

THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE HISTORY

PREPARED IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT INVESTIGATIONS

BY SOME OF

THE FOREMOST THINKERS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED.

EDITED BY

REV. GEO. C. LORIMER, LL.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, M.P.

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PREFACE.

THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE HISTORY, while planned by the editor in the interest of evangelical religion, was not designed to be either narrow or repressive. Truth is never advantaged by seeming dread of thorough investigation and reasonable freedom of expression. The intelligent public has a right to know what eminent scholars think on subjects closely interwoven with man's spiritual welfare, and to judge for itself how far recent researches may or may not invalidate cherished faiths. It has not, therefore, been considered necessary or desirable by the editor that every representation relative to the human element in the sacred writings which does not command his own approval should be excluded. Certain extreme statements of a purely conjectural and speculative character he has prevailed on their authors to modify or eliminate; and an occasional, and as he trusts, involuntary, display of denominational bias he has ventured to suppress. As the prime purpose of this volume is to unfold the history recorded in the Bible, and not to discuss theories of inspiration or defend a system of theology, a wider range of opinion has been allowed than would have been admissible in other circumstances. But at the same time this generous latitude has made it apparent that there is a distinctively evangelical school of higher criticism—a school loyal to the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, though diverging somewhat from traditional estimates of their documentary sources. While the editor dissents from several of the positions assumed by some of his learned coadjutors, as being inconsistent and untenable, he is more than gratified to acknowledge their manifest loyalty to the Headship of Christ. Assuredly it is a great gain to the Christian world to see for itself that the old faith has nothing to fear from the freest thought and the most brilliant scholarship.

The reader of these pages should realize that the novel views set forth by various erudite teachers concerning the dates and composition of the sacred books, especially of the Hexateuch, are not as yet finally accepted, though, of course, their advocates regard them as irrefutable. But these enthusiasts overlook the fact that while such critics as Dillmann and Delitzsch, on the one side, and Graf and Wellhausen, on the other, coincide in the opinion that the Hexateuch has been compiled out of documents far older than itself, they are not altogether agreed as to the true analysis of its component parts. The differences may be slight, but they are real. Dillmann's A. is Wellhausen's P. C.; while his B. and C. stand for what is usually represented by E (Elohists) and J (Jahvist). Wellhausen considers one part of the composition, that marked J, as older than Dillmann does. The latter, likewise, concurs in the general truthfulness of the patriarchal histories as recorded in Genesis, and has no sympathy with Stade who regards their heroes as primitive deities, nor with the former in beginning his "History of Israel" at the birth of Moses. Dillmann is also impatient with some recent Assyriologists who insist on tracing the Biblical accounts of Creation and the Flood to Babylonian sources, rendered accessible by the Captivity. These variations are instructive and indicate that the end is not yet. There is no doubt that the Hexateuch reveals distinctions in vocabulary, style, and construction, and that narratives apparently are duplicated and enactments repeated on its pages, some accounts being Jehovistic and others Elohist. But then we have psalms thus differentiated by the Divine Name, and yet no hard, unyielding theory of their origin and age has been elaborated from such slim materials. We may, therefore, well pause before committing ourselves irrevocably to all of the confident assertions of modern critics. As dealing with the human side of the

Scriptures, with which this history has especially and almost exclusively to do, their suggestions and representations are not out of place, and add immeasurably to the interest and value of this volume; but at the same time they ought to be taken with caution and reserve. Even as these words are being penned, and while the brilliant assaults of George Adam Smith, Cheyne, and Driver, on the unity of "Isaiah," are still fresh in the public mind, Principal Douglas, their peer in learning and ability, is challenging their conclusions in a masterful treatise, entitled "Isaiah One and His Book One." It is consequently impossible at this date to anticipate the final findings of genuine and well-balanced criticism. That must be left to the future. Each author connected with this Bible History is alone responsible for the views he advocates; but whatever these personal teachings may be, every candid student will admit that they have not obscured the sublime truths, which the movements of the mighty past disclose, that God is in all history, and that all the ages have providentially been made tributary to his unique manifestation in the Divine Christ.

From the slow development of religion, which is perhaps the most notable feature of the inspired chronicle, it is evident that we cannot hope to comprehend its meaning in a moment or without patient application. God does not hasten: we cannot. It is also observable, that not only has religion been of tardy growth; it has been the product of various and oftentimes of indirect agencies. At the beginning God did not put coal in the mine, neither did he plant the full-grown tree, but scattered living germs on the earth, which afterward became forests. These forests drank in the sun until they were soaked with flame; then they sank into the darkness to be transmuted in the laboratory of nature into substance for heat and light. Thus the final religion had to pass through successive stages. At first it was but a seed; then it took shape in antediluvian, postdiluvian, patriarchal, theocratical, ceremonial, and prophetic eras—more than once being submerged in the night of exile, oppression, and apostasy—at last to blaze forth in all the splendors of the Christian dispensation. No wonder, then, if the history of this sublime progress should reveal the touch of many hands, and the interblending of diverse materials. It may be compared to a mosaic in which piece to piece has been joined that a glorious picture of heavenly things might be produced. Though the seams and divisions of this picture may not be apparent to all—for the Bible is not fashioned like the Byzantine mosaics, where all the articulations are palpable and rough, but like those of Rome where all the lines are ground down until they are nearly invisible—they still exist; and when some master-workman shows them to us and makes clear the various fragments that enter into the composition of the whole, let it not be doubted that even this may be true, and the divine origin of the grand old book remain uninvalidated. For one controlling, guiding, unifying mind must have been operative through all the weary ages to produce out of such composite elements a result so wonderfully unique, uplifting, and unfathomable as the Bible: and that mind in the nature of things could not have been human.

It has been customary in volumes of this character to give an account of the four centuries between the last of the Hebrew prophets and the first of the Roman emperors, and to embrace in the narrative a description of the overthrow of Jerusalem. This introduction of material not contained in the Scriptures is justified as necessary to an understanding of the relation existing between the old economy and the new, and to the coherent unfolding of the divine purpose in the calling of the Gentiles. But it has always seemed to the editor that the reason, good and sufficient as it is, for this method, ought to lead the historian yet farther. Instead of arresting his work at the point of catastrophe, he ought to carry it onward to the period of victory. That the student may perceive how Christianity emerged from obscurity to the preëminence it attained under the Cæsars; that he may see how it

began to fulfill what was foretold of its career, and observe the manner of its emancipation from the influence of Judaism and from reliance on miracles: in a word, that he may be able to form some idea of its transition by which, though never of the earth, it came to be in many respects like the kingdoms of earth, under the dominion of natural law, there should be furnished, at least in outline, an account of the events which make the two hundred years subsequent to the Apostolic era singularly significant in the spiritual annals of mankind. This will explain the unusual extension of the present treatise beyond the ordinary limits conventionally set to Bible history.

It is only right that the editor should refer in befitting terms to the publishers, and to others who have had much to do in preparing this volume for the press. All that money could do has cheerfully been done by Henry O. Shepard and his partners to render this contribution to religious literature scholarly in treatment and artistic in execution. The paper, letterpress, pictures, and binding speak for themselves, and the names of Gladstone and Farrar, to say nothing of the others, are evidence that the text is not unworthy its beautiful accessories. But if the company has been generous in its use of money, the business manager of the book, Mr. G. L. Howe, has been equally lavish in the thought and labor he has spent on its production. Though the editor is the architect, in a very real sense the book must be regarded as Mr. Howe's monument. He it was who invited the editor to elaborate the plan of the work and choose colaborers to aid in the execution. To him alone is due the merit of enlisting the pen of the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone in the enterprise; and from first to last he has exercised an unsleeping oversight of its progress toward completion. And now that he assumes control of all agencies employed in its circulation, the public may receive him in confidence as a gentleman entitled to the highest consideration.

No pains have been spared to render the text as accurate as possible. This has not been an easy task, the editor and his literary associates living remote from one another, some of them being beyond the sea. The greatest care has been taken to guard against mistakes; and if the result is in any commensurate degree satisfactory, credit is largely due to the very thorough proofreading done in Chicago, especially by Mr. Robert D. Watts, and to the final supervision of the page proofs in Boston by the Rev. Charles Follen Lee, A.M., to whose scholarly attainments and critical taste testimony need hardly be borne.

And now that this History passes from the workshop of the editor to the great world outside, he trusts that it may find its way into multitudes of homes, and prove a fresh incentive to the study of that mysterious BOOK, wherein the highest genius of man appears enkindled and inspired by the Spirit of God.

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JUNE 4, 1895.



BIDA.

THE DREAM OF JOSEPH.

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BY REV. ELMER H. CAPEN, D.D.

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BY REV. FRANK M. BRISTOL, D.D.

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BY REV. W. T. MOORE, LL.D.

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BY REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D.D.

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BY REV. JOSEPH AGAR BEET, D.D.

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BY REV. CASPER RENÉ GREGORY, PH.D., D.TH., LL.D.

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BY REV. WILLIAM CLEAVER WILKINSON, D.D.

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BOOK XIII.—FROM DESCENT FROM THE CROSS TO ASCENT TO THE THRONE.

BY REV. SAMUEL HART, D.D.

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BY REV. J. MONRO GIBSON, D.D.

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BOOK XV.—FROM THE FALL OF JERUSALEM TO THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY REV. GEORGE C. LORIMER, LL.D.

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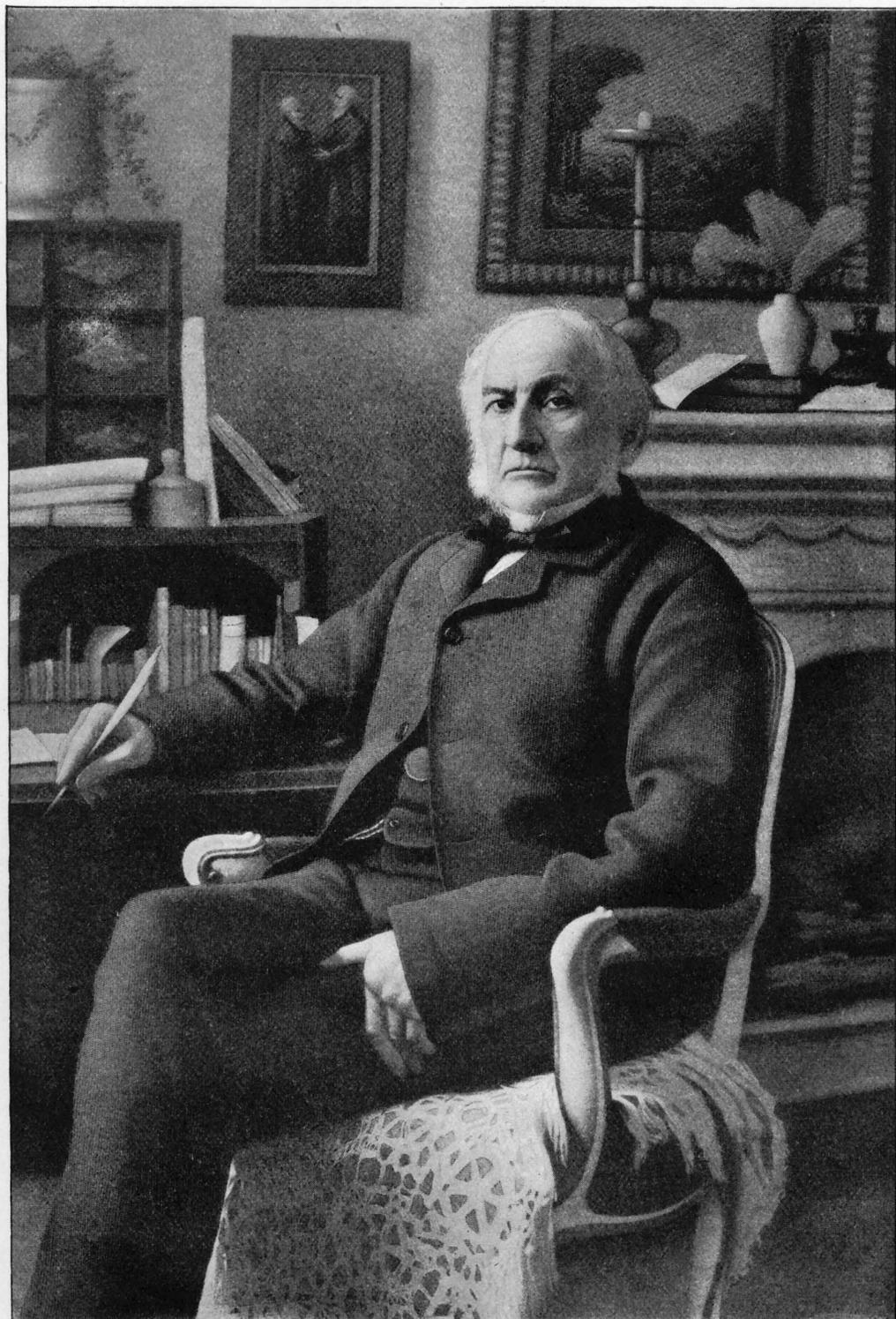
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W. H. Ludstone

GENERAL INTRODUCTION,

BY

RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, M. P.

I

IT sometimes happens, in the crisis of a great engagement, that the fiercest of the conflict rages round the standard, which the one party is struggling to capture and the other to save from the grasp of hostile hands; and it is even so at the present day with reference to the subject of this prefatory notice. There is a banner which waves, and which is seen to wave, on high, over the whole of that field—the widest and by far the most noteworthy in the world—on which is being fought out the battle that is the greatest of all battles, and that ultimately may be found to include all the rest: the battle of belief in Christ. Is there, or is there not, one great and special revelation of the will of God to mankind, vital to the welfare of the human race?

This banner is the banner of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Vast and essential as is the living agency by which the work of the Gospel is to be carried on, and to which, indeed, it was first committed by the Savior, that living agency is for the present broken up into fractions, which seem to maintain or even to consolidate themselves on their separate bases, and no one among which commands the adhesion of so much as one moiety of the entire body. But there is no division, or at the least there is no great and vital division, among Christians even as to the canon of the older Testament; as to the Testament of the Gospel, or the new covenant, there is no division at all.

There was a preparatory period after the ascension of our Lord, approaching three centuries in extent, during which the several books of the New Testament were exercising a profound and comprehensive influence, although the Canon, or complete list of the books acknowledged as due to divine inspiration, had not yet been completed. Even after that preliminary stage, paganism had enough of remaining strength in its death agony to continue its partial and spasmodic efforts, which can hardly be said to have altogether

ceased when the sword of Mahomet and his successors invaded and seriously curtailed the territory that had been already won by the Gospel. Yet, upon the whole, the boundaries of the Church, through the course of many centuries, were greatly widened. Not, indeed, without many and sad diversities of experience: aberrations in doctrine, ruptures of communion, extravagant assumptions of authority, and frightful corruption of manners acknowledged on all hands. Yet the life from within could not be repressed, and more and more lands were added to the Gospel profession. In modern times, the process of occupying the earth has been carried on more largely by growth of population and by emigration than by bringing new nations within the fold. But during the nineteenth century there has been a marked renewal of activity and progress. Doubtless the kingdom of God within us has been even more doubtful and defective in its development than the kingdom of God without us. But wherever Christianity has gone, whatever its agents have taught, and however little its professors may have adorned their calling, at all times and in all places it has carried with it the acknowledgment of the Holy Scriptures.

Contemporaneously with the attainment and maintenance of this great and unrivaled ascendancy, and in the absence of any comprehensive and effective warfare against it from beyond the borders of Christendom, the conflict, which was noticed at the outset of the present paper, has been raised against this great and acknowledged treasure of all Christians from within the borders of Christendom itself, and carried on wholly or mainly by those who have passed through the waters of baptism. But formidable as it is, it does not imply either any disposition on the part of the members of Christian communities generally to abate their allegiance to the Holy Word, or their hopes of the coming time. Indeed, it has been simultaneously with the undermining and disintegrating

movement that the religion of Christ has assumed more visibly than ever a commanding position in the world. It is for mankind the greatest of all phenomena, the greatest of all facts. It is the dominant religion of the inhabitants of this planet at least in two important respects. It commands the largest number of professing adherents. If we estimate the population of the globe at fourteen hundred millions (and some would state a higher figure), between four and five hundred millions of these, or one-third of the whole, are professing Christians; and at every point of the circuit the question is not one of losing ground, but of gaining it. The fallacy which accepted the vast population of China as Buddhists in the mass has been exploded, and it is plain that no other religion approaches the numerical strength of Christianity; doubtful, indeed, whether there be any that reaches to one-half of it. The second of the particulars now under view is perhaps even more important. Christianity is the religion in the command of whose professors is lodged a proportion of power far exceeding its superiority of numbers; and this power is both moral and material. In the area of controversy it can hardly be said to have a serious antagonist. Force, secular or physical, is accumulated in the hands of Christians in a proportion absolutely overwhelming; and the accumulation of influence is not less remarkable than that of force. This is not surprising, for all the elements of influence have their home within the Christian precinct. The art, the literature, the systematized industry, invention, and commerce—in one word, the power—of the world are almost wholly Christian. In Christendom alone there seems to lie an inexhaustible energy of world-wide expansion. The nations of Christendom are everywhere arbiters of the fate of non-Christian nations.

In every part and parcel of the mass now so wondrously developed and diversified, there is, and there has for fifteen hundred years been rendered, an allegiance to the Holy Bible, alike uniform, uninterrupted, and unreserved. And that allegiance was consistently applied (though with limited means) in promoting the free circulation of the Scriptures until the sixteenth century, when the circumstances of the time brought about a change, at least within the pale of the Latin or Western Church. And although in the controversies of the day the Bible may perhaps be said to stand upon the defensive, it will surely be admitted that, in and since the early part of the now almost expiring century, it may be said to have issued a kind of challenge to the powers of the world at large. This challenge was first delivered principally from Great Britain, and only by a portion of the Christian body, although that

body is now more united than formerly, with respect to its form; which was the circulation of the Sacred Volume without note or comment. They were Protestants, they were English-speaking Protestants, they were English-speaking Protestants chiefly of the non-conforming type, or in varying degrees of sympathy with it, who conceived the idea of an association marked, even in its day of small things, by its aspiring and comprehensive aims. Bishop Heber, in the early infancy of modern missions, wrote as to their work, the lines,

Waft, waft, ye winds, his story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole.

The society, which undertook the work, was not to represent, befriend, or oppose, any particular community of Christians, but it was to circulate the Divine Word among all nations and in all languages. They were to open a great armory where all who would were to find greatly augmented facilities for obtaining the chief weapon needed in the work of conversion. They were not deterred from their undertaking by the enormous difficulty of reproducing the sacred text in countless tongues, most of them imperfectly understood, many of them wholly unknown, and spoken only by races of uncivilized men, equipped with none but the most limited vocabularies and the narrowest ideas. Nor was their work arrested by the recollection that the church of the New Testament was propagated under the authority of our Savior, in its earlier experiences, not by written documents, but by the agency of living men. They may have reasoned on the belief that living men would continue to supply their proper propelling force, and would derive, from a larger supply of copies of the written Word, a manifest increase of power in the fulfillment of their work. Who can deny that this was a brave and a great, even if an incomplete conception? It would be alike a violation of charity and of common sense to surmise that the founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society had for their leading, or probably for an acknowledged aim, any polemical advantage in those controversies which divide Christians. They probably regarded the Scriptures not as a tangled thicket of dispute, but as "a green pasture" of immeasurable richness for the souls of the people of God.

The material result has been beyond doubt remarkable. The Sacred Scriptures have been sown broadcast over the world; and in a new sense "their sound has gone out into all lands." By the agency of this society taken alone, the Bible or integral parts of it have

been circulated to the extent of more than one hundred and forty million copies,¹ in 320 languages and without any note or comment. Even the purely philological effect of this vast operation has been remarkable. A variety of languages, previously without organization of any kind, have, since and in connection with the action of the society, come to be possessed of lexicons and grammars. There is a further very large British circulation independent of the society, but we may justly borrow from the old mythologies to term it the hundred-handed and the hundred-eyed. Its daily issues from its different depots exceed 12,000 copies,² and in 1892 they rose for the year to 4,000,000. A kindred institution in America likewise operates upon a very large, if a less gigantic scale. Has this been a casting of pearls before swine, in the sense of thrusting the sacred volume wholesale upon men unprepared for its becoming reception? Who can say but that such miscarriage may have occurred at some point of a prolonged experience, and a vast organization? But there is no reason known to me for supposing that such things, if indeed they have happened, have been more than rare exceptions. This immense multiplication of the copies of Scripture has been not only contemporaneous, but associated with that remarkable enlargement of missionary activity, which has supplied a prominent feature of the religious history of this century, and especially of its latter moiety.

The mental questionings of these times were doubtless brought to bear upon the Scriptures apart from any efforts made to extend their circulation and their influence. These were most active in Germany, which had smaller concern with Bible societies or missions. But the challenge implied in a scheme which may be said to have aimed at carrying the Bible to every member of the human family might also be likely to concentrate the electric fluid of criticism floating in the atmosphere, and to precipitate it upon the object which was becoming so provokingly conspicuous.

II.

If we now turn to the contents of our sacred books, we at once perceive that they have not been framed with any view of evading conflict by the limitation of claims and pretensions. Of the other sacred books, current in the world among various peoples, they take no notice whatever. Their claim to authority is absolute throughout; and the God in whose name they speak is proclaimed all along as the only and as the universal God.

¹ Annual Report of the Society for 1894, p. 314; with an allowance for the months not included.

² The "Gospel in Many Tongues," p. 88.

It is to be borne in mind that they never speak of themselves as a whole; although the Old Testament obtains recognition in that character not only from the Jewish race, but from our Savior, in the threefold and popularly understood division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. The obvious reason of this last designation, which was meant to embrace the whole Hagiographa, was that the Psalms were named first in the list of these books. The New Testament was gradually formed in separate books, as the Old had been. These books appear all to have been issued within about two generations after the lifetime of our Lord, but more than two centuries passed before their systematic acknowledgment and incorporation in a collected mass, although the number of books which did not obtain immediate recognition, so far as they were known, was a very small proportion of the whole. But here we perceive one of the high prerogatives of the Scriptures which helps to explain their close and elastic adaptation to the progressive needs of our race. No other sacred books are so minutely and exactly divided by periods and by authorship. No others cover so vast a range of time and of diversified human history. They began for a family, and they ended for a world. Not given at once and in stereotype, but "at sundry times and in divers manners."¹ This is one of many points of severalty on which it will be right to touch, as marking them off from other records purporting to be in the same mode and sense divine. Nor have they at any period wanted the advantage of attestation from without. It was the office, first of the Jewish people and then of the Christian Church, to bear to them an audible and living witness, which has sounded through all the ages. The flock have attested the documents, while the documents have checked the aberrations and rebuked the shortcomings and the corruptions of the flock. They constitute one great and majestic trilogy, as they present to us, first, the creation and completion of the material universe, with the introduction of man to his earthly home; secondly, his fall from innocence into a state fundamentally deteriorated, through willful sin, together with the immediate dawning of "a light in a dark place," through promises which were to save him from despair; and thirdly, the great redemption from the ruin thus let loose, by the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, with a course of prophetic intimations reaching to the consummation of the world. Is there any other case of a collection of records which thus deals with the destinies of our race from

¹ Hebrews i, 1.

its cradle to its grave, and in this comprehensive grasp asserts its commanding authority over the race as a whole? I apprehend that all other documents claiming kindred with the Bible rather bear the stamp of the occasional or accidental, at any rate of a work ended and put by.

The question of the authorship of the several books of Holy Scripture is far from being identical with that of their genuineness and authority. According to the general and thoroughly reasonable belief of Jews and Christians, this authorship began with Moses, a great man whose position in history is far too solidly established to be shaken. The form of the earliest book appears to show that he collected, under the divine guidance, those primitive traditions of the race, which, whether accurate or not in every particular, retain, and alone retain, all the features required in order to convey to us the outlines of divine government in the creation, administration, and redemption of the world. It is not necessary here to inquire whether each and every portion of the books ascribed to Moses had him for its author, or whether, besides the palpable case of the chapter¹ which relates his death, other additions in furtherance and exposition of his career may have been made. Christendom at large, as well as the Jewish nation, firmly believe that he and none other was the great legislator of the Hebrew race; that the vital substance of his legislation remains embodied in the Pentateuch; and, as it may be added, that never in human history was any legislation so profoundly and so durably stamped upon the life, character, and experiences, even down to the visible and clamant witness of the present day, of those to whom it was addressed.

The higher and inner meaning of these general statements has yet to be brought more pointedly into view. We justly dwell upon the unapproachable elevation, and the wonderful purity, of the teachings of the Bible in their general tenor. But it cannot be too clearly understood, when attempts are made to reduce the Bible to the level of other ancient records, that we claim on its behalf this distinction and exclusive character—that it revealed to man truths absolutely vital to all pure religion, and generally admitted to be so, but which were not revealed elsewhere. Our religion, and some other religions extant at the present day, rest upon the doctrine of the unity of God. The Christian creeds, like the Scriptures as Christians in general hold them, teach the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; but this doctrine of the Holy Trinity presupposes and is based and built upon, the doctrine of the unity. When

¹ Deuteronomy xxxiv.

we proceed to ask how, when this unity has been so largely—nay, in ancient times so pre-vaillingly—denied and set aside, it has been kept alive in the world during the long period of nearly universal darkness and safely handed down to us, the reply is that it was upheld, and upheld exclusively, as a living article of religious obligation, in one small country, among one small and generally disparaged people, and that the country and the people were those who received this precious truth and preserved it in and by the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

And not only did those Scriptures teach the unity of God, but they taught it with an emphasis, persistency, and authority such as no other work of any period or authorship has equaled; and the doctrine of the New Testament on this subject is really no more than an echo from the doctrine of the Old. If this truth was thus taught by the Old Testament in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, to the Hebrew race, and that through a long course of centuries, while it was everywhere else at least hopelessly darkened and more commonly denied, we have only to take further into view the generally acknowledged truth, that it supplies the only foundation on which the fabric of a pure religion can be reared, in order to make good, as among the old sacred books of the world, not only the superior, but, so far as regards the very heart, root, and center of divine truth, the exclusive claim of the Bible.

I do not, indeed, deny, and shall presently insist, that authentic traces of this majestic truth are to be found elsewhere in old books and old religions; but it is amid a mass of evil and ruinous accretions, which grew progressively around it, and but too rapidly stifled and suppressed it. This, then, does not alter the parallel and even more undeniable fact, that it is in all these cases traced rather than recorded, recorded rather than taught, and, if taught at all, taught with such utter lack of perspicuity, persistency, and authority as to deprive it of all motive power, to shut it out from practical religion, and to leave it, through the long and weary centuries, in the cold sleep of oblivion or under a storm of overwhelming denial.

The Koran, as all are aware, has, outside the Hebrew and Christian precinct, appropriated the pure tradition on which were built the Bible's first beginnings, and taught the unity of God, with abundant vigor, to a considerable section of mankind, reaching probably at the present day to between one and two hundred millions. But the recency of its date places the Koran wholly beyond the scope of the present argument; except in so far as the

derivative character of the doctrine, as standing upon its pages, helps to illustrate the authority of the august source from which it proceeded. And it remains true that the vitality of religion, as bound up with this doctrine, hung for very many centuries suspended upon the single cord of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.

And yet we are still told (I quote from one of the most recent American publications) that the Bible belongs essentially to the same family as the remainder of the Eastern books reputed to be sacred, that it is one of many revelations contained in them; "on the whole the highest and best that the ancient world produced." These books, then, it would seem, are like children in a class at school; and the Bible, on account of its merits, is promoted to the head of the class.¹

It is not the Bible that produced religion and morals, but religion and morals that produced the Bible.² It is, then, as much as any other, a properly human composition in its matter and in its authority. Yet this same author frankly admits that "the Bible is the parent of monotheism in the world, so far as a book can produce it."³ And, of course, we agree that the monotheism of the written Bible is founded upon a prior communication of divine truth to mankind. It is strange, indeed, if the exclusive guardianship of the great *articulus stantis aut cadentis religionis*, which died out in every other country, was a charge only to be acknowledged in a shuffle for precedence! It is supremacy, not precedence, that we ask for the Bible; it is contrast, as well as resemblance, that we must feel compelled to insist on. The Bible is stamped with speciality of origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors.

It may be right to notice in this place that there is a practice, somewhat usual in the Bible and rarely characteristic, I apprehend, of the other ancient books of religion, which pledges the personal veracity of the authors to the direct and definite character of the revelation imparted.⁴ It is not adopted in the historical parts of Scripture. But where laws are to be delivered, it is largely used by Mosès with some difference of degree: commonly "the Lord said unto Mosès"; or more particularly, as in Exodus xx, 1, "and God spake all these words, saying"; or, as in Deuteronomy xxix, 1, "These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Mosès to make

with the children of Israel." In the utterances of the prophets, from first to last, it is so habitual, with diversities of expression which do not affect the substance, that it is needless to cite them in particular, from "the vision of Isaiah,"¹ to "the burden of Malachi."² And Saint Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, helps us to comprehend the character of inspiration, and its distinctness in his own case from that more general guidance which is given to the spiritually minded man, when he writes as follows: first,³ "unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord"; and then,⁴ "to the rest speak I, not the Lord." These are assertions of a very serious and practical character; they show us that oftentimes the very words, and not merely the general purport, were in question; and they appear, in the subject matter which they legitimately embrace, to show the singular earnestness with which the work of the sacred writers was pursued; if they do not, indeed, oblige us to make our choice between acknowledging inspiration and charging imposture. Let it not, however, be supposed, that while I dwell upon the contrast in dignity and title between the Holy Scriptures and the ancient books of the East, I intend to speak of those more promiscuous works, or of the religious developments gathered round them, with sweeping disrespect. On the contrary, both the religions and the records have their value; and I am cognizant of the fact that in the case of the Achæians, or earliest historic Greeks, the accepted religion embodied interesting and valuable elements of the old traditions preserved for us among the Hebrews, although they had none of the advantage to be derived from the support of written or regular records. Both in subject matter and in the evidence they afford of drawing from a higher than any human source, they offer to us particulars of very high interest from more than one point of view.

Sometimes we may recognize, as in the Assyrian or Vedic hymns, approximations, if with long intervals unfilled between, to those wonderful developments of the inward life of devotion with which the Scriptures, and beyond all other ancient books the Psalms, are so intensely charged. These impressions, outside the Scriptures, have a double value: first, in the testimony which they render to the principles of piety, and secondly, in the exhibition they afford of the scarcely measurable superiority of the Hebrew records as patterns and guides in the school of religious experience.

Still more remarkable may be considered the moral teachings of the Chinese philosopher,

¹"The Bible, Its Origin, Growth and Character, and Its Place Among the Sacred Books of the World." By J. T. Sunderland, New York, 1893, p. 249.

²*Ibid.*, p. 250. ³*Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁴Claimed, however, by Zoroaster. Rawlinson, "Ancient Religions," p. 95.

¹ Isaiah i. ² Malachi i.

³ I. Corinthians vii, 10. ⁴ I. Corinthians vii, 12.

Confucius. They were delivered at a very early date, and herein may have lain one of the reasons of their purity and elevation. We find the American writer already quoted recording with a kind of glee that Confucius taught the golden rule centuries before Christ.¹ A writer by no means favorable to negation gives it as his judgment² that the attempt of a religious party to represent the moral teachings of this great man as standing in close conflict with Christianity is much to be deplored. The golden rule, however, does not come up to the full height of the "second" commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But we ought to be thankful wherever we find teaching so nearly approaching the truth. Again: the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" vividly depicts the condition of man after his demise, and the judgment to be passed upon him. Although the religion with which this remarkable work was connected be immersed in polytheism, and false tradition enters into the delineation of details, yet on the other hand it gives a more systematic and particular expression to the great truth of the soul's survival after death than we find set forth in the Hebrew books, and it is also remarkably sustained by the early records of the Zoroastrian system. All this we accept with lively thankfulness, and, as I shall shortly explain, this is to be recommended from a double point of view.

Take again the case of the Hindoo cosmogony. Deficient as it is in the nobler elements preserved for us in the Book of Genesis, and even absurd in its particulars, one of its points may be compared to a ray of light shining from the far interior through the mazes of an interminable cavern. Its golden egg is said to have been the home of Brahma before his birth. He lay there for a divine year. And a day and night of Brahma's year are equal to 8,620 millions of ordinary years. Is it not within the verge of possibility that this vast extension of time may convey to us, even if in gross caricature, some trace of the fact that the pre-human periods of cosmic and mundane preparation appear to have extended over vast spaces of time?

And finally let us refer to the central truth of the unity of God. In the work which I have cited on "The Jesuits in China" we find that the Chinese were required by the Confucian religion to pay reverent worship to Tien.³ This word Tien was interpreted at Rome to mean the heaven. But in China it was held that the

emperor had supreme hermeneutic power, and he steadily maintained that the phrase meant not heaven but the Lord of Heaven.¹ And further it appears that, in all or some of these sacred books, as we ascend toward their oldest traditions we come more nearly into view of a primeval monotheism. This was held by Ricci, the Jesuit missionary, to be remarkably the case in the ancient religious system of China.² So likewise in the Gâthâs of Persia,³ where religion was degraded in later times not only by the full development of dualism, but by the introduction of a multitude of gods and of elemental worship. Thus, again we have, in comparing the Persian books with the Hebrew records, the double witness: first of concurrence, and secondly of a marked inferiority. But apart altogether from the support given to the early Scriptures by resemblance or contrast of contents, is that which accrues from the same sources to their authority. The pure doctrines of religion, and especially monotheism, which the speculations of to-day largely represent as the laborious attainment effected, after many efforts and through many stages, by the agency of human thought, is referred by the traditional belief of Christians to a primeval revelation. This belief might be sufficiently sustained, even did the Hebrew Scriptures stand alone in the world. But the concurrent voice of many witnesses further serves to raise this contention to the rank of an historical and moral certainty.

III.

For these Eastern books severally record the most ancient religious traditions of the respective countries where they were in vogue. There is no difficulty in accounting for their diversities. But how are we to account for their points of agreement; of agreement in very high matters; of agreement which in subsequent times, instead of being extended, very largely disappeared?

Here the Hebrew book comes in to our aid; and on this occasion not so much as a transcendental fashion, as by supplying a rational and historical solution to an interesting problem.

It was obviously to be expected, if these nations had a common origin, if they were distributed over the world from a common center, that the religious traditions which they have severally first placed upon record would bear traces of the time when they all had one seat, and (if so it had been) one speech. I

¹Sunderland, pp. 26, 27.

²Rev. A. C. Jenkins, "The Jesuits in China," p. 89, also pp. 13, 14.

³"Laws of Manon," Book I, Sections 9 and 72, edited by G. Pauthier, Orleans, 1875.

¹"The Jesuits in China," London, 1894, pp. 24, 27, first edition; see, also, the weighty opinion of Dr. Legge.

²*Ibid.*, p. 13.

³Rawlinson, "Ancient Religions," p. 97, and "Ancient Monarchies," III, pp. 104, 105; and particularly, Haug, "Essays on the Parsees," p. 149.

shall notice later on what linguistic and ethnographical research have told and are telling us on these subjects. But the Bible had told it to us long before.

Here again it was among the Hebrews, and among the Hebrews alone, that any available and particular record of the primitive condition of mankind was preserved. In the tenth chapter of Genesis we are informed how most, if not all, the races among whom the most interesting records of ancient religion are preserved, sprang from the same ancestry as the Hebrews, and spoke with them a common speech.¹ The fact of a great threefold division is established by linguistic study. Many even of the names can be traced, such as those of the Medes (so much associated in religion and history with the Persians), the Egyptians, and the Assyrians. Testimony from other sources, as to race and language, bring the Indian people within our view; and further developments may come to include China. Although the Greeks have no sacred books, properly so-called, it is not the less true that in their most ancient religious traditions they have transmitted to us many points of marked resemblance to the traditions recorded in Scripture. Of all the races in question the Hebrews alone have preserved what explains at once the concurrence and the diversities in the materials before us. They, and they alone, furnish us with what may be termed a history of primeval man. Does not that history, though it has disappeared from other channels, derive much access of credit from the confirmation given by the Eastern books in other particulars to the Hebrew books? Is it not a moral certainty that, when the several races came to place upon record the oldest religious traditions which they possessed, the record must have retained, in greater or in less degree, material derived from the stock common to them all before the dispersion? It seems impossible that while one race conserved these traditions in an unbroken line, all others should at once have lost all memory of them. It appears, then, that, so far as their common materials are concerned, all these books drew from one fountain head; and that was a source where the doctrine of primitive and consecutive revelation from God himself to the patriarchal line is consistently and plainly declared. Regarded in this light, the singular and precious elements found in the Eastern books plainly show that the Hebrew traditions were not the particular classic of the Hebrew nation, but the best and most authentic representation of a common original, and greatly corroborate the belief that that original was divine.

¹ Genesis x, xi, 1.

The Assyrian tablets have opened to us separate traditions of the Creation and the Flood, in forms of very old date, which powerfully reinforce all these considerations. There is no doubt of the relationship between the narratives drawn from the tablets and the records of Genesis; while a vast moral inferiority in the more precious of the two, that relating to the Creation, further shows how greatly our race had to suffer, in proportion as it was cut off from the higher opportunities of learning in the most authentic manner the divine lessons of knowledge as well as of life.

Everything tends, then, to confirm us in the belief that, in the day when the human race was undergoing the first experiences of its infancy, the guiding hand and the audible voice of the Universal Father were made freely available to direct its faltering and wayward march.

I know of no reason, however, why we should not proceed one step farther with respect to these sacred books of the East. If there are particular cases in which any one of them brings into view, or into clearer view, any matter on which the Hebrew tradition is silent or less clear, why should we hesitate to acknowledge that, within these limits, such books are discharging an office specifically their own, and intrusted to them by providential wisdom? It might be allowable to instance the developments as to a future life in the Egyptian and Persian records. But it is one thing to make this avowal; it is quite another to attempt comparing them generally with the Bible, while the glaring fact remains that, after every fair allowance, they provide us neither with the record of our creation, nor with the hope or the plan of our redemption. That is to say, on the matters which are to us of the profoundest interest they are a blank.

In considering, however, the relations between the Bible and the older sacred books, we should beware of being drawn into captious debate on questions of words. We may be asked whether the prerogative we claim for the Bible is a difference in kind, or whether we are content with the admission of a superiority in degree. Now, a distinction between these two is in common use, and reasonably so. Yet it may be true that this common use is founded more in practical good sense and utility than in any abstract and absolute conception of the mind. Let us seek for illustrations. Does a good man differ from a bad man, commonly so-called, in kind, or only in degree? The general conscience would revolt against the proposition that Alexander VI. (Borgia) differed from Savonarola, whom he burned, only in degree. By general consent, such differences are spoken of as differences in kind. Again, is the difference between day and night a

difference of kind, or only of degree? The general voice would reply that it is of kind. Yet, upon examination of the matter, it would be found that the difference was one only of degree. And in the former case of the good man and the bad, it might be difficult to avoid dispute on behalf of a similar conclusion, at least until a day shall arrive when the tares are to be severed from the wheat.

An explanation may perhaps be sufficiently supplied as follows: Evidently mere differences of quantity are not always taken, even when enormous, to be differences of kind. Twelve hundred, or twelve thousand, millions, evidently differ from a simple dozen of units to an extent which even bewilders the thinking faculty, and may well be termed immeasurable. Yet it is at once seen that the difference of the two is one only of degree, because there is no change of quality and character between the trifling and the enormous numeral. But when quality and character, when influence and power, are so altered as to make the operation in human affairs of the two things compared fundamentally different and practically opposed, then we reasonably decline to describe the difference as if it were of quantity alone. So, in material things, differences in the percentages of different ingredients may tell upon what we term the essence: and we are perfectly warranted, notwithstanding the rules of kinship as to some important points, in describing the difference between the Scriptures and these other books as a difference in kind, and not only in degree.

Before finally quitting the relation of the Bible to the Eastern sacred books, I will notice another point of much interest, to which attention has recently been called by Dr. Wright.¹ We depend for our knowledge of the Bible, except in Greek or the case of a very few who are Hebrew scholars, upon translations. And, evidently, so it must continue to be for an indefinite period, and throughout the world. But what may be held truly wonderful is that the Bible in a translated form seems not sensibly to lose its power. In Palestine, the Septuagint competed with the original Hebrew. In the English tongue, the Authorized Version bears, and has borne for centuries, the character of a powerful and splendid original. It has greatly contributed both to mold and to fix the form of the language. From Germany we hear a somewhat similar account of Luther's Bible. In general, even a good translation is like the copy of some great picture. It does not readily go home to heart and mind. But who has ever felt, or has ever heard of anyone who felt, either in reading the English or in other

translations of the Bible, the comparative tameness and inefficiency which commonly attach to a change of vehicle between one tongue and another? Is it believed that the Epistles of Saint Paul in English have seriously lost by submitting themselves to be represented in a version? At least it may be said with confidence that there are no grander passages in all English prose than some of the passages of those translated epistles. Such is the case of the Bible in its foreign dress. I am not competent to pronounce that it loses nothing. But it retains all its power to pierce the thoughts of the heart, it still remains sharper than a two-edged sword, it still divides bone and marrow. It does its work. We turn to the other Eastern books—what a contrast they present! Certainly the same opportunities have not been afforded them of operating through a variety of tongues which have been given to the Holy Scriptures. But Confucius and the Koran were translated into Latin in the seventeenth century; and in English they have been accessible for more than one generation. They each assumed a German dress more than a century ago. The presentation of these books in the mass to the modern world is, of course, too recent to be dwelt upon. But the earlier facts show that, had these books been gifted with any of that energetic vitality which belongs to the Bible, a beginning of its manifestation would long ago have been made; whereas there is not a sign that any one of them is likely to exercise, beyond its own traditional borders, any sensible or widespread influence. They appear to sink into a *caput mortuum*, a dead letter. It is a sublime prerogative of the Holy Scriptures thus to reverse the curse of Babel. They, and they alone, supply the entire family of man with a medium both for their profoundest thoughts and for their most vivid sympathies which is alike available for all; and once more, in a certain and that no mean sense (so far, that is to say, as the work of language is concerned), they make the whole earth to be of one speech.¹

IV.

I next proceed to bring together in a few words some instances selected from the signal confirmations which the Holy Scriptures have received during the present century, through the progress of science and research. Every lover of truth must heartily desire their further advances on the simple and paramount ground of allegiance to truth. We may now, from reviewing what has already happened, entertain rather sanguine anticipations as to the probable effect of new discoveries and fuller

¹ "Bible Society's Reporter," December, 1893, p. 191.

¹ Genesis xi, 1.

maturity of speculation in supplying further confirmations of the general trustworthiness of the early books of Scripture.

First. The discovery of the Egyptian monuments, together with Egyptian research in other forms, has, as may be seen from the works of Brugsch and other leading students, completely established the historical truth of the Mosaic record as to the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, their forced labor there, and their flight therefrom.

Secondly. Some sixty years back, Doctor Whewell, in his *Bridgewater Treatise*, spoke with favor but with diffidence of the great theory of Laplace known as the nebular or rotary theory. During the intervening period it has won extensive acceptance in the scientific world, and appears, if not treated as a certainty, at least to hold the field without a present rival. It is in singular conformity with the cosmological account given in the first chapter of Genesis, to which I shall shortly return.

Thirdly. It has been pointed out that linguistic study, especially as to the tongues of the races principally treated of in the Bible, has traced them to a single root-speech, and to a single region, in remarkable correspondence with the statements of the Book of Genesis.

Fourthly. At the same time, and by a parallel movement, ethnological science has taken into view the dispersion and distribution of the human family, recorded in Genesis, chapter x. Tracing the relations between the peoples and eponymists there enumerated, and the eventual settlement of the great triform continent of Europe, Asia, and Africa, it has found in the chapter a striking correspondence with the leading facts of that ethnography. As an historical document, the chapter appears to stand without a peer among archaic monuments.

Fifthly. The discovery, in our own day, of the Samaritan Pentateuch, in actual use among certain descendants of that hybrid people, appears to place beyond doubt, not, of course, the Mosaic authorship of the books of the Torah as they stand, but their public use in their present general form, before the severance, in the tenth century B. C., of the northern from the southern kingdom. For the subsequent rivalry and so frequent enmity of the countries would surely have led to the exposure of any endeavor in either of them, by priests or others, to falsify or substantially change their general tenor.

Sixthly. It seems to be admitted that recent researches in the Holy Land, especially the survey by the British Royal Engineers, have confirmed even minutely the statements of the Pentateuch as to cities on the east of the

Jordan, whose existence the survey brought to light.

Seventhly, and lastly. The records of the Creation and the Flood contained in the Assyrian tablets give strong support to the Biblical narratives. The Creation story indeed loses that which in Genesis is its crowning glory, namely, the promulgation of the great doctrine of Creation. It also has a large admixture of inferior elements; and yet not sufficient to efface the undeniable marks of a kindred origin for the two. Both the Assyrian narratives carry certain marks of having proceeded from the same source with those of the Bible. And as they purport to be of a date approaching four thousand years before the Advent, and belong to a people familiar with the practice of regular record, they carry us up to a point nearer to the origin of our race than had before been historically attained. Belonging to a series, they have greater weight than could have attached to them as isolated narratives floating on the sea of time.

In the case of the Deluge, there are particulars on which a question may legitimately be raised as to the comparative accuracy of the two relations. This is a matter of small, if, indeed, of any, consequence in comparison with the confirmation furnished to what we must regard as the essential purport of the tradition. That is to say, that since the appearance of man upon the earth there has been a great penal judgment inflicted upon the race, in its Babylonian seat and perhaps in some wider range, for its sinfulness, by a terrible invasion of water, from which only a handful are known or believed to have escaped. The Creation legend, as has been said, proclaims itself as having departed sooner, and traveled far more widely, from the precious original.

V.

It has now become almost a matter of course, in any statement, however cursory, which deals with the Scriptures at large, to notice that great chapter, the first chapter of Genesis. It was long a favorite subject of attack, and defenders came to be somewhat disheartened and intimidated. But there has grown up in some, I trust in many minds, a conviction that this chapter is a great fortress of the Scriptures, not an open passage through which they may be advantageously assailed. We should, therefore, accept with satisfaction every proper occasion for noticing, however briefly, its main characteristics.

And at the very outset we ought to cast aside the poor and artificial shelter which some have sought in broadly distinguishing between spiritual matters and matters physical, in which last it is said it was not the design of

Scripture to furnish us with an education. Nor is it. But spiritual facts may have a physical side, and facts physical a spiritual side; nor can a sharp or defensible line be drawn between them. The Ascension, the Resurrection, even the Incarnation of Christ, involved strongly physical elements, and such a plea of defense as I have mentioned is one highly dangerous if not fatal to their authority. Even so the announcement of Creation in this great chapter, to mention nothing else, besides being a physical fact, is one of the greatest and most pregnant moral facts in the whole Bible. Renouncing all subterfuge, let us boldly point out the superlative claims and the hardly measurable value of the chapter. Each leading point must, however, be dismissed in a few words.¹

First. The doctrine of Creation, that is the production of matter without any material antecedent, is set in the very forefront of the chapter. And here, as in the case of monotheism, the treasure of this truth is enshrined exclusively in the Scriptures. The great philosophers of old time could not come at it; but the babes and sucklings (for such they were in learning) of the Hebrew race had it, through this inestimable chapter, for a household word. The Psalter, for example, is saturated with it from end to end. The creation of man is a moral fact of the very highest importance. It establishes the title of the Almighty to rule over us, and to dispose of us in a manner which without this doctrine it would be difficult to establish or even to comprehend. It may be added that when once the doctrine of Creation has been firmly founded, every such question as those recently raised and now afloat concerning the possibility of miracle seems to become trivial and even frivolous. What exercise of divine power can we presume to exclude, when we have embraced this sublime and wholly transcendental act as an elementary fact of our religion?

Secondly. The highest peculiarity of the chapter is, perhaps, this: that it propounds, from man and to man, not as speculation or mere opinion, but as authoritative fact, what happened in the heavens and the earth before man himself existed. It has been said that either this was known by scientific inquiry, or by divine revelation.²

There is, indeed, a third alternative, that of hardy and fortunate imposture, but it has not

¹ The main considerations associated with Genesis i-ii, 4, are more fully treated in my small work, "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" (Revised Edition, 1892).

² "The Bible, Science and Faith," by the Rev. Mr. Zahm, Professor of Physics in the University of Notre Dame, Baltimore, 1894, p. 30.

been put into the field, and need not be considered. The idea of scientific inquiry is absolutely inapplicable to a period thousands of years before men dreamt of examining the crust of the earth, to say nothing of its total incongruity with the habits and pursuits of the Hebrew race. What genius and culture did not elsewhere attain could not have been learned by research in a case where genius and culture for such purposes did not exist. And how could science, which presumes all along the anterior existence of man and of the material order, have had the means of learning how that material order originally came into being? There was no *pou sto*, no point of departure from which it could begin to operate.

Thirdly. As a chapter of practical and religious teaching, scientific completeness forms no part of its aim. Its truly rational method is to use such language as shall be most communicative. Hence it makes no definite allusion to the great Reptile age, which had ceased to be represented in nature such as it was presented to primitive man. Hence, again, it speaks of the moving of the spirit on the waters, where the elements of water had not yet been disentangled and combined, but by the word water was conveyed effectually and simply the idea of fluid with motion, as distinct from what is stationary and solid.¹ Fishes and birds are associated together, but placed in their true order of priority. Both are made anterior to the land population. A like orderly succession had been maintained in regard to diffused light, to sea and land, to the concentration of the heavenly bodies severally, and to life in its three great forms as vegetable, animal, and spiritual. Evolution, the darling of our age, has the first chapter of Genesis for its parent source.

Fourthly. Referring the origin of man and animals to a common source, the chapter lays the foundations of duty to the brute creation, which was recognized in the Mosaic law, but not by the ancient world at large. It elevated the conception of duty to the Most High by the special parentage assigned (in verses 26, 27) to the human race. It exhibited the fond and elaborate care with which, through a long succession of stages, God had prepared for man, as a favored child, the home in which he was set down, and which was declared to be "very good."

Fifthly. Objectors have fondly dwelt on the use of the word day, and its sharp division into "the evening" and "the morning," as totally

¹ One modern writer substitutes for the word water "a surging chaos," and another "uncompounded, homogenous, gaseous condition"; truly hopeful modes of conveying instruction to the mind of infantine, primeval man.

inapplicable to the vast periods deemed to have been required for the operations noted in the chapter. But —

(1) The main question is, whether the phrase was well adapted to convey to the infant mind of man that division of the great work into successive stages which was the main idea required to be conveyed, and which, as we see from the subsequent Scriptures, was clearly conveyed to and retained by the Hebrew race, and by no other race on earth. The power of numeration, even as high as to a thousand, was very imperfectly possessed by all or some races of men as late as the time of Homer. In our own day, large numbers are really conventional symbols, rather than the vehicles of clear ideas; they simply confuse the mind of a child, and in a great degree baffle that of a grown man.

(2) It is noteworthy that, contrary to our common usage, the evening precedes instead of following the morning. It seems to be among the proofs of the commanding influence of this chapter that this appears as the Jewish usage both throughout the Scriptures and down to the present day. And this form appears to be the one which, according to the theory of rotation, is correct. For the first possible marking or notation of time in connection with light would be its diminution on the side of the earth turned away from the central solar mass, and the second when with an increase of luminosity that side again came to face the (incipient) sun. It would be very easy, did space permit, to deal with any other objection which has been taken to the use in the Mosaic narrative of a phrase which has proved its efficacy for its proper purpose by the results exhibited in the literature and usages of the Jews.

(3) If we hold that the days of the great chapter are not periods of twenty-four hours, but are themselves chapters of action capable of overlapping, rather than of mere horological time, this is not a denial that the several stages might have been accomplished in any number of our chronic hours, however small, had it so pleased the Almighty Father. It is because the analogy of nature, which teaches us his ordinary method of operation, points to the prolongation of complex and diversified processes over considerable periods of time as being usual, and we prefer the construction of the word which is agreeable to such analogy.

(4) It is a gross error to suppose that the Christian Church has ever tied itself to the opinion which treats these days as days of twenty-four hours. In the very first ages of the literature of the Church, different teachers and different schools freely and without reproach promulgated different interpretations. This has been well shown in America during

the present year, in the work of Professor Zahn already quoted (chapters ii-iv). So that the question was an open one, and never at any period, I believe, has there been an attempt at an authoritative construction of the passages. And now let us thankfully review the security of the position which the Bible, and especially the great chapter, holds in relation to present or possible research and its results.

Suppose for a moment that it were found, or came to be granted in the argumentation of science, that the first and lowest forms of life had been evolved from lifeless matter as their immediate antecedent. What statement of Holy Scripture would be shaken by the discovery? What would it prove to us, except that there had been given to certain inanimate substances the power, when they were brought into certain combinations, of reappearing in some of the low forms which live, but live without any of the worthier prerogatives of life? No conclusion would follow for reasonable men, except the perfectly rational conclusion that the Almighty had seen fit to endow with certain powers in particular circumstances, and to withhold from them, in all other circumstances, the material elements which he had created, and for which it was surely for him to determine the conditions of existence and of productive power, and the sphere and manner of their operation?

Or again, if we are to suppose (a question on which no opinion need be given) that the years allowed by the chronology of Holy Scripture from the Deluge to the Advent, or from the Creation to the Deluge, are proved by the facts of prehistoric date, which have been supplied through archæology or otherwise, to be fewer than are required according to sound analogies for the occurrences recorded, in what respect need we be discomposed? It has, or it should have been, notorious to us all that the Hebrew text, the translation known as the Septuagint, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, supply three different chronologies, as between which there are no materials for conclusive or authoritative decision. As they differ so that their figures of time cannot all be reconciled, it is plain that no theory of infallibility, however aspiring, will protect them from legitimate criticism. And what right have we to assert, should evidence to the contrary be produced, that the gap between the longest and the shortest has touched the extreme limit which, did we know them, might be supplied by the facts? As each asserts itself against the others, so the actual history might vary from them all, and establish a more extended — possibly even a much more extended — boundary.

Or again if, while Genesis¹ asserts a separate

¹ Genesis i, 26-28.

creation of man, science should eventually prove that man sprang, by a countless multitude of indefinitely small variations, from a lower, and even from the lowest ancestry, the statement of the great chapter would still remain undisturbed. For every one of those variations, however minute, is absolutely separate, in the points wherein it varies, from what followed and also from what preceded it; is, in fact and in effect, a distinct or separate creation. And the fact that the variation is so small that, taken singly, our use may be not to reckon it, is nothing whatever to the purpose. For it is the finiteness of our faculties which shuts us off by a barrier downward (beyond a certain limit) from the small, as it shuts us off by a barrier upward from the great; whereas, for him whose faculties are infinite, the small and the great are, like the light and the darkness, "both alike,"¹ and, if man came up by innumerable stages from a low origin to the image of God, it is God only who can say, as he has said in other cases, which of those stages may be worthy to be noted with the distinctive name of creation, and at what point of the ascent man could first be justly said to exhibit the image of God.

Or, let us open another topic. Let us suppose ourselves confronted with the Quaternary or geological man, and challenged to declare whether a being, if only lodged in a form generally corresponding as to limbs and cranium with our own, is recognized by us as belonging to that family of man which was made in the image of God.² Our answer is plain. We have no means of knowing what the geological man may have been in respect to that vital condition which stamps his nature as a nature conformable to the Mosaic description. When science supplies us with those means, it will be time enough for us to meet the challenge. We shall then know whether he had the spiritual, as well as the animal and intelligent life; whether, with circumstantial resemblances, he was apart from us as to essence, or whether we are essentially as well as circumstantially one. He may have been only on his way to that condition which the words of Scripture so beautifully describe. Certain animals, as we know, are endowed with high, and might conceivably be endowed with higher intelligence. Bishop Butler treats them as not absolutely beyond the possibility of being raised to a level with ourselves. There might be beings with higher endowments than any now enjoyed by any creature less elevated than man, and yet who, notwithstanding, might not be capable of attaining to the supreme gift which in some sense allies our nature with Deity. For

example: Man is nowhere more clearly severed from the lower orders of the animal creation than as a tool-making animal. A tool-making creature, in the form of a man, would have a position higher than that of any known animal; but can we declare it impossible that there might be such a creature, who nevertheless should not come within the conditions which would declare him to be one created in the image of his maker?

I have dwelt most largely on the value of the great chapter for the purpose of establishing theistic and Christian faith. But we may gladly bear in mind that it was probably given for purposes still higher than those of any controversy or contention, however sacred. While it taught primitive man the doctrine of one God, it also powerfully tended to establish him in his true filial relation to the great Being it had revealed. He saw around him an abundant provision made for his subsistence, his comfort, his childlike delights. He learned something of what he owed to his Almighty Father. And if the great teachings of this chapter were from the first made known to him, they probably gave him all the knowledge which he had faculties to receive, while they trained and disciplined his mind for apprehending more. They contained not a word to darken the pure atmosphere in which he lived. They exhibited to him the march of onward and upward progress, which, so far as our limited faculties instruct us, would seem to be the normal condition of man, when launched on the right lines of progress, as the highest earthly work of God. From this point of view, the chapter might almost in its simple sublimity be termed the Gospel of Paradise.

VI.

There has been a disposition, due, it would appear, rather to zeal than to a prudent estimate of the position, which has led many to maintain the absolute accuracy and truth of every word contained in the book which we properly term the Sacred Volume. But this, like other works, has had to undergo many risks to which other vehicles of human knowledge are subject when in the course of transmission from people to people, and from age to age. The earliest traditions of all may have been orally handed on. When they passed into writing, and afterward into print (which has neutralized many of the previously existing risks), the business of custody and of copying and the special necessity of translating a book intended, after a preliminary season, for all mankind, were matters such that an absolute immunity from casual errors could only have been obtained, in this or any other case,

¹ Psalm cxxxix, 12. ² Genesis i, 26.

by a standing miracle. But such an intervention of miracle none have been hardy enough to assert. The question in dispute, therefore, disappears, and absolute inerrability cannot be maintained. Not that such a provision might not have been made, had God in his wisdom so seen fit. It would, however, not have been in keeping with the ordinary conditions of the dispensations under which we live; and, both here and elsewhere, it is the sufficiency, rather than the absolute mechanical perfection, of the provisions made by God for the attainment of his purposes, on which we have to rely.

In this case, however, we are not left to the operation of mere presumptions for the determination of the case. We have to meet the broad fact that there are before us two texts at least of the Hebrew Scriptures, which are rivals in authority. The one is in the original tongue; but the other, the translation of the Septuagint, was made from manuscripts far older than any of those from which our Hebrew Bible is derived. The differences are sometimes irreconcilable. But both authorities are cited, apparently with indifference, by our Lord and by his apostles. Where they differ in substance, we cannot suppose the two to be equally authentic, or there would be two channels of infallibility instead of one. Here, then, we have the existence of some forms of error, smaller or greater, established beyond doubt. Even if an explanation could be found for such a conflict, it could not cover the case of the three chronologies. The principal differences attach to the period between Adam, or the Creation, and the emigration of Abram from Haran. For this the Septuagint¹ gives a period of 3,279 years; the Hebrew, 2,023; and the Samaritan text, 2,324. It is almost as difficult to place in any other category the differences as to certain genealogies. Next to them may be specified numerical statements bearing upon their face the highest probability of an error of copyists, commonly by exaggeration. The numbers assigned to the children of Israel when they quitted Egypt²—600,000³ on foot that were men, besides children—may be quoted as an instance, and others could be readily supplied. It seems not impossible that while the introduction of errors in numerical statements is peculiarly common and easy (most of all when numerals, as in Hebrew, are designated by letters), the particular direction of these errors may be partly due to the bias of Jewish patriotism.

¹ "Smith's Bible Dictionary," Art. Chronology.

² Exodus xii, 37.

³ A number raised to over two millions by reckoning those males who could not walk, and also the females. "Speaker's Commentary" *in loc.* and "Student's Bible," do.

Again, there are instances where no phrase aiming at scientific accuracy would have conveyed an intelligible idea, and an expression in itself imperfect supplied the only vehicle available for reaching the apprehension of the race in its infancy. Such is the case of Genesis i, 2, already noticed. Among the well-known cases are those in which the movement of the sun and the immobility of the earth are described, and those which speak of corporal organs in connection with the Almighty.

We may proceed a step farther to notice, by way of example, those passages of the Psalms which, if literally and grammatically construed, might be held to affirm a real existence for the gods of the heathen. For we are told that God "is a judge among gods";¹ again, "worship him, all ye gods";² and once more, "thou art exalted far above all gods";³ while we know from other Psalms that "the gods of the heathen are but idols," "the work of men's hands."⁴

Reasons have already been given why we should decline on behalf of such passages to accept, when they will bear it, the unsafe excuse, not always true as matter of dry fact, that they refer to such departments of knowledge as lie beyond the scope of the Scripture revelation. This idea is capable of a just application, but partially and by no means universally. Let us frankly and fearlessly accept the comparatively few inaccuracies of the text as they stand; they make no sensible deduction either from the value or from the efficacy of the Bible. It is not in these matters that we touch any serious portion of the case. The objector advances his principal line of battle when he brings together from the pages of the Old Testament a list of acts which, as he thinks, offend the moral sense, but which, in some of the cases, are passed without censure, and in others even attract emphatic praise. Such are the sacrifice of Isaac, the reception by Rahab of the spies who were hostile to her country, and the slaughter of Sisera by Jael; a list to which I will only add the destruction by Jehu of the Baal worshipers. I need not touch the cases on which the Bible passes no judgment; and any notice taken here of these grave matters must be slight and insufficient.

I pass by the case of Abraham with these remarks only: that he, who probably had learned through the tradition of Enoch that God had modes of removal for his children other than death, may well have believed that some such method would at the critical moment

¹ Psalm lxxxii, 1.

² Psalm xcvi, 7. See also Psalms lxxxix, 7; xcvi, 4; cxxxvi, 3; cxxxviii, 1.

³ Psalm xcvi, 9.

⁴ Psalms xcvi, 7; cxxxv, 15.

be devised for Isaac; and that what is commended in him by the Bible is not the intention to slay his own son with his own hand, but¹ the ready assent to the privation he was to undergo in the frustration of the promise that the Messianic line should descend from him. But I will dwell upon the case of Jael, because, although she is not commended in the New Testament among the witnesses of faith, she is emphatically praised by Deborah the prophetess; and because, on the other hand, she is commonly made the subject of the severest and most unqualified censure; as though, from the objector's point of view, the case admitted of no discussion. The swoop and haste of these judgments perhaps mainly serve to show with what laxity questions are sometimes handled, when the matter at issue is only thought to be the honor of Almighty God.

It is urged, however, that her conduct displayed the extreme of violence combined with the extreme of deceit, and with the profanation of the laws of hospitality, against a man with whom she and hers, the house of Heber the Kenite, had no quarrel.

This, as a bare statement of fact, is mainly true. But, on the other hand, and as regards social duty, was not the first social duty of Jael rather to the children of Israel—her family being derived from Jethro the father-in-law of Moses—than to Sisera, with whom she had no other than a negative relation? Was not Sisera the chief agent and representative of a power which was seeking by war to extirpate or enslave the Israelites? Did Jael, or did Sisera, create the dilemma? And what were the alternatives set before her by the act of Sisera? He demanded shelter; he required of her² that she should deny his presence in her house, and should use against those who were first entitled to her sympathies the instrument of falsehood which she turned against him. Surely all the reason of the case was not on the side of this demand! What were the alternatives before her if she complied with it? The victorious Israelites were in hot pursuit; and Barak's path lay by her house. As a lone woman she was in no condition to refuse him entry to her house altogether. Had she denied the presence of Sisera, as he required, and had her house been searched, her life must obviously have fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance of the victors; nay, rather to their just resentment. Had they waived the search, and had Sisera in consequence made good his way to Hazor, with what purpose would he have gone there? Certainly, and from his point of view justly, he must have gone there still to fight his people's battle; that is to say, again to

carry fire and sword, at the earliest practicable moment, through the homes of Israel. Had she no duty to her own flesh and blood? none to the people in whose land she dwelt, and with whom by her husband's descent she stood in bond of sacred alliance? She knew, too, that Sisera and his friends were laid under the curse, as inhabitants of Canaan, which God had laid upon that people for their wickedness; so that except by disobedience to God the Israelites were under a general command to withhold from them clemency in war. I do not prosecute this branch of the subject, which sometimes is so handled as to involve the assumption that no amount of wickedness could warrant the extinction of the nation involved in it.

Now, I submit that what has been said shows that there were very grave difficulties in this case from whatever point of view it may be regarded. I have cited a statement of it wholly adverse to Jael. Let me put the case in her favor. There was war—a war of extermination. When she was compelled to take a side, she rightly took the side of those with whom she had special ties. She slew a man, but it was a man who, more than any other, was the life and soul of the war against those whom she had made her own people. She slew him in her own house; but it was not she who brought him there. She sacrificed his life for her folk. He had desired her to expose her own life for him. She slew him with deceit and falsehood. But these are of the essence of stratagem in war, and could the Israelites, or those denizens who took their part, be expected to refrain from them?

I think that, viewing the question with the modern eye, we might say that there was no course open to Jael which was in all respects satisfactory. Dr. James Mozley, who stands in the first rank of English theology for the present century, has given us a masterly discussion of this subject in the sixth of his "Lectures on the Old Testament."¹ It was evidently a case of conflicting duties. Human life furnishes from day to day abundant minor examples of such cases; and there are many of them, for which, with our limited faculties, we can find no satisfactory solution. Dr. Mozley observes justly (p. 150) that with admiration there must here be mingled a certain repugnance; something rises up within us against the act. The same observation applies to-day in the more difficult of the cases where conflict of opposing duties has arisen. Difficulty for us only springs up when we contemplate the glowing and unqualified eulogy of Deborah.² But that eulogy was pronounced under a

¹ Hebrews xi, 17.

² Judges iv, 17-20.

¹ London, 1877.

² Judges v, 24-26.

partial and progressive revelation; under a system where the Almighty, in that earlier stage of human experience, authorized and enjoined modes of action toward public enemies such as have never found a sanctioned place under the Christian system. In this view, we are little concerned with the case.

Let us state the upshot in the form least favorable to our estimate of the Bible. The sacred book states in bare outline, and at various epochs approves, certain acts in whole or in part irreconcilable, so far as we see, with the law of Christian love. It only indicates, and does not give us the advantage of knowing, the contemporary argument in defense. These acts are, in perhaps the most difficult case, analogous to acts which are now produced in times of violence, and which, being so produced, do not draw down the censure of mankind. Admit that they leave a moral difficulty unexplained. It is in a volume which, taken as a whole, bears a testimony, comprehensive, wonderful, and without rival, to truth and righteousness. How are we to treat the case? I answer by an illustration. Suppose I am reading a work full of algebraic equations, which I find to be a sound and masterly book. But at length I arrive at one which I cannot wholly solve, cannot wholly comprehend. Should I on this account renounce and condemn the book? No; I should reserve it in hope of a complete solution in the future. This seems to be the mode which is dictated alike by reverence and good sense, not only in the case of the Holy Bible, but in regard to the mysterious problems which encounter us when our eyes traverse the field of human destinies at large. We know the abundant richness of the gift we hold and enjoy; as to the small portion of light at present withheld, we contentedly abide our time. Nor let our appreciation of Holy Scripture in any respect be cooled by our becoming conscious that the light it sheds was less full in old Hebrew days than when the fullness of time had come. The slight and hardly perceptible points of difficulty in Holy Writ are doubtless meant, like the far more obtrusive difficulties presented by the face of the world and of life, for the trial, enlargement, and corroboration of the principle of faith in the minds of believing Christians, and thereby for the greater excellence and happiness of men, and the more abundant glory of God as redounding from it.

The Christian apologist need entertain no fear in probing to the very bottom any and all objections advanced, on whatever grounds, against the divine inspiration of the Bible. He cannot claim a mathematical exactitude for every proposition it contains. This is quite plain from what has been already stated, as to

matters of fact. Even in the New Testament we find that inspired utterances appear to have been subject, at least in certain cases, to critical and corrective judgment. Saint Paul informs us that God had appointed various officers in the Church, among whom were prophets; and these prophets appear to have ranked near to the apostles.¹ He tells us that, in the delivery of what was supplied to them, their free agency was not altogether excluded; for, says the apostle, "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets,"² and accordingly the utterances delivered by one prophet were not exempt from animadversion by his brethren: for again we have, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge" (in the Revised Version, "discern"); that is to say, discriminate, and consequently, if need be, rectify.³ The notable case of Agabus bears upon this subject. In the name of the Holy Ghost he prophesied that if Saint Paul went up to Jerusalem the Jews would bind him and deliver him to the Gentiles.⁴ Saint Paul did go to Jerusalem. The Jews, in an uproar, were about to kill him; but the Romans rescued him by force from their fury, bound him with two chains and then, having saved his life, proceeded to the examination of his case.⁵ The substance of the prophecy, as to the danger to Saint Paul's life, was fully verified; but the incidents were materially changed. It may be that, in very early stages of the divine dispensation, there was no such careful provision as in the Corinthian Church against what we may term undigested prophecy. To say that by such provision an element of uncertainty is introduced into the divine Word would be a futile criticism. Elements of uncertainty, in the strict meaning of the words, we have already noticed. But we have also seen, bounding, tempering, and overruling them all, the radiancy of the Divine Spirit, which has flooded the Holy Scriptures with a supply of light that our experience, now reaching over several thousand years, has proved to be fully adequate to all the needs of mankind. And this is the rock that may still and ever be justly termed impregnable.

VII.

After this review, it may now be time to sum up the situation, and also to seek a moment's refreshment in turning from topics more or less polemical to such as are practical.

The Holy Scriptures have for the last hundred years resembled a beleaguered town, with the shouts of the foeman and the roar of his artillery sounding round the walls. It would

¹ I. Corinthians xii, 28. ² I. Corinthians xiv, 32.

³ I. Corinthians xiv, 29.

⁴ Acts xxi, 10, 11.

⁵ Acts xxi, 30, *seq.*

be most unjust, and not less absurd, to apply such a description, or anything approaching it, to a reverent criticism, however acute might be its vision, however searching its processes, or whatever effect they might have had in disintegrating the sacred volume. For the Bible must, on account of its human dress, come under literary treatment, and of that treatment truth, and not comfort or quietude, must be the aim. But the penetrating character of the diagnosis pursued by a skilled physician detracts nothing from the tenderness of his regard either for the character or the feelings of his patient; at least if, besides being a clever, he is also a judicious and right-minded man. Now, dividing roughly assailants from defenders, admitting fully, with respect to the modern critics that, until they show themselves otherwise, they are to be considered as assailants only of the form and not the spirit of the Bible, we may still ask whether their tone and temper, speaking generally, has been such, say, for example, in Germany, as the Christian community was entitled not only to desire but to demand? Have they proceeded under the influence of sentiment such as would govern one who was endeavoring either to wipe away external impurities or to efface spurious manipulations, from some great work of a famous artist? Not the mind only, but the finger also, of such a man is guided by tenderness and reverence throughout. And, in the case of the Holy Scriptures, to tenderness and reverence there should be added an ever-living sense of gratitude for the work which they have performed and are performing in the world. Has this been the prevailing and dominating spirit of the critical negations of the last half century? Sweeping judgments, in answer to such a question, are not to be delivered without breach of propriety and of charity, except by students both widely and accurately versed in the subject matter. A very limited acquaintance with the critical literature certainly does not show me, within my own narrow bounds, that the negative school carefully eschews precipitancy and levity; that it never seems to betray a desire for the negative conclusion rather than the affirmative; that it handles what it deems sick and sore places as children would deal with them in an afflicted parent; that reverence is the keynote of its tone.¹ Glad shall I be, if

¹ I do not know the latest American literature on the subject of the higher critics; but in Britain we have had two important though not bulky publications.

Sir W. Muir, Principal of Edinburgh University, the highest British authority on all that relates to the "origin" of the Mohammedan religion, arguing by analogy, with due circumspection and reserve, from his own comprehensive researches to the case of the Book of Deuteronomy, condemns the theory of Wellhausen

better informed and more competent judges be able to render a different and more satisfactory account.

But be this as it may, and however grave at the present day may be the general assault upon belief, with which Bible criticism ought to have nothing in common, the impression made upon me by the experience of life is that, wherever religion is alive, the Bible has not lost any of its power. I am not now contemplating its office as a corrector of error, as a tribunal of appeal upon soundness of doctrine and of practice, but am considering it entirely with reference to what may be termed its pastoral office; to that declaration of the Apostle which apprises us that all Scripture given by inspiration of God (I am now assuming that the lately revised English version has in this passage improved upon the old one) is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.¹ This was to Timothy, who from a child had known the Scriptures of the older covenant, which were able to make him "wise unto salvation"²—that is, unto hearty reception of the faith of Christ. And if the books of the Old Testament, laden with the several difficulties of which we hear so much, could accomplish so great a work, what must not be the wealth, and what the capabilities, of the Scriptures of the New Covenant, with their larger, brighter and more disentangled revelation?

I have referred to the vast multiplication of copies of the Sacred Scriptures through Bible societies and otherwise. If we turn to other portions of the Christian fold than those principally concerned with Bible societies, we must not forget to observe that free and full circulation of the Holy Scriptures was the rule and practice of the entire Christian Church, until in the course of the sixteenth century jealousies due to the controversies of the time produced, as it would appear, a change of policy in the Latin Church. I have myself purchased in Athens a cheap copy of the tract of Saint Chrysostom, in which he presses upon the laity

as against all the evidence, and every likelihood of the case.

A still more direct thrust is administered by Dr. W. L. Baxter, the minister of a charge in St. Andrews. In some very concise tracts, bearing the title, "One God, One Sanctuary—Is Wellhausen Right?" he examines with apparently merciless care and precision the contention of Wellhausen that the unification of the Hebrew religion at a single center was never heard of until the reign of Josiah, and was only after the Exile solidly and permanently established. He not only overthrows the doctrine and reduces it to dust, but appears to convict the critic of faults so gross as to suffice for destroying any literary or scientific reputation. This publication appeared in April, 1894. Unless and until it is answered, it seems to exclude any and every appeal to Wellhausen as an authority. (December, 1894.)

¹ II. Timothy iii, 16.

² II. Timothy iii, 15.

the study of the Scriptures and contests the arguments of those indisposed to forward it. This tract was published with the countenance of the Archbishop. I also possess a beautiful copy of the Gospels and Acts, in a pocket size, printed at Venice in 1544, and another of the same character, also printed at Venice in 1536; both of them without note or comment. In truth, the amount of diffusion of the sacred volume from the era of the invention of printing down to the Reformation is even astonishing. They were translated and printed in almost every European tongue, except the Russian. Germany had no less than sixteen complete versions. In France the Versions and Epitomes, taken together, amounted to twenty. England lagged deplorably, and had nothing before Tyndale: for the great work of Wycliffe was never printed until half of the nineteenth century had gone by. We must hope that the appreciation of the teaching and feeding efficacy of the Bible is on the increase; and that any jealousies associated either with the grave difficulties of translation, or with the possibility that perverse minds may now treat the sacred books as the Epistles of Saint Paul were treated in the apostolic age, are being gradually abated. Why should the dutiful perusal of the Bible raise any apprehension on behalf of the Church, or Kingdom of God, which is asserted with so much force in important portions of the Old Testament, and set forth, or presupposed, in almost every page of the New? Does it not seem that God has consigned to us a double witness in the living voice which proclaims that word throughout the world, and in the unalterable record which provides for maintaining the harmony of that living human voice with the divine purpose. Not, indeed, that the Bible has either converted the world, or saved Christianity from all error and corruption, any more than it has saved Christians from all sin. But, of the actual faith and love that subsist in the Christian heart, despite the world, the flesh, and the devil, who can doubt that, over and above the corrective action of the Bible, there is a vast portion due to the direct influence, most of all perhaps among English-speaking peoples, of its words upon hearts and life?

It may, perhaps, be excused, if, before concluding, and before touching on the application of the Holy Scriptures to the inward life of civilized man at large, I venture, not without diffidence, to offer a few words to the class of which I have been a member for more than three score continuous years; the class engaged in political employment, and invested with so considerable a power in governing the affairs, and in shaping the destinies, of mankind. In my own country I have observed that those

who form this class have fallen under the influence of the negative or agnostic spirit of the day in a much smaller degree, than have some other classes. And, indeed, widening the scope of this observation, I would say, that the descriptions of persons who are habitually conversant with human motive, conduct, and concerns, are very much less borne down by scepticism than specialists of various kinds and those whose pursuits have associated them with the literature of fancy, with abstract speculation, or with the study, history, and framework of inanimate nature. So far, they are indeed happy in their lot. They are also to be congratulated on this, that the good they do has the privilege, as their evil deeds have the misfortune, of operating at once on the character, condition, and prospects, not of individuals only, but of large masses of their fellow creatures. They also enjoy a very great advantage, which, perhaps, they do not always duly appreciate, in the free and active, even if sometimes licentious, comments incessantly offered by the press and the public on their proceedings. More might be added in the same strain; but I forbear. Still, the distinctive features of their profession are not all of this rosy or favorable color. They are under peculiar temptations, not only to judge with undue severity the actions, but also to misconstrue and suspect the motives of those with whom they are in conflict or in contact. Both in self-defense and in the prosecution of their aims, which we may suppose to be generally lawful, they are open, in the choice of means, without any visible deviation from personal honor, to tamper in a thousand ways with their own essential integrity. Lastly, and all the more in proportion as they are men of reality and executive strength, they are liable, from the absorbing interest of their pursuit, and the imperious and, so to speak, domineering nature of its demands upon their faculties, to be reduced to a state of mental exhaustion, which, far more subtly than the mere want of leisure, deprives them of the mental energy necessary in order to discharge other difficult duties, or to face, and treat with searching judgment, complex or ensnaring problems or laborious inquiries.

It would appear, then, that they are called to a high but dangerous vocation, abounding in opportunities on the one hand and dangers on the other. The principle of probation, which applies to all men, has for them an application altogether peculiar, and they, even more than members of society in general, require to drink of that water, which, whosoever drinketh of, he shall never thirst again.¹

¹ John iv, 14.

The force of all these considerations is enhanced by the unequivocal tendency of the present, and probably, also, the coming time, both to multiply the functions of government and to carry them into regions formerly reserved to the understanding and conscience of the individual; so that their risks are greatly enhanced together with their rewards for fruitfulness in well doing. The alternative opened for them by the choice between good and evil is one of tremendous moment. True it is, that the New Testament deals in but scanty bulk with the specialties of their profession; but also true, that it sheds for their benefit a whole flood of light on the virtues of humility, charity, justice, and moral courage, without which their profession is a snare, and promises to them in its earnest and, if possible, systematic perusal the richest results of a happy experience:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." As they have lived and wrought, so they will live and work. From the teacher's chair and from the pastor's pulpit; in the humblest hymn that ever mounted to the ear of God from beneath a cottage roof, and in the rich, melodious choir of the noblest cathedral, "their sound is gone out into all lands and their words into the ends of the world."¹ Nor here alone but in a thousand silent and unsuspected forms will

¹ Psalm xix, 4.

they unweariedly prosecute their holy office. Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of Scripture find their way to the human soul as if embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by these words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary student opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil. And in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn, in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night season, upon the bed of sickness, and in the face of death, the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several and special messages, to heal and to soothe, to uplift and uphold, to invigorate and stir. Nay, more, perhaps, than this; amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market place, when every thought of every soul seems to be set upon the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest.

W. E. Gladstone

Howarden Castle
 Chester
 Oct-7. 94

BOOK I.

LITERATURE AND MANUSCRIPTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LITERATURE, BY PROF. A. H. SAYCE.

I.

HISTORY is usually defined as the record of the past actions of mankind. But the definition is either too wide or too narrow. It is too wide, because it is the actions of civilized man only that come within the range of the historian. Uncivilized man has left behind him no chronicle of his deeds. The stone weapon or the unbaked potsherd may tell us how he lived, and the shape of his skull may determine his kinship in race, but of his history, in any sense which the term can properly bear, they can tell us nothing. The definition, again, is too narrow, in that history ought to be something more than a mere record of human actions. It ought to aim at showing how these actions have sprung one out of the other, what were the motives which underlay them, and what is the influence that they have had upon the world. It ought further to reproduce as in a picture the social life of a civilized community, and above all the religious feelings and beliefs which have animated it. History, in short, is not only a record of the past actions of civilized man; it is also a picture of civilized man himself. But it is civilized man, not as a single individual, but as part of a state or a community; and the actions it describes, the life it depicts, are the common actions and common life of a civilized body of men.

There are, however, various modes of writing history. A history may be either a mere chronicle of past events arranged in a chronological order, or it may attempt to show the necessary sequence and inner connection of these events and to find, as it were, a single thread running through them all, or finally it may dwell more on the social forces that have brought the events about than upon the events themselves. One historian may be more interested in the wars and the foreign relations of a

nation than with the development of the people that compose it, while another may consider the external politics of a State of comparatively small importance and concentrate his attention to the social life that has existed within it. Or again a writer may make universal history his object rather than the history of particular nations, and marshal his facts with a view to their bearing on the general progress of civilization; or he may use history as a means of illustrating and enforcing some theory or doctrine, the events of the past being valuable to him only in so far as they seem to verify his views.

Few historians, indeed, are altogether free from the charge of suiting the facts of history to a preconceived theory. The first requisite of a historian is that he should be sympathetic, able to realize the life of the past and to sympathize with those who led it, and this almost necessarily compels him to take sides. The absolutely impartial historian is a man who keeps his feelings and sympathies in check, who holds his judgment in suspense, and regards everything in "the dry light" of intellect. But we are emotional as well as intellectual beings, and the "impartial" historian is therefore apt to be dull. He does not carry us along with him in his pictures of the past; they have no life in them, and the men he describes are mere names or abstractions inhabiting a world that is not our own. Grote's "History of Greece," written as it was to defend the author's theories of democracy, has wholly superseded the more intellectually accurate and sober-minded "History" of Thirlwall. Grote compels us to take sides for or against his heroes, and in so doing to realize the scenes and actions he describes.

Moreover, history which is absolutely "impartial" is likely to present us only with the

dry bones of the past, and thus to fail of its real end and object. History in the true sense of the word must be a good deal more than dry bones; the skeleton must be clothed with flesh before it can represent in any real manner the past actions of mankind. A "colorless" narrative may be all very well in criticism, but it is like a beautiful landscape in a thick fog. History deals with the lives and actions of living men, and unless it can make them instinct with life we shall get but little profit out of it.

It is not needful that the historian should always be conscious of the bias with which his history is written, of the theory and doctrine which underlie it. It may be that what German writers call the "tendency" of his work is unrecognized even by himself. At other times the work may be written with a full and deliberate consciousness of the moral to which it points. The author may set out with the intention of showing how history, when rightly interpreted, is a parable for our instruction, and how its lessons agree with the doctrines he wishes to inculcate. Such a use of history varies in degree from the discreetly veiled purpose of Gibbon to trace in the fall of the Roman empire the effects of Christianity down to the employment of the parable, where a fact of history may be taken to convey an ethical or religious lesson. The Jews of the Talmudic period specially delighted in employing history, or supposed history, in this way. In their hands what was termed Haggadah underwent a great development. History was transmuted into homiletic teaching, with the inevitable result that little care was taken as to whether the history were true or false. For homiletic purposes a legend was as serviceable as a narrative of actual facts—perhaps even more serviceable. It was not as history, but as a vehicle for conveying religious and moral truth, that the story was valuable, and so long, therefore, as religious and moral truth was conveyed, it mattered little whether it were also an exact relation of fact.

II.

This brings us to the question of the truth of history. Nowadays everybody allows that history ought to be a true record of facts, and that if it is untrustworthy it should not be regarded as history at all. The chief object which historical criticism has set before itself is to determine what portions of the history which has come down to us we may believe and what we ought to reject, and whether the documents in which the history is embodied are worthy of credit or not. An ancient book may be excellent reading, but if the statements contained in it are incorrect we cannot regard it as historical.

But the actual amount of error which is permissible in a historical work is much more difficult to settle. No human work can be perfect, much less a work on history. Even to-day we have only to read the newspapers in order to see how hard it is to learn the exact truth about the occurrences which are taking place, as it were, before our very eyes. It is a common experience in courts of law for thoroughly honest witnesses to contradict one another about simple matters of fact; how much more difficult must it be to arrive at the exact truth where the facts are no longer simple and where the passions and prejudices of numbers of men are involved! It is impossible for any historian to be sure that all his facts are correct. He has to depend upon human testimony, and human testimony is eminently fallible. Equally impossible is it for him to be certain that the inferences and conclusions which he draws from the facts are just. Even if the facts themselves are right, they still cannot be the whole of the facts. The historical record is necessarily imperfect; we can know it only in part, and the complexion we give to it must be imperfect also.

It is important to bear this in mind. Books have been written of late which seem to demand from the historians of the past a mathematical exactitude which the nature of the case renders impossible. All that we can require from a historical document is an honest account of what was known to the writer of it, and from the historian who makes use of the document a similarly honest representation of its statements. So long as the main facts are faithfully narrated we need not trouble ourselves about the accuracy of unimportant details. A document may be perfectly trustworthy, even though the critic can detect in it minor errors and inconsistencies. The sun does not shine less brightly upon the earth because there are spots upon its face.

Of course, it makes a considerable difference to the credibility of a narrative whether or not it was written down at the time when the events recorded in it actually occurred. Written testimony is better than oral testimony, and history when handed down by oral tradition alone is apt to become legendary. Where the history of an event has been embodied in contemporaneous literature we may feel assured it cannot be very wide of the truth.

The history of the past, or rather the documents in which that history has been preserved, can be verified in various ways. Chief among these ways is archæological discovery. Time after time it has happened that ancient monuments have been found which confirm the statements made in some old record. Our own century has been beyond all others fruitful in such

verifications. The East—the home of early civilization—has been yielding up its dead, and the decipherer has made them speak once more in living tones. First Egypt, then Assyria and Babylonia, and lastly the other lands of Western Asia and the Ægean Sea have been revealing their buried secrets and bringing a world to light the very memory of which has been well-nigh forgotten. The men of Egypt among whom the Israelites sojourned so long, the Assyrian monarchs who overthrew the kingdom of Samaria and demanded homage from Judah, the Babylonian conqueror who destroyed Jerusalem, can now be known and studied face to face. The Egyptian tombs have told us of the daily life, and thoughts, and beliefs of the subjects of the Pharaohs, the clay tablets of Nineveh have proved to be the relics of a richly stocked library, and we can read the very words which Nebuchadnezzar caused to be inscribed in honor of his god, or in which Cyrus described his conquest of Babylonia.

For the records of the Old Testament such archaeological discoveries are of inestimable value. Hitherto these records have stood alone, or almost alone; there was nothing with which to compare them, nothing whereby their statements could be checked or confirmed; and a free hand was consequently given to the critic to deal with them as he would. Now all this is changed, and one of the first and most important results of the discoveries which have been pouring in upon us during the last few years is the proof that Canaan was a land of readers and writers long before the Israelites entered it, and that the Mosaic age was one of high literary activity. So far as the use of writing is concerned, there is now no longer any reason for doubting that the earlier books of the Bible might well have been contemporaneous with the events they profess to record.

It is a long space of years that is covered by the books of the Old Testament—a still longer space that is covered by the history they contain. But it is a history through which runs a continuous thread of connection, binding its several links into a single chain. It has been said by a German thinker that the ultimate result of a philosophy of history is to show how God has worked in and upon men, guiding and educating them toward a fuller and truer revelation of himself and of his relations to them. If this is the end and object of a philosophy of history, then it is a philosophy of history which is to be found in the Old Testament. We are led up by it through the Law to the Prophets, and Prophecy dies with the Gospel on its lips.

III.

The Book of Genesis sets before us the dawn of civilized life. Adam or "Man" has come

to know what is good and what is evil, and must henceforth depend on his newly-gained knowledge in his struggle for existence in the world. Hardly has he left Paradise behind him when the arts and sciences take their start, and man learns that if he would rise above the level of the brute he must wring from nature her secrets and her bounties with the sweat of the brow. But his civilization is external only; his inner being is unaffected by it; and the luxury and conveniences with which he has surrounded himself serve merely to lead him farther away from his Creator and to give him greater opportunities for crime. "The wickedness of man was great in the earth"; so the flood came and swept it away. From the heights of Ararat a single family descended to people once more the purified land of Asia and to hand on the traditions of the past.

It is around Babylon in the plain of Shinar that the records of post-diluvian man first gather. The beginnings of a history which was to end with the establishment of the Christian Church are on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. Here was the starting-point of the civilization and culture which spread through Western Asia and had so powerful an influence, first upon the people of Canaan and then upon their Hebrew conquerors. Here, too, the Semitic race, to which the Hebrews belonged, first acquired the elements of art and learning and founded the earliest Semitic power the world had seen.

This art and learning had been the creation of a race which was not Semitic. The inventors of the cuneiform system of writing, the builders of the great cities of Babylonia, the pioneers of Asiatic civilization were a people who spoke an agglutinative language like that of the modern Turks or Finns. They have been called Sumerians and Akkadians by scholars; what they called themselves we do not precisely know. But they were the teachers of those Semitic tribes who had settled in their neighborhood and who soon exchanged the life of shepherds for that of traders and merchants in the large towns. A time came when the Semite was predominant in the land, and Sargon of Akkad, in the gray dawn of history, not only made himself supreme in Babylonia, but carried his victorious arms to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The populations of Western Asia were fused into a single empire from the mountains of Elam in the east as far as "the land of the Amorites"—or Syria and Palestine—in the west. Naram-Sin, the son of Sargon, extended yet farther the limits of his father's kingdom. He marched his armies along the road afterward trodden by Chedorlaomer, and subdued "the country of Magan," the Midian and Sinaitic peninsula of later

days. Here the Chaldean conqueror found himself confronted by another great civilized power which had arisen on the banks of the Nile. The two civilizations met and joined hands together, and from henceforth that corner of the globe which has been the scene of the most momentous events of biblical history was permeated by the civilizing influences that flowed alike from both.

But the influence of Babylonia largely exceeded that of Egypt. Shut up within her wall of deserts, Egypt was too self-contained to care about spreading her gifts of knowledge and culture very widely. Babylonia, on the other hand, naturally looked westward. Its great road of commerce ran through Haran—"the high road"—toward the Mediterranean; eastward were only the inhospitable mountains of Elam and Kurdistan, with unknown hordes of barbarians beyond. Moreover, though the empire of Sargon of Akkad passed away, the memory of it was never forgotten. Up to the age of Abraham the kings of Babylonia claimed also to be rulers of Palestine. And the claim had a foundation in fact, as is now clear from the cuneiform tablets which have been found at Tel el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt. They prove that the influence of Babylonian culture upon Canaan and the rest of Western Asia had been deep and lasting. Everywhere the cuneiform system of writing had been adopted, with its cumbrous and complicated syllabary; everywhere, too, was the Babylonian language taught and learned, and the Babylonian literature studied. Babylonian traditions and beliefs penetrated to the frontiers of Egypt, and the deities of Babylonia were worshiped in the cities of Canaan. The empire of Sargon of Akkad, which had been won by force of arms, was succeeded by the more enduring empire of Babylonian civilization and ideas.

It was in the midst of the civilization and culture of Babylonia that Abraham was born. The road he was summoned to traverse to the west had already been traversed by Babylonian generals, officials and merchants. Between Ur, his birthplace, and Haran, his half-way resting station, there was a special bond of union. Ur was the chief seat of the worship of the Babylonian Moon-god; its other chief seat was Haran. The worship of the god had been carried to Haran by the Babylonians, and the temple in which it was carried on there had been founded by them. In passing to Haran, therefore, the family of the Hebrew patriarch would still have found itself in familiar scenes and among its friends. It was not there, accordingly, that it was destined to dwell. The nations which spring from Abraham were to have their habitation farther west, farther away from the influences of Babylonian

polytheism and the allurements of Babylonian life.

But we must never forget that Babylonia thus forms the background of the history of the patriarchs and therewith of Israelitish history. The Ur in which Abraham was born, the Haran in which he dwelt for a while, the Canaan in which his body rested, were all alike in the possession of the same culture, the same literature, and the same script. The civilization in the midst of which he had been brought up met him equally in that distant land of the West to which he had gone. Even the language of his boyhood was known to the educated classes of the country of his adoption.

One of the first acts he was called upon to perform in his new home was to help in resisting a Babylonian invasion. The acceptance of Babylonian culture did not imply an equally ready acceptance of Babylonian rule on the part of the native princes of Canaan. And in quitting Ur, Abraham had left behind him his Babylonian citizenship. In Canaan he became as one of the Canaanites, fighting their battles for them and paying tithes out of the spoil to the priest-king of Jerusalem.

God's call had come to Abraham in Haran, but it was not until he had reached the Promised Land that a divine covenant was made with him. Now for the first time it was declared that Palestine should pass into the hands of that chosen seed of the patriarch in whom all the earth would be blessed. The civilization and conquests of Babylonia had prepared the way for the announcement of the promise; but a long period of time had yet to elapse before the promise could be fulfilled. One by one the descendants of Abraham had to be tried and sifted, before the one selected line could be finally established; Ishmaelites, Arabs of the South, and Edomites might claim kinship with the chosen race, but it was not for them that the divine covenant had been made. Had the Israelites been as their kinsfolk there would have been no Law and no Prophets, no Jewish Church, no Messianic hope. Modern science teaches us that a race improves through a process of natural selection; so, too, through a process of divine selection, the Israelitish people were set apart for the work they were intended to fulfill.

IV.

It has long been the fashion to speak of Abraham and the other patriarchs as Bedouin sheiks. But the comparison gives a wholly wrong idea of what they really were. There are Bedouin sheiks, indeed, who spend the larger part of their lives in towns, and are as civilized and cultured as the generality of their neighbors. It is not, however, of men like these that the writer and reader usually think

when they describe Abraham as a "great Bedouin chief." It is rather of the half-civilized nomad, who lives by rapine and the precarious products of his flocks, whose natural home is in the desert, and who is free from the restraints of civilized life. Such a conception of the Hebrew patriarchs would be wholly incorrect. They lived, it is true, for the most part in tents; they moved from one part of the country to the other; but they were in no sense uncivilized wanderers. They were brought up in the very midst of Babylonian culture, and lived among those who were thoroughly imbued with it. Their home was in Canaan or at the court of the Pharaoh, not in the desert among the wild Amalekites. Such civilization and culture as were possessed by the inhabitants of Ur and Haran or by the people of Canaan they must have possessed also.

The extent of this civilization and culture we are but just beginning to realize. Long before the days of Abraham, Babylonia was a land of libraries and schools, of art and science, of law and settled government. A code of morals had been formed and an elaborate religion organized by the State. This religion was an amalgamation of the religious beliefs of the older Sumerian population and those of their Semitic successors. But the higher and more spiritual ideas of the Semite dominated it, and as time went on it came more and more to center round the doctrine which saw in the sun the visible symbol of the supreme Baal. Babylon became a holy city such as Rome was in the Middle Ages; it was under the control of a high priest, the Babylonian State being regarded as a theocracy at the head of which was Bel-Merodach, the god of Babylon. The ritual was elaborate and costly; tithes were required to be paid by every Babylonian to the temples of his gods, and sacred books existed which may be compared with our Bible and Prayer-book. The bible consisted of a collection of hymns to the gods, and penitential psalms, and they were considered so sacred that the mere mispronunciation of a word in their public recitation was held to invalidate the ceremony and even incur the anger of heaven. The prayer-book also contained the hymns, together with rubrical directions for their use as well as for the performance of the sacrifices and offerings and other acts of worship required in the daily services.

We cannot study the religious literature which has been preserved in the cuneiform tablets without feeling that the Babylonian was genuinely pious. But he was beset by superstitions of all kinds, and he added gods and goddesses innumerable. Nevertheless, there were those who in the midst of the darkness of polytheism were seeking "the Lord, if haply

they might feel after him and find him." Now and again we meet with hymns in which language is used that shows how, for the moment, the deity who is addressed was exclusively and alone in the writer's thought, and how near he had come to a perception of the truth. Thus, in a hymn which was composed in Ur itself, Abraham's birthplace, probably long before he was born there, the Moon-god is addressed as follows: "Father, long-suffering and full of forgiveness, whose hand upholds the life of all mankind! . . . Firstborn, omnipotent, whose heart is immensity, and there is none who may fathom it! . . . In heaven, who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme! In earth, who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme!" Indeed there are indications that a school existed which sought to resolve the numerous deities of Babylonian theology into forms or manifestations of the Sky-god Anu, and in the penitential psalms we find expressions which prove that a sense of sin was present to the Babylonian heart. "O Lord," we read in one of them, "my sins are many, my transgressions are great! . . . I sought for help and none took my hand. I wept and none stood at my side; I cried aloud and there was none that heard me. To my God, the merciful one, I turn myself, I utter my prayer. . . . O my God, seven times seven are my transgressions: forgive my sins!"

Such was the religious atmosphere in which the boyhood of the Hebrew patriarch must have been passed. On the one side gross superstition, idolatry and polytheism, but on the other side glimpses of a purer light and of a more spiritual faith. Babylonian culture was feeling its way toward monotheism and a recognition that true religion must be spiritual and not material. It already acknowledged the divine government of the world, the existence of a creator and a benefactor of men. Nay, more even than this; there are hymns in which Bel-Merodach is spoken of as "the compassionate god, who raises the dead to life." Here, then, in these religious aspirations of Babylonian culture, lay the preparation for God's revelation of himself to Abraham. In the culture of Chaldea we must see the educating forces which molded the mind of the Hebrew patriarch. It was only when their work had been accomplished and the new revelation had been made to Abraham that he was bidden to tear himself away from his older associations and remove to a land and a mode of life where they were the less likely to influence him.

V.

The patriarchal age of Hebrew history ends with the migration of Jacob and his sons into

Egypt. It was now time for the other great civilizing power of the ancient East to exercise its influence upon the chosen people. But this influence was negative rather than positive. Egypt was the furnace of trial through which Israel had to pass before it was fitted for its future part in the world; the house of bondage which should make it value and cherish the blessings of freedom. Egyptian luxury and Egyptian idolatry were henceforth associated with the idea of slavery; it was rarely, if ever, that they henceforth had attractions for the Israelitish people. Toward Egyptian culture and religion the feeling of the Israelites was that of antagonism, of repulsion rather than of the reverse. Doubtless Moses had been the adopted son of an Egyptian princess and was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, but it was their wisdom that he utilized, not their beliefs and practices, their religious customs and social life. How marked, for instance, is the contrast between the stern insistence of the Mosaic law upon the duties of this life and the continual living for the world to come which characterized Egyptian civilization! With all his light-heartedness, the Egyptian had ever before him the image of death; the Mosaic law scarcely looks beyond the rewards and punishments which await the good and the evil in this present world.

Perhaps there was a racial as well as a historical and religious reason for this attitude of antagonism between the "dwellers on the Nile" and their fugitive bondsmen. Unlike the Babylonians, the Egyptians did not belong to the same Semitic race as the Israelites, and between Egypt and Asia there had long been feud. The wall of isolation within which Egypt had once entrenched herself had long since been broken down, and before Joseph became the prime minister of the Pharaoh the valley of the Nile had been overrun and conquered by Asiatic invaders. The foreign domination lasted for several centuries. Then came the war of independence, and the founder of the eighteenth dynasty succeeded in expelling the last of the strangers from the soil of his country. A war of revenge was next carried on against Asia, and under Thothmes III. and his successors Canaan became an Egyptian province and the boundaries of the Egyptian empire were pushed as far as the Euphrates. But the conquest of Western Asia reacted upon the conquerors. The Pharaohs married Asiatic princesses and became half-Asiatic themselves. Amenophis IV., or Khu-n-Aten, eventually surrounded himself with Canaanitish and Syrian officials and endeavored to force an Asiatic form of faith upon his unwilling subjects. The worship of the Solar Disk, the symbol of the Asiatic Baal, was substituted for

that of the Theban Amon, and the quarrel between the Pharaoh and the Egyptian priests grew so acute that Khu-n-Aten deserted the capital of his fathers and built himself a new city farther north. It was on the site of this new capital, now known as Tel el-Amarna, that the cuneiform tablets were discovered to which allusion has already been made. They consist for the most part of letters from the allied princes and Egyptian governors in Asia, and show that even at the court of the Pharaoh the language and script of Babylonia were the medium of diplomatic intercourse.

The religious reforms of Khu-n-Aten ended in civil war and the fall of the eighteenth dynasty. The Egyptian empire in Asia fell at the same time, though the larger portion of Canaan was recovered by the earlier kings of the nineteenth dynasty. Foremost among these was Rameses II., whom the discoveries of Mr. Naville at Pithom have shown to have been the Pharaoh of the oppression.

We have learned from the tablets of Tel el-Amarna why "the new king which knew not Joseph" should have dealt so hardly with the Hebrew people. The rise of the nineteenth dynasty marks the success of the national uprising against the Asiatic policy of the later kings of the eighteenth. The native Egyptians had looked on with smothered indignation while the posts about the court had been handed over to the hated foreigner; when the ancient religion of the country was proscribed they broke into open revolt. All the old feelings of hostility to the Semitic stranger were aroused afresh, and the triumph of the national party meant the expulsion of the Asiatic and his religion from the valley of the Nile. Those who remained were enslaved or exterminated.

While Rameses lived there was no hope for the suffering bondsmen. They were kept incessantly at work on the cities and buildings with which he filled the land of Egypt during his long reign of sixty-seven years. But with his death there came a change. Egypt had to stand the shock of an invasion by northern and western nations, and the nineteenth dynasty grew weaker every year. The opportunity for escape arrived at last, and the Israelites under their leader, Moses, plunged into the desert, there to be formed into a nation and made ready for the conquest of Canaan.

In Egypt they had been in close and intimate contact with one of the most literary of peoples. From time immemorial the Egyptian had known how to read and write. The walls of his tombs and temples were covered with lines of writing; even the ornaments he wore and the objects of his toilet were inscribed with words and names. At times the cartouches of the Pharaohs were stamped upon



TEL EL-AMARNA TABLET.

the mud bricks their bondsmen were bidden to mold, and the rocks and monuments that still remain are thick with the scrawls of passers-by. The contrast between Nubia and Egypt in this respect is striking; go where you will in Egypt inscriptions stare you in the face; in Nubia, on the other hand, they are few and far between. The scribe was the honored of all men; the children of the Pharaoh did not disdain to adopt the profession, and it led, as in modern China, to the highest offices of state. Schools and teachers must have been multiplied all over the land, and the papyri which have been left to us prove how large and how ancient must have been the literature of the country in the truest sense of the word.

The land toward which the Israelitish fugitives bent their steps was equally a land of literature. The tablets of Tel el-Amarna have told us so. There, too, in Canaan, writers and readers abounded; there, too, were schools and libraries, though the script was that of Babylonia and not of Egypt, and the literary language was a foreign one. Even in the desert itself, if the latest researches of Glaser and Hommel are justified, they could not have been altogether beyond that literary atmosphere which in the age of the Exodus enveloped the whole of Western Asia. Alphabetic writing in the Arabian peninsula seems to be older than the days of Moses. There was a cultured kingdom in the south whose kings claimed sway as far as the borders of Egypt and Edom, and who held control over the great caravan road of trade. Their inscriptions have been found near Teima in the northwest, not very far distant from the region in which some part of the wanderings of the Israelites was passed.

But even if the views of Glaser and Hommel turn out to be incorrect, it would make no difference to the general fact that Moses and his followers lived in a literary age and in the very midst of literary nations. That they should have been unacquainted with the art of writing would have been nothing short of a miracle. How could they alone have been slumbering, while the peoples around them were all awake? We must, accordingly, regard the influence of Egypt upon Israel as not entirely negative. It had also its positive side. The "wisdom of the Egyptians" was preëminently a literary wisdom, and the Israelites, when they fled from Egypt, must have carried away with them a knowledge of writing and the conception of a literature.

VI.

The desert was the cradle of the Mosaic law. There the fugitive slaves of Pharaoh were organized into a nation, and for the first time

were made to understand that they were henceforth to be the chosen people of the Lord. The covenant made with the patriarchs now found its realization in the covenant made with the nation that had sprung from them. The individual had given place to the community, and the history of the Old Testament enters upon a new stage. From henceforth the individual falls into the background; he is merely the representative of the people; and God's dealings are with the people rather than with the single man. The patriarchal age has disappeared forever; the great figures that henceforth cross the stage of Hebrew history—Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David—are but the leaders and representatives of the community behind them. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob has become a national God, and the patriarchal household has developed into a theocracy.

It is always so in history. It begins with individuals; it ends with nations and communities. Not that "the great man," as he is termed, is ever dispensed with; but the social forces upon which he works grow wider and more complicated; he is more largely acted upon by them, and his own influence is more difficult to determine. He no longer stands forth like an isolated peak; there are innumerable mountain ranges behind him as far as the eye can reach, and the historian must take account of them all.

Among the many lessons learned in the desert, perhaps the chiefest was that Israel was one united nation, a peculiar people singled out of all mankind for the revelation of the unity of God. Other nations were divided into principalities and smaller states, each with its own worship and its own supreme deity, and when these principalities and States came to be united together, the union of their several worships and divinities produced those polytheistic state-religions which we find in Egypt, in Canaan, or in Babylonia. But the tribes of Israel were formed into a single whole, with a common law, a common worship, and a common belief in the one supreme God, before they had settled in the Promised Land and could there become a state. The theocracy already existed while they were still but a wandering caravan, necessarily subject to the control and discipline of a single leader. When at last they entered Canaan and settled in the country which had been promised to their fathers they were already a corporate body, with a definite organization and a definite faith. Israel was no amalgamation of townships and petty states, but an organized community whose tribes recognized the same priesthood, the same laws, and the same beliefs.

The desert, consequently, made Israel not only a nation, but an undivided nation. And with the feeling of national unity came a confidence in its own powers. The slaves of Pharaoh, who could not be led along the way of the Philistines lest they "should see war," soon became those hardy warriors who first defeated and scattered the Amalekite Bedouin and then invaded the cities of Canaan. Along with freedom and discipline had come strength and the power of united action.

But it needed time to prepare the people for their appointed task. And meanwhile the way was being made ready in Canaan itself. The wars of Rameses II. against the Hittites had carried ruin and devastation through the Canaanitish cities. The Hittites, who had descended from the mountains of the north in the closing days of the eighteenth dynasty, had taken secure possession of Syria and had established themselves at Kadesh on the Orontes, in the land of the Amorites, not far from the future frontier of Palestine. The campaigns of Rameses II. and his father checked their further advance. But the struggle between the two powers lasted for many years, and though the Egyptian Pharaoh conquered Canaan and even extended his influence to the eastern side of the Jordan, it must have been an exhausted province which he finally possessed. In the troubles which followed the reign of Rameses, Canaan was again lost to Egypt and never subsequently recovered. But other invaders were at hand. When Rameses III., of the nineteenth dynasty, was on the Egyptian throne, Palestine was overrun by hordes of barbarians, from the Ægean Sea and the coasts of Asia Minor, who swarmed southward both by sea and land. Some of them remained permanently in the country, the southern part of which was afterward invaded by the Egyptian Pharaoh after his complete victory over the northern foe.

But the work of destruction begun by the wars of Rameses II. must have been completed by the invaders from the north. The inhabitants of Canaan could have had but little strength to resist the Israelitish invasion, when Joshua at last led the tribes across the Jordan. Little by little the larger part of the country was subdued.

The Book of Judges, however, makes it clear that the work of conquest was not a rapid one. Indeed, it was not until the age of the kings that some of the most important of the Canaanitish cities fell into Israelitish hands. Jerusalem, the future capital of Judah, was one of the early conquests of David, and it was not until the reign of Solomon that Gezer, in spite of its strategical value, was given by the Egyptian Pharaoh to the Hebrew king. The age of the

Judges was an age of fighting and disorder. The civilization of Canaan retrograded, and each man did that which was right in his own eyes. Invasion followed upon invasion, servitude upon servitude, so that "the highways were unoccupied" and the Israelitish warriors deprived of their arms. The disorganization of the tribes seemed at times complete; the law of Moses was forgotten and "they chose new gods." Nevertheless, with all this disorder and disorganization, Israel never wholly forgot the lesson it had learned in the Wilderness. It never wholly lost the consciousness that it was one people under one national God, and in moments of distress it realized the fact. Time after time the tribes rallied round some patriotic leader, and acknowledged both their own unity and their common faith. The state of Canaan after the Israelitish conquest is paralleled by the state of Europe after the fall of the Roman empire. In Europe, too, there were war and discord, loss of culture and political disorganization, and in Europe, also, there was one stable and unifying element—the Christian Church—which eventually brought order out of chaos, and peace out of anarchy.

But it was manifest that the Hebrew people were not yet fitted for a purely theocratic government. They required a visible head, who should lead them in war against their enemies and decide their quarrels at home. The epoch of the Judges was fast passing into an epoch of disintegration. The Philistines had overrun all the south of Palestine, and now held the passes which commanded the approach to the north. It seemed as if the name of Israel was about to be wiped out, all its previous training to end in nothing. When the Ark was captured by the enemy, all hope seemed to be gone.

The Judges had failed. A strong hand was needed to resist the hostile forces that were threatening to destroy Israel from without and to harmonize the jarring elements that were threatening to destroy it from within. Saul was elected king, and Samuel, the last of the Judges, became the first of the Prophets. The assertion of individual right and influence which had manifested itself in the stormy scenes of the period of the Judges was now disciplined into a better and more spiritual path. Though it was the pressure of hostile attack which had forced Israel to cry out for a king, yet underneath that cry lay an instinctive feeling that only so could Israel be molded into a single nation, animated by a common spirit and seeking a common end. The unity that had been realized in the desert in the person of the lawgiver could only be realized in Canaan in the person of a king.

With the rise of the royal power Israel once more comes into contact with the great nations

of the ancient world. David created an empire which reached to the Euphrates, and Solomon made alliance with the Pharaoh of Egypt. The fall of the empire brought with it the foundation of the kingdom of Damascus and was followed by the revolt of the ten tribes. The revolt proved how useless was the attempt to unify Israel by political means only; the real bond of unity was religious, not political. But several centuries were needed for the recognition of this truth, and when at last it was recognized, the Israel which received it was but a fragment of the political Israel of the past.

The wars and alliances with Damascus led to the interference of Assyria in the affairs of Samaria and Judah. Assyria had now taken the place once occupied in Western Asia by Babylonia. It was the leading state of the civilized Asiatic world. Its monarchs claimed to be the ministers of their god Assur, sent forth by him to punish the disobedient and to compel all mankind to acknowledge his supremacy. From the ninth century onward their campaigns led them to the west. Here, rather than among the rude mountaineers of the east and north, was booty to be gained, and the roads of trade opened up for the merchants of Nineveh. Damascus stood between them and the shores of the Mediterranean, and its kings had consequently to bear the brunt of their attacks.

Already Jehu had paid tribute to the great king of Assyria, and the Israelitish envoys are depicted on the obelisk of black marble which now stands in the British Museum. But it was not until the rise of the second Assyrian empire under Tiglath-Pileser III., in 747 B. C., that the entire destruction of Syrian and Palestinian political independence was attempted. Tiglath-Pileser inaugurated a new system of policy which was ably carried out by himself and his successors. He set himself to form a great empire which should include all the countries of the civilized world, as well as Egypt, and of which the Assyrian king should be the absolute head. It was to be a great corporate body, with a highly centralized government, the like of which the world had never seen before. In order to carry out his plans, Tiglath-Pileser created a standing army, as perfectly equipped and disciplined as the age allowed it to be. It soon became an irresistible instrument of conquest; none could stand against the veterans of Assyria and the skilled generals who commanded them. One by one the states and cities of Western Asia fell under the iron power of Assyria; Assyrian satraps, accountable to the king, were placed over them, and all spirit of disaffection or patriotism in the conquered populations was sought to be crushed by their transportation to distant parts of the empire.

Assyrian garrisons and colonists watched over the fidelity of such of the older inhabitants as were permitted to remain in their homes, and an army of Assyrian officials managed the affairs of the mighty empire and constituted a check upon the military commanders.

Such was the power which destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and threatened to overthrow that of Judah. But the kingdom of Judah had not yet accomplished its mission. Sennacherib's host dashed in vain against the walls of Jerusalem, and the danger which had threatened it passed away. Hezekiah and his people were saved, and when Manasseh subsequently returned to allegiance to Assyria a wiser and more conciliatory ruler than Sennacherib was on the throne of Nineveh, and there was no longer any desire to blot out the Jewish name.

Assyria fell as suddenly as it had risen to power, and for a few short years the possession of Syria and Palestine was disputed between Egypt and Babylonia. Judah suffered in the conflict between the two powers, and when Babylonia prevailed its kings still deluded themselves with the hope of preserving their independence by playing off the one power against the other. The hope was futile, and it was not long before Jerusalem was captured and overthrown, the temple burned, the priests and people carried into exile, and the kingdom of David extinct.

But the work of the monarchy was done. That portion of the Israelitish people which made up the kingdom of Judah had been forced into a single community. Four centuries of common national life under the line of David had made them a united whole. Little by little the divisions—religious, political, and social—which had existed among them had been smoothed away. Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, and Levi had become a homogeneous State, with a single center and a single head. The religious worship which had been carried on at the various "high places" of the country, the ancient centers of religious veneration, had been suppressed, and concentrated once for all in the temple at Jerusalem. The "holy city" of Jerusalem had, as it were, absorbed all the other holy places which had once existed in Southern Palestine. And with this concentration of worship went a realization of the unity of the national God and of the relation of the nation toward him such as had never been possible before. Judah had become a self-contained unity, both in religion and in politics.

VII.

Side by side with this religious and political concentration, and, in fact, under the shadow and protection of it, prophecy grew up and

extended its influence. As we have seen, the creation of the royal power was the signal for the judge to pass into the prophet. Already in the reigns of the first kings of Israel we find the prophet taking his place at the side of the monarch as guide and counselor, friend and critic. It is he to whom the king appeals for counsel in moments of political difficulty; it is he who alone can venture to rebuke the sovereign, and who can make and unmake kings. It is he, lastly, who becomes the chronicler of the kingdom, and the people's schoolmaster. He is, in fact, the externalized conscience of the prince, whose autocracy would otherwise be checked only by revolt and revolution, the representative alike of the Lord and of the Lord's people.

In prophecy, however, as in all things else, there was development and progress. As time went on, its voice grew clearer and more definite. The morality that it preached became more catholic and more spiritual. Its vision ceased to be confined within the narrow horizon of a single nation, and began to embrace all mankind. And with enlargement of its vision came also an enlargement in its ideas of time. It was no longer the immediate present or the immediate future which it contemplated, but the far-reaching ages that were yet to come. The appeal to the sight made way for an appeal to the ear and the mind. The sign and wonder were superseded by the still, small voice which was indeed the voice of God. The earthly line and throne of David faded away into the larger lineaments of the kingdom of Christ.

It was only in Judah and in the later days of the Jewish monarchy that Hebrew prophecy thus attained the full realization of its mission. Not until the Jewish nation had learnt to feel that they were one people, separate from all others, were they ready to receive the final revelation of prophecy. It was needful that they should first gather round the earthly Jerusalem and the temple of Solomon, with its priesthood and its services, before they could be taught that all these were, after all, but types and symbols, and that the stately cult of the Jewish ritual was but a veil which hid behind it the more spiritual cult of the heart. If the law was a schoolmaster to bring the world to Christ, the Jewish monarchy was equally the schoolmaster which enabled prophecy to deliver its full message to an understanding people.

And yet it was a message hard to understand. It was a new gospel for men to hear. A high code of morals had been preached in Egypt from the earliest times, and the soul of the dead man was required to satisfy the stern judges of the other world that he had fed the

hungry, clothed the naked, and wronged no man. But this code of morals was supplementary only to the external forms of religion. The slightest departure from the prescribed formula of the religious ceremonies would have been more fatal than inability to answer the judges of the dead, and a belief in the dogmas of the orthodox faith was more necessary than the most perfect performance of the moral law. In Assyria and Babylonia, again, the correct fulfillment of the requirements of the ritual constituted the very essence of religion. Assur of Nineveh and Bel-Merodach of Babylon were local divinities and had therefore to be treated like earthly kings. What they saw and what they demanded was mere outward propriety of conduct and worship; the worship of the heart was an almost meaningless phrase. We look in vain elsewhere than in Israel for that keynote of prophecy which finds its expression in the first chapter of the Book of Isaiah. The God of Israel required a pure heart and a holy life, not a ceaseless round of sacrifices and rites or the most gorgeous temple that man had ever reared.

The message of prophecy was enforced by national suffering. When Isaiah delivered it, there were few who could as yet understand what it meant. But the century which followed brought with it many bitter experiences, and imprinted its lesson on the minds of the better portion of the Jewish people. Doubtless the majority still clung to their old localizing faith, and believed up to the last that their God would never suffer his temple to fall into the hands of the foe. There were many, however, who had come to know that true and vital religion does not depend on the accidents of space and time. With ever-increasing clearness the prophets had declared that unless the nation repented inwardly as well as outwardly their sanctuary should be desecrated and forsaken, and that the true Israel should survive in a faithful remnant which had learnt that God was a spirit, and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

The Assyrian had been recognized by the prophets as the instrument of God's wrath upon Samaria. Nebuchadnezzar was equally recognized as the instrument of his wrath upon Judah. The doctrine that God requires purity in the inward man necessarily involved the further doctrine that sin is an abomination to him and that sooner or later it will meet with divine punishment. National sin brings with it national disaster, just as the sins of the individual bring down upon him the wrath of God.

The Babylonian Exile was thus a necessary part of the spiritual training which Israel had to undergo. One by one all the elements had

been eliminated which were antagonistic to the ultimate mission of the chosen race. Of the descendants of Abraham only the Israelites had been selected for the revelation of God that was made on Sinai; of the Israelites only the kingdom of Judah had been allowed to carry on the work that was laid upon them; and of the Jewish State those only preserved their national existence who had learnt the spiritual lessons of prophecy. They alone were prepared for the trial of the Exile, and consequently for the education which the Exile was intended to provide.

It was a new and purified Judah which returned to its old home. The Jewish monarchy was superseded by the Jewish Church. The main body of the returning captives consisted of priests, bitterly hostile to the idolatry which surrounded them and bent on keeping themselves separate from the Gentile world. With the loss of national independence had come the consciousness of a religious and spiritual union, and of the fact that the true king of Israel was the Lord himself. It was as a theocracy, not as a monarchy, that the Jewish State must henceforth survive. Once more, therefore, Judah turned to the law of Moses, but with quickened understanding and deeper spiritual insight than had been possible before. Ezra the Scribe and "the men of the Great Synagogue," to quote the language of the Talmud, collected the scattered writings of the past, and revised the text of the Pentateuch. The books of Moses became the basis of political and social life in a way that had never previously been the case, and the Canon of Scripture began to be definitely formed.

Meanwhile a new power had appeared upon the scene of history. Cyrus had overthrown the empire of Nebuchadnezzar and imposed his sway upon the nations of Asia from the far east to the shores of the Ægean. His son Cambyses completed his work by the conquest of Egypt. Once more, as in the days of the Assyrian successors of Tiglath-Pileser, there was one law and one government for the whole civilized world of the East. But the policy which directed and underlay it was changed. The conquest of Babylonia had taught Cyrus the dangers which attended on the older policy of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings. His invasion of Chaldea had been materially assisted by the existence of disaffected elements within Babylonia itself. The system of transporting the populations of conquered states had failed. The exiles had not lost their old feeling of individual nationality, and instead of losing themselves in their conquerors had retained all their old measure of hatred toward them. We gather from the inscriptions of Cyrus that there were others

besides the Jews who welcomed in him a deliverer. His first act, he tells us, after the occupation of Babylonia was to permit the captive population to return to their former homes, carrying with them the images of their gods. The Jews alone had no images to take, and it was accordingly the sacred vessels of the temple which were given into their hands.

The policy of Cyrus was successful, so far, at least, as the Jews were concerned. His memory was regarded by them with gratitude, and Jerusalem remained faithful to the Persian kings. It took no part in the general revolt which broke out shortly after the death of Cambyses and obliged Darius to reconquer almost the whole of the empire of Cyrus. As long as the Persian rule lasted, the Jews continued loyal subjects to the Persian monarch. The "remnant" which had returned had ceased to dream of political independence or of a restoration of the Davidic monarchy; they were content to be merely a religious community, provided their religion was not interfered with and their religious convictions were not outraged. Moreover, between them and their new rulers there was a bond of sympathy. The Persians were practically monotheists. Darius and Xerxes acknowledged but one god, Ormuzd, and Xerxes was the destroyer of the golden image of the Babylonian Bel.

Under the Persian domination prophecy languished and died. Its work, in fact, was accomplished. The revelation of God to his chosen people is henceforth realized, not in a state, but in a church. The Jewish Church has risen out of the ashes of the ancient monarchy. The high priest has taken the place of the king, the temple that of the royal palace. There is no longer any need of the prophet to inculcate the lesson that the God of Israel is one God, and that him only should the people serve. They have no other aim than that of obeying the Mosaic law and fulfilling its minutest precepts.

The danger that now besets the Jewish community is a wholly new one. It is no longer the danger of too little zeal in God's service, but of over-zeal. Strict obedience to the law threatens to dull and obscure the spiritual life. A cold formalism begins to supersede the devotion of the heart and the Jewish Church to lose its earlier vitality. There was need of an awakening, and the awakening came.

Alexander of Macedon had seated himself upon the throne of Cyrus. The Persian empire passed away, trodden under foot by the Greek phalanx. On its ruins rose the kingdom of Alexander's generals, and Greek culture and Greek ideas spread through Asia to the frontiers of India itself. Between the ideal of Greek culture and the ideal of the Jewish Church there was irreconcilable antagonism. Art and beauty,

the pride of life and the lust of the eye, were the end and object of the one; a stern sense of duty, a distrust of pleasure, a puritanical hatred of the art which seemed to savor of idolatry, were the distinguishing characteristics of the other. On the one side was polytheism, with all its sensuous indulgences; on the other side an uncompromising monotheism and the Mosaic law.

Prophecy was silent; no priest had arisen with the Urim and Thummim, and the requirements of ritual were fast becoming a weightier matter in the eyes of the religious teachers of the people than a holy life and a pure heart. It was little wonder, therefore, that the seductions of the Greek culture proved too strong for a considerable portion of the Jewish community. Numbers of the more educated and ruling classes yielded to the new influences that were around them, and it almost seemed at one time as if Judah was about to forget its mission, and to be swallowed up in the Greek world. The Maccabean revolt and the defeat of the armies of Antiochus Epiphanes saved the Jewish Church, and once more separated the true Israel from those who were Israelites only in name.

VIII.

The Maccabean revolt belongs to the same age as the Greek translation of the books of the Old Testament, commonly known as the Septuagint. The translation is a testimony to the influence of the Greek language and to that invasion of the East by Europe which culminated in the Roman empire; but it is also a testimony to the fact that Judaism was in its turn invading the Gentile world and infusing it with its own ideas. Jewish communities were establishing themselves outside Palestine, filled with men as zealous for the faith of their fathers as those who had remained in Jerusalem, but who, nevertheless, were willing to mingle with the Greek world and to convert it to their own views. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures rendered those Scriptures accessible to all the educated classes of Europe and Western Asia, and at the same time brought the fact home to the mind of everyone that Judaism was not necessarily confined within the limits of Palestine as the heritage of a single people, but might be shared in by all mankind. The time had come when God's revelation to Israel might be preached to the whole world; when the truth of the unity of God could be believed by Jew and Gentile alike, and when the Jewish Church, freed from its national peculiarities, its exclusiveness, and its individualism, might be developed into that universal church which the prophets had beheld in the dim future. As the Jewish community was about to be

merged into the universal empire of Rome, so the Jewish Church was likewise about to be transformed into the Catholic Church of Christ.

The Septuagint translation presupposes that the Old Testament Canon was complete, or very nearly so. A collection of sacred books must have existed before it could be translated into Greek. The fact that the Canon adhered to in Palestine differed in some respects from the Canon which came to be adopted by the Greek-speaking Jews of Egypt makes no difference to the general fact.

The word "Canon" denoted a rule or standard laid down by public authority. The Canonical books, accordingly, were those which were recognized by the Church as conforming to a particular standard. But this standard itself constituted the rule and law of the Church. It was by it that doctrines were tested and decided, so that whatsoever could not be proved out of Holy Scripture was not to be required as necessary to salvation. The books of Scripture were the title-deeds of the Church; the foundation upon which her creeds were built, and her ultimate court of appeal.

In the Book of Daniel¹ reference is made to "the books" or scriptures, one of which contained the prophecies of Jeremiah. But the first definite account of the Hebrew Canon is to be found in the Prologue of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, the Greek translator of which, writing in 132 B. C., states that his grandfather "had much given himself to the reading of the law and the prophets and other books of our fathers." The same threefold division, therefore, which we still find in the Hebrew Bible was at that time in existence, and it is again alluded to by our Lord when he speaks of "the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms."² The Jewish historian, Josephus, in his controversy with the Alexandrine grammarian, Apion, toward the end of the first century A. D., is still more explicit. He tells us that there were twenty-two books which the Jewish Church "rightly believed to be divine," and that they consisted of five books of Moses, thirteen books of the prophets, and four others which "contain hymns to God and didactic teaching for men." From this list Ecclesiastes alone seems to be excluded. According to the Jewish belief the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings were written by prophets and were consequently regarded as prophetic. The view was just, for, as we have seen, the prophets were the early writers of Jewish history, and the educators of the people throughout the period of the monarchy. The "didactic teaching" of Josephus is the Haggadah of the Jewish Talmud.

¹ Daniel ix, 2.

² Luke xxiv, 44.

In one respect, however, the arrangement of Josephus deviates from that of the Hebrew Bible since his time. In his third division of the Holy Scriptures he reckons only four books instead of the nine, or the eleven, which appear in the modern Hebrew Bible. The twelve minor prophets were considered to be one book, the Books of Ruth and of Lamentations were attached to Judges and Jeremiah, and the Books of Job, Esther, Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Chronicles were counted among the prophets. This would leave the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Book of Daniel, and the Canticles for the last division of the sacred books.

But it must be remembered that there was a considerable amount of controversy among the Jewish Rabbis as to the canonical character of the Books of Esther, of Canticles, and of Ecclesiastes, and that in the case of Ecclesiastes more especially discussion grew hot between the great schools of Hillel and Shammai. Indeed, it would seem that it was not until the Council of Jamnia, about 90 A. D., that the Book of Ecclesiastes was finally admitted into the Canon, and the Talmud declares that it would have been considered apocryphal had it not been for the verses at the beginning and end. Josephus, throughout his writings, never refers to either Canticles or Ecclesiastes, Proverbs or Job, and Philo, the learned Jew of Alexandria in the age of Christ is equally silent in regard to the Books of Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Esther. In the New Testament also there is a similar silence in regard to Ecclesiastes and Canticles, as well as to Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Judges.

In contrast with the extreme caution displayed by the Palestinian Jews in admitting books into the sacred Canon, was the readiness of the Jews of Alexandria to enlarge the volume of Holy Scripture. The Septuagint, as it was received by the early Christian Church, included several books which are now to be found in the so-called Apocrypha. Early Christian writers, accordingly, generally quoted them as of equal authority with the other Canonical Scriptures. It was Saint Jerome who threw the weight of his influence and learning on the side of admitting only the twenty-four books of the Palestinian Hebrew Canon, and in spite of the contrary view of Saint Augustine his opinion came, on the whole, to prevail. The question, however, was never authoritatively decided in the Western Church till an attempt was made to do so by the Council of Trent. But the attempt only led to an additional cause of difference between the Roman and the Reformed Churches.

The wider limits assigned to the Old Testament Canon at Alexandria were in some measure due to the doctrine of inspiration which

prevailed there. Moses, as Philo tells us, was the "Chief-prophet" of God, the holy men who followed him being but his disciples and comrades. The Pentateuch accordingly was the sole authoritative source and rule of faith, round which all other sacred writings revolved like satellites round their central sun. The inspiration which was breathed through these lesser and derivative Scriptures was different in degree, if not in kind, from that of the law itself, and though the wisdom of God spoke through their writers it was only in so far as their works reflected the teaching and truths of the law. Wherever this was the case, the voice of the divine wisdom might be recognized and the work in which it was heard might be admitted into the collection of sacred books.

A similar doctrine was also held by the Jewish Church in Palestine, though the results which followed from it were not the same. There also the Pentateuch was exalted at the expense of all the books of the Old Testament Canon. They were all "divine," it is true, but the divine character of the Mosaic law was incomparably higher than that of the prophetic and later books. It alone formed the basis of orthodox belief; it was the one supreme rule of faith by which all doctrines and all other books had to be tried.

Among the Sadducees and Samaritans this doctrine led to the practical rejection of the divine authority of all other portions of the Hebrew Canon. Whatever belief could not be proved out of the five books of Moses was at once condemned. But among the bulk of the Jews, whose opinion ultimately became that of the whole Jewish Church, the doctrine had less far-reaching consequences. It merely caused the Pentateuch to be put in a place apart, and to be regarded as of higher authority than the rest of the Canon. The Canon was further divided into three parts, consisting of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Kethûbim or "Writings," more usually known as the Hagiographa, and as the Pentateuch was held to exceed in degree of inspiration and importance the Prophets, so too the Prophets were considered to exceed the Hagiographa which followed them.

The Hagiographa comprises all those books which, from one cause or another, were the last to be added to the Canon of Scripture. They consist of the following books: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the two books of the Chronicles, to which Ruth and Lamentations are usually added.

The distinction between the Pentateuch and the rest of the Canon on the one hand, and the Prophets and the Hagiographa on the other,

must be carefully kept in mind, as it constitutes the keystone in the Jewish theories about the Scriptures. The prophets are the interpreters and followers of Moses; they hand on the law which he was commissioned to deliver, and explain those parts of it which are obscure. But it is only in so far as they are in agreement with the law that their teaching is to be listened to; if it could be shown that they differ from the law, or originate new ideas of their own, they would have to be rejected at once. Their authority is not so much derived from any special revelation to themselves as from the revelation which was made once for all to Moses. The Hagiographa stand on a still lower footing. They form, as it were, a bridge from the Canon to the uncanonical works that were based upon it. Nevertheless, they are a part of the Canon; they "soil the hands," as the Talmud expresses it. But they relate to ritual and preaching rather than to the foundations of religious faith, and they introduce us to that "Haggadah"—that transformation of history into parable—to which Talmudic Judaism became so attached. In the Pentateuch we have history combined with the establishment of law and religion; in the Prophets we again have history with its religious and moral explanation; in the Hagiographa history tends to pass into parable and to be considered of importance only in so far as it can teach a lesson in religion or morality.

Such was the Jewish conception of the Canon of the Old Testament. It was a conception underneath which lay a belief in a most stringent form of inspiration, but modified by the further belief that inspiration admitted of various degrees. While the Pentateuch was what we should now call verbally inspired, the inspiration of the other books of the sacred volume was at most but plenary. Indeed, it may be questioned whether the Hagiographa were not often regarded much in the same way as the Apocrypha in the English Church.

IX.

Modern study and research have done much to change or modify these older ideas of the character of Scripture. The Canon, indeed, remains as it was—that is a matter which has been definitely settled once for all—but our views in regard to the contents of the Canon have necessarily undergone alteration in the course of centuries. Controversy and inquiry have been more especially keen during the last century and a half, and revolutionary theories have been propounded, which, if accepted in their entirety, would reverse the judgment of the Jewish Church and overthrow the continuous and universal belief of historical Christianity. The Pentateuch, it is now alleged,

instead of being the oldest portion of the Old Testament, and the foundation of Israelitish religion and history, is really later than many of the books which are classed by Jewish tradition among the Prophets; the larger part of the law, instead of being promulgated by Moses, is the invention of the age of Josiah and the Exile; while the Book of the Law professedly found by Hilkiah, the high priest, in the temple in the reign of Josiah, is actually the older portion of the Book of Deuteronomy, which has just been composed for the first time.

The arguments by which such views are supported are mainly philological. It has long been recognized that there are traces in the Pentateuch of the use of different documents, especially in the Book of Genesis. The critic, accordingly, has set himself to separate these, one from the other, and to determine to his own satisfaction the precise fragments that belong to each. The process of dissection has been carried out with such nicety that the beginning of a verse is ascribed to one author, the middle of it to a second, and the end of it to a third. But such mathematical exactitude would be impossible in the case of a modern English writer; much more must it be so in the case of an ancient Hebrew writer. Hebrew has long since ceased to be a spoken language, and our knowledge of it is derived from the limited amount of literature contained within the covers of the Old Testament. Such knowledge is necessarily imperfect; numberless words must have existed of which no trace remains, while the interpretation of many of those that remain is exceedingly doubtful. Equally doubtful and equally imperfect must be our knowledge of the niceties of Hebrew grammar, and still more of Hebrew idiom. How, then, is it possible to determine the peculiarities of the documents embodied in the Pentateuch with such precision as to know where one begins and another ends, or to what date they are severally to be ascribed?

It is true that support is found for the conclusions of the so-called "literary analysis" in other lines of argument. Thus it is urged that there are evidences in the Pentateuch of three separate systems of legislation, which have been superimposed upon one another, the earliest belonging to the nomadic period in the history of Israel, the second coinciding with the time when the Israelites were firmly established in the Promised Land, and the third implying the age of the Exile. The oldest code, termed the Book of the Covenant,¹ though not put into shape until after the foundation of the monarchy, embodied ancient material some

¹ Exodus xxiv, 7.

of which may have gone back to Moses himself. In it the priests, it is urged, are not yet regarded as a special and separate class; altars are ordered to be built wherever the Lord shall "record" his "name";¹ the only feasts known are those of the sabbath, the sabbatical year, and the feasts of unleavened bread, of the harvest, and of the ingathering; the only sacrifices enjoined are burnt offerings and peace offerings; while the commands in regard to purification are conspicuous by their absence. In the Deuteronomic code, which is supposed to have first come into existence in the age of Josiah, there is a distinct advance upon this earlier legislation. The whole tribe of Levi is set apart for the priesthood; it is only "in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of" the Israelitish "tribes"² that altars may be erected; new feasts are introduced, the Passover, the feasts of weeks and of tabernacles and the year of release; tithes, vows and freewill offerings are added to the simple sacrifices of the older epoch; and a distinction is made between clean and unclean beasts. In the latest or "Priestly Code," which occupies the larger part of Leviticus and Numbers and is asserted to belong in its complete form to the age after the Exile, there is further and radical change. The priests, "the sons of Aaron," are distinguished from the Levites, who henceforth are relegated to subordinate posts about the sanctuary; it is only at the tabernacle, the type and precursor of the temple of Jerusalem, that sacrifices and offerings may be made, the festivals of the new moon and the seven great sabbaths, the day of first fruits, the feast of trumpets, the year of jubilee, and above all the great day of Atonement, are added to the earlier list of festivals; sin offerings and trespass offerings are commanded in addition to those already known; and the laws about purification assume a prominent position and are of minute character.

The existence of these three stages in the Mosaic legislation cannot be denied, though the conclusions drawn from them by the "higher criticism" need not be accepted. The composite character of the Mosaic books is a fact now accepted by all schools of theological opinion. The more we know about early oriental literature the more certain it becomes that the oldest and most authoritative portion of it was to a certain extent a compilation and a growth. The "Book of the Dead," which has been termed the Bible of the ancient Egyptians, is an illustration of this fact. It is a combination of ancient materials, put together at the very beginning of Egyptian history, and subsequently enlarged by additions of various kinds. Marginal notes and commentaries crept into

the text, explanations of phrases or ideas which had become obsolete made their way into the body of the work and in their turn became the subject of later explanations and notes, while whole chapters were interpolated which did not belong to the original book, though they were doubtless of great antiquity. The Babylonian collection of hymns to the gods suffered the same fate. Here, too, the text underwent many alterations, and numerous additions were made to the original work, before the text was finally fixed so rigidly that the slightest deviation from it was considered to be a sin.

It is evident that the history of the Pentateuch also cannot have been very dissimilar. The Book of Genesis relates the history of times long anterior to the birth of Moses. If, therefore, the great Hebrew legislator was its author he must have made use of older documents which he combined together and incorporated in his work. From the very nature of the case the book must be a compilation. Nor need we believe that the Pentateuch, as a whole, took its final shape before the time of Ezra and "the men of the Great Synagogue." Such, at least, was the Hebrew tradition. Indeed, the Second Book of Esdras (chapter xiv) goes further and ascribes to Ezra the rewriting of all the twenty-four books of the Old Testament, including the Law. The Law, it is said, had been burnt and lost, and was consequently revealed again to Ezra, from whose lips it was written down. Besides the twenty-four books of the Canon seventy other books were revealed to the Jewish scribe, which contained esoteric doctrine, too sacred to be published. In all, therefore, ninety-four books (not 204 as in the Vulgate and the Authorized Version) were written in forty days by Ezra's assistants. The same story is repeated by the early Fathers of the Christian Church, and we meet with it in the works not only of Saint Clement of Alexandria,¹ but in those of Saint Irenæus as well.² The fact that the death and burial of Moses are described in the last chapter of Deuteronomy would of itself show that the old Hebrew tradition had a foundation of truth. Moreover, a careful examination of the historical books of the Old Testament gives further indications that the history of the Pentateuch resembled that of most of the other sacred books of the world. On the one hand, it is plain that the Mosaic law could have been but imperfectly known. The best of the kings and prophets would otherwise have never set its commands at defiance by sacrificing at the high places and allowing laymen to take upon them the functions of the priest. In fact, the Books of

¹ Exodus xx, 24.

² Deuteronomy xii, 14.

¹ Strom. i, 24.

² Adv. Hær. iii, 21, 22 (A. D. 185).

Samuel, so far from regarding sacrifices at the high places as forbidden by the law, look upon it as an usage in which there is nothing to reprimand. Up to the days of Hezekiah the people had burnt incense to "the brazen serpent that Moses had made" all through the days of men like Samuel and David, Jehoshaphat and Jehoiada, and it was not until the reign of Josiah that the "Book of the Law" was found in the Temple. The reading of it produced an immediate effect upon both the king and his subjects, and brought about the most thoroughgoing reformation witnessed in Judah during the period of the kings. Such a neglect of the Book of the Law would, on the other hand, inevitably produce corruption of its text. Where none was concerned to preserve it intact, or where portions of it only were read and known, phrases would necessarily make their way into it, if not whole chapters and paragraphs. Words and phrases which had ceased to be intelligible would be altered or explained, the explanations, as in the Egyptian "Book of the Dead," subsequently being incorporated into the work, and from time to time the text would be adapted to the requirements and conceptions of the age. Where a text was not protected by a reverence which made every letter of it sacred, more especially if it were a code of religious and national law, changes of this kind would almost certainly have taken place. We need not be surprised, therefore, if it can be shown that periods subsequent to that of the Exodus are reflected in parts of the Pentateuch, or if instances are recorded in it which belong to a later age. This would not make it any the less the work of Moses as a whole, or diminish its value and authority, religious as well as historical.

Moreover, if there is any truth in the biblical record, the law was revealed to Moses by God himself. It was not the self-evolved code of a legislator, whose view was limited by the needs of the community for whom the laws were made. It was a code given by the national God of Israel, a God whom the Christian Church believes to have been also the one true God and Creator of the world. The legislation, therefore, which Moses was commissioned to promulgate could not have been intended merely for the temporary wants of the caravan in the Wilderness. It must have had lying, as it were, implicit within it the principles of the legislation, both secular and divine, which Israel would need in the land that had been promised to it. It may be that the regulations necessitated by the after life of the Israelitish people were not described in detail: that may well have been left to a future age to accomplish in accordance with the divine scheme of

gradual education; but if we believe at all in the divine origin of the Mosaic law we must believe also that there lay in it all the germs and principles which it was reserved for later experience to develop. Hence, while we may fully admit that until the time of Ezra there was no fixity or finality in the text of the Pentateuch, and that the laws contained in it could be modified or developed as the progress of the centuries demanded, we must also believe that the legislation as a whole is of Mosaic origin, and that we may safely turn to the Pentateuch for authentic records of early Hebrew times.

Here, however, the "higher criticism" would again join issue with our conclusions. The narratives of the Pentateuch are denied a historic value, and the denial is based on a variety of assumptions. There is, first of all, the assumption that the Israelites of the age of Moses and for many centuries afterward were illiterate barbarians, without books or schools or scribes. Then there is the second assumption that the results of the "literary analysis" are ascertained and unassailable facts. And lastly, there is the assumption that none of the documents discoverable in the Pentateuch—or rather the Hexateuch, for the Book of Joshua is attached to the Books of Moses—is older than the revolt of the ten tribes and that the statements contained in them are derived for the most part from oral tradition and report.

If the documents are indeed of so late a date, if none of the materials embodied in the Book of Genesis go back to the age to which they relate, the conclusion of the higher critics would be justified. We cannot trust a history which is not contemporaneous with the events it professes to record. Unless we have a written record descending from the time to which the events belong, we can have no certainty that the events have ever happened. Oral testimony, unchecked by other and more trustworthy evidence, leads us to myth rather than to sober history.

If, therefore, it can be proved that neither the Pentateuch in its present form nor the materials which are embodied in it are of older date than the ninth century before the Christian era, we shall be forced to allow that the skepticism of the critics may be right. But such a proof cannot be given. A scientific fact can be established only by the method of comparison, and the critics have nothing but the books of the Old Testament itself with which to compare them. To compare a thing with itself is not a scientific mode of comparison.

X.

But though the purely biblical critic is unable to invoke the method of comparison there

is another worker in the field of ancient literature that is able to do so. Oriental archaeology is a new and very important factor in Old Testament controversy. It is the creation and the marvel of our nineteenth century, and its discoveries become every day more numerous and more startling. It has already caused us to rewrite the history of the ancient oriental world, to reconsider the opinions which we have inherited from the past, and to realize for the first time how high was the culture and civilization of the ancient East. It brings us face to face with the men around whom the history of the past has gathered; we can read their thoughts, dissect their beliefs and reconstruct their daily life. We have disinterred and interpreted the actual monuments which they left behind them, and are, therefore, no longer dependent on the accidents of a merely literary tradition and the vicissitudes through which manuscripts and the copies of manuscripts must pass. A history which was already a sealed book to the Greeks and Romans has been opened out before our eyes, and almost every day brings us fresh revelations of a forgotten past. The historical records contained in the Pentateuch no longer, therefore, stand alone. It is no longer possible to question their authenticity on the ground that they are inconsistent with one another or with the critic's conceptions of the condition of the ancient world, or because the documents which embody them are assumed to be late. We can now confront the conclusions of critical skepticism with the monumental facts of oriental archaeology. And the result is not favorable to the cause of skepticism. The historical character of a considerable part of the Pentateuch has been vindicated; we may anticipate with confidence that more of it will be vindicated in the future.

We have already seen that the primary assumption upon which so much of recent Old Testament criticism has been really built, the assumption, namely, of the late use of writing in Israel, is an assumption against which modern discovery emphatically protests. There is no reason why Moses should not have been able to write the Pentateuch — nay, there is every reason why he could have done so. And the documents made use of for the earlier history of Genesis may equally well have been of the date to which their narratives refer. Indeed, in one or two instances we can now show that they actually were. The historical character of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, for example, has been established by Assyriological research, despite all the arguments which an unbelieving criticism had brought against it. So far from a Babylonian campaign into the West being inconceivable in the time of

Abraham, as has been asserted, we learn from the cuneiform inscriptions not only that the kings of Babylonia claimed to be rulers of the "land of the Amorites" two or three centuries before Abraham could have been born, but that long ages previously Babylonian monarchs had conquered the West, welding it into a single empire with their own Chaldean home, setting up images of themselves on the shores of the Mediterranean and even marching their troops into the Sinaitic Peninsula. The cuneiform tablets of Tel el-Amarna, which show that the Babylonian script and language had become the script and literary language of Western Asia, are a proof how profound and lasting the influence of Babylonia must have been. The very names that meet us in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, as well as the political situation it implies, are met with again in the early annals of Chaldea. Lagamar was an Elamite god, and Kudur-Mabug, "the servant of the god Mabug," is the name of an Elamite prince who lived just at the period to which the Book of Genesis would refer the lifetime of Abraham, and who is called by his son "the father" or "ruler of the Amorite-land." This son was king of the Babylonian principality of Larsa, and his name was Eri-Aku, in which we cannot fail to recognize that of Arioch, king of El-lasar. Babylonia was at the time divided into several States, and an Elamite chieftain was exercising suzerainty over it. Such is the evidence of the cuneiform record and such is also the evidence of the Old Testament.

Let us turn, again, to the tenth chapter of Genesis. Here we read that Canaan was the brother of Mizraim or Egypt. But there was only one period in the history of the ancient world when such an expression was correct, and when a writer could have coupled Canaan geographically and politically with the kingdom of the Nile. This was the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth Egyptian dynasties — the period, that is to say, to which Moses belongs.

When, then, the statements of the Pentateuch can be tested by an appeal to the evidence of contemporaneous monuments, the verdict has been given on its side. Is it fair to deny that this would be equally the case where the evidence has not yet been found? On the contrary, the confirmation archaeology has already afforded of the substantial truth of Old Testament history is a presumption that the more archaeological discovery advances the more will that truth be confirmed.

One of the arguments of the negative criticism in favor of the late date some of its advocates assigned to the Book of Genesis has been disposed of by the tablets of Tel el-Amarna.

Certain of the earlier narratives of Genesis have a strong Babylonian coloring, and in the case of one of them—the account of the Deluge—we have learned that the Chaldean and biblical accounts resembled each other even in details. It was urged that this likeness could be explained only by the Exile, when the Jews had an opportunity of acquainting themselves with the ancient literature and legends of Babylonia. But we now know that this literature and these legends were studied in Palestine, and even in Egypt, before the Exodus took place. Moses and his contemporaries could have read, and, if need were, have copied them in Egypt as well as in Canaan. The latter portion of the Babylonian legend of the first man, Adapa (or Adama), and of how sin entered the world has been found among the *débris* of the office of the scribe at Tel el-Amarna, while the beginning of it, belonging to a copy made for the Assyrian king nearly eight centuries after the tablet of Tel el-Amarna had been buried in the ground, has been brought from the ruins of the library of Nineveh to the British Museum. So, too, the Babylonian story of the Flood has its parallels in both of the documents into which the biblical narrative has been analyzed. Both the "Eloh-ist" (or "Priestly Code") and the "Jehovist" exhibit proofs of an acquaintance with it; we cannot say that, while one of them borrowed from it in Babylonia during the Exile, the materials of the other were drawn from it at an earlier time from some Palestinian version. The Babylonian coloring appears in both alike, while there are indications, such as the change of the Babylonian "ship" into an "ark," that the biblical account was written on Palestinian ground.

Modern criticism would reject the judgment of Jewish antiquity which separated the Book of Joshua from the five books of Moses and included it among the Prophets. It has become the fashion to speak of the "Hexateuch," and to regard the Book of Joshua as forming a continuation of the Book of Deuteronomy. From the purely literary and philological point of view this conclusion of criticism may be right. As has already been said, the Pentateuch probably underwent a final revision shortly after the return from the Exile; indeed, that such a revision took place is expressly stated by Jewish tradition. There is no reason why the original Book of Joshua should not have shared in the revision and have been appended to the books of Moses. The death of the great legislator would be naturally followed by an account of his successor, and of the mode in which the work he had begun was carried out. In the Pentateuch we have a history of the preparation for the

conquest of Canaan; in the Book of Joshua a history of the conquest itself. That the latter book, therefore, should show the same redacting hand as those which precede it is only natural. Thus far the results of the "literary analysis" may be safely accepted.

But on the other hand it must be remembered that, if the so-called Hexateuch had ever really formed a single work, it would be impossible to explain the sharp line of demarcation that was made by the Jews and Samaritans as far back as our materials allow us to go between the "prophetical" Book of Joshua and the Mosaic law. We may even trace this line of demarcation back to the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra read and expounded "the book of the law of Moses"¹ and it was in "the Book of Moses" that the prohibition was found against the entrance of the Ammonite and Moabite "into the congregation of God."² At that time, at any rate, "the book of the law of Moses" or "the Book of Moses" must have been a compact whole and have ended where the Pentateuch ends to-day. In the belief of Ezra and his contemporaries neither the "Deuteronomist" nor a later "redactor" could have incorporated the history of Joshua's conquests into the sacred law. The same testimony is borne by the Canon of the Samaritans which consisted of the Pentateuch alone. The Pentateuch, and the Pentateuch only, was considered of such divine origin as to constitute the sole rule and basis of faith. This belief, however, presupposes that the Pentateuch had already been marked off by the Jews from all the rest of their ancient literature, and that the doctrine of a graduated inspiration in the books of the Canon had already taken root among them. Had there ever been actually a Hexateuch, the existence of the Samaritan Pentateuch would be hard to explain.

Like the other historical books of the Old Testament the Book of Joshua is a compilation. This accounts for the full details that are given of certain events in the conquest of Canaan, and the little that is said about others. While the capture of Ai is described at length, and the war of the five kings against Gideon is fully described, we hear nothing of the way in which the kings of Taanach or Megiddo or Dor were overcome,³ or of the war which he carried on "a long time" with the Canaanites of the north.⁴ In the Books of Judges, of Samuel, and of Kings the marks of compilation are very distinct. In the Book of Judges we find an ancient song of triumph, the song of Deborah and Barak, one of the earliest relics of popular Hebrew literature, and in the Books of Samuel we have varying accounts of David's

¹ Nehemiah viii, 1.

² Nehemiah xiii, 1.

³ Joshua xii, 21, 23.

⁴ Joshua xi, 18.

rise to favor with Saul which are not very easy to reconcile. The compiler has given them honestly, just as he found them, without any attempt to harmonize their apparent contradictions. That is the task that has been left to a later and more critical age.

When these compilations of ancient documents were thrown into their present shape it is generally useless as well as needless for us to inquire. It is only in the case of the Books of Kings that we can approximately fix a date. Here the compiler breaks off with the statement that Evil-Merodach, the son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar, had brought the captive Jewish king Jehoiachin out of prison and had given him a daily allowance "all the days of his life." Evil-Merodach reigned only two years, being murdered in 560 B. C. It would seem that the Books of Kings must have been finished before this happened and while Evil-Merodach was still on the throne. In that case the date of the work can be determined almost to a year.¹

The Books of Samuel were doubtless finished at a very much earlier period. What this precisely was is a matter of little consequence. The important thing is not the date of the compilation, but of the documents of which that compilation consists. If they are contemporaneous with the events which they commemorate, their statements can be accepted as authentic and trustworthy; if they are of later origin, we cannot be sure of their historical truth.

For the most part even the most skeptical criticism is constrained to admit the historical character and early date of the materials used in the Books of Judges and Samuel. It is admitted that the song of Deborah and Barak is of the age to which it claims to belong, and that many of the narratives incorporated in the Books of Samuel were composed in the reign of David. Even where a narrative has been asserted to be a fiction or a misinterpreted tradition we can at times bring archæological testimony to prove its exactitude. Thus, the account of the oppression of Israel by the king of Aram-Naharaim, shortly after the Israelitish settlement in Canaan, has been called improbable and unhistorical. But the tablets of Tel el-Amarna have risen up to corroborate the story. We learn from them that the kingdom of Mitanni, called Nahrina by the Egyptians and Aram-Naharaim in the Old Testament, was for a long period of time an important element in the history of Canaan. It had made alliances with Canaanitish or Amorite chiefs and had sent forth its armies to invade the land. The presence of its troops in Southern Palestine,

¹Cf. also I. Kings iv, 24, "beyond the river" Euphrates, mistranslated in the Authorized Version.

therefore, was no new thing. Moreover, there was a special reason why the king of Naharaim should hold Palestine in subjection in the days of Othniel. If, as Egyptologists believe, the Exodus took place in the closing days of the nineteenth Egyptian dynasty, the conquest of Canaan could not have been effected before Rameses III., the second Pharaoh of the twentieth dynasty, sat upon the throne. Now, Rameses III. was assailed by a vast confederacy of northern tribes which had descended upon Egypt by sea and land. Those who had marched by land had made their way through the lands of Naharaim, of the Hittites, and of the Amorites and had carried with them in their march some of the populations whose countries had been overrun. Among these were the people of Naharaim. Nevertheless, though Naharaim was one of the nations with whom the Pharaoh was called upon to fight, its king did not enter Egypt. This is certain from the fact that he is not named among the princes who took part in the great invasion. While, therefore, he had joined the invaders he yet had not actually crossed the Egyptian frontier. What is more probable than that he had remained behind in Southern Palestine, and that in him we must see the Chushan-rishathaim of the Book of Judges?

XI.

Archæology is thus vindicating the trustworthiness of the documents embodied in the historical books of the Old Testament. It has shown that they are what they profess to be, authentic records of actual facts. It has given us an assurance both that they themselves go back to the early age of Israelitish history, and that the compilers who have used them have done so honestly. There has been no tampering with the words of the original writer; where two narratives existed which seemed inconsistent with one another, both have been given without any attempt to explain away their contradictions. The good faith of the compiler is conspicuous throughout, and we may feel confident that in the Books of Joshua and Judges, of Samuel and Kings we have documents and materials coeval with the facts which they have handed down to us.

Doubtless the compilation was intended to convey a religious lesson. It was not only the history of Israel that had to be recorded, but also the religious and moral truths which that history illustrated. The writer had a religious aim over and above his purely historical one. But this is just what we should expect if he wrote under the guidance of the divine will. The very essence of what is termed inspiration

is that the inspired Scripture should be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness." This is the quality which distinguishes it from writings that are merely secular. It is because the history of Israel has been so written as to convey "instruction in righteousness" that the historical books of the Old Testament form part of the Canon of Scripture.

The materials used by the compilers of the historical books were various. Poems and psalms, books like that of Joshua, the writings of the prophets, and the State chronicles and records were all alike brought into requisition. They imply the existence of a considerable amount of literary activity, and consequently of teachers and schools. The cuneiform characters employed throughout Western Asia at the time when the tablets of Tel el-Amarna were written had been superseded by the simpler Phœnician alphabet, and papyrus or leather had taken the place of clay as a writing material. It had consequently become easy to compose books of some length, as the writer was no longer limited by the possible size of a clay tablet. Even libraries, it is probable, were beginning to be formed. They had existed from early times in Assyria and Babylonia, as well as in Egypt, and the statement in Proverbs, xxv, 1: "These are the proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out," goes to show that in Jerusalem also there was a library in which scribes were employed, as in Assyria, in copying, or, as we should now say, in editing the older literature of the country.

The existence of such a library throws light on the way in which the literature was preserved as well as upon the mode of its transmission. The Assyrian tablets show us how scrupulously careful the scribes were about their work. The very lacunæ in the original were reproduced in the copy, with the words "fracture" or "recent fracture" attached to them; a character of whose value the scribe was doubtful was either copied exactly or else represented by both the signs to which he thought it might be equivalent, and when he was unable to read or understand his text he frankly wrote "I do not know." At the end of each copy a colophon was added stating the nature of the work and the place from which it had come, while special lists were drawn up of the authors of the great epics and literary productions of Chaldea.

We have no reason to think that the Jewish scribes did not exercise equal care. When they tell us that certain proverbs had Solomon for their author we have no ground for imagining that they were without good authority for the fact. On the contrary, separated as they

were from the wise king of Israel by an interval of only two centuries, it would have been extraordinary if they had had none. An autograph manuscript of Solomon could easily have lasted down to the time of Hezekiah, and even if it had perished, copies of it might well have been in existence. The usage of the Assyrian scribes warrants us in believing that when such copies were made, a note was added describing and guaranteeing the original text.

When, therefore, we are told that the history of Solomon contained in the Books of Kings was extracted, at least in part, from "the book of the acts of Solomon," or when the First Book of the Chronicles asserts that "the acts of David, the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer," we have every reason to credit the statement. The art of writing was known and practiced in Palestine long before the Israelites arrived there, and still longer before the Israelitish monarchy had been founded; we have gathered that under the kings a library was established in Jerusalem, like the libraries which existed elsewhere in the ancient oriental world and (as we now know) had once existed in Canaan itself before the days of the Exodus; and the scribes and copyists employed in the library occupied themselves with the republication of the older literature of their country. Archæology has confirmed the trustworthiness of the history which is embodied in the Books of Judges, of Samuel, and of the Kings, while even the most skeptical criticism is fain to admit that some of it at least is coeval with the events which it describes. Lastly, the compilers who have thrown this history into its present form were scrupulously honest, transcribing sometimes word for word the older documents that lay before them, even where these appear to disagree one with the other. Is not the conclusion inevitable that in the historical books of the Old Testament we have authentic and credible history?

At the same time we must remember that it is history — not the mechanical reproduction of transcendental infallibility. The sacred writers were historians and not machines. We must not look, in them, for a mathematical exactitude, which would be impossible in any form of history, much more in ancient oriental history. Inspiration made use of the powers and aptitudes of the human writer; it did not transform them into something superhuman. It adapted history to the needs of man's spiritual and moral nature, but it left that history with all the imperfections and limitation to which the age and the place rendered it subject. To think otherwise is to adopt the doctrine of the

Hindu theologian, who believes that every word of the Rig-Veda is the expression of divine infallibility; it is not the doctrine which has been held by the Christian Church.

From the literary point of view the Old Testament historian had the same difficulties to contend with as all other authors who have undertaken to write the history of the past. He was limited by the imperfection of his materials; where these failed him, he was liable to draw the same erroneous inferences as any other honest historian who wrote under similar circumstances. He could not go beyond the facts at his disposal, and the imperfect record of the facts sometimes led him to wrong conclusions. The same oriental archæology which has so fully vindicated the general truthfulness of the Books of Kings has also demonstrated that the chronological framework on which the history of the Jewish and Israelitish kingdoms is made to rest is altogether wrong. It is more than forty years in excess, and the synchronisms between the later kings of Judah and Samaria are based upon an incorrect estimate of time.

We must not forget that when the Books of Kings were put together the kingdom of Judah had ceased to exist. The books were compiled in Babylonia far away from the library of Jerusalem, and the building in which it had been stored had doubtless been destroyed. The compiler nevertheless quotes from older documents, some of which he mentions by name, and these documents, it must be noticed, belonged not only to the Jewish kingdom but to the northern kingdom as well. It may be asked how an exile in a distant land could have had access to these records of the past? The question is one which could not have been answered before the decipherment of the Assyrian monuments.

But we now know that though the Assyrian and Babylonian kings warred upon men, they did not make war upon books. On the contrary, there were some among them who had strong literary tastes. Assur-bani-pal, the son of Esar-haddon, was especially a patron of literature, and no present was more acceptable to him than some ancient text which his library did not contain. A large portion of the books contained in the library of Nineveh were copies of texts which had been brought from Babylonia. Others are the old texts themselves, taken from the library of some city which had been captured and plundered by the Assyrian troops. One of these texts, which is now in the British Museum, was a list of the plants that were cultivated in the gardens of Merodach-baladan.

What happened in the case of Babylonia when Assyria was the conquering power might

well have happened in the case of Jerusalem when the holy city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. The inscriptions which Nebuchadnezzar has left behind him prove him to have been a man of culture and piety, conciliatory and humane according to the notions of the time. Just as the generals of Assur-bani-pal had carried away the literary treasures of a captured Babylonian town, so we may assume might Nebuchadnezzar have carried away the contents of the Jewish library. And in Babylonia they would be accessible to whoever wished to study them. Assur-bani-pal is never weary of telling us that the new editions of ancient books which were made for the library of Nineveh were intended for the use of "readers," not for that of the king merely and a select circle of scribes.

But, furthermore, the history of Assur-bani-pal's library throws light on the fact that the compiler of the Books of Kings was unable to appeal to "the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel" and to make use of the biographies of the northern prophets Elijah and Elisha. As Babylonian books were brought to the library of Nineveh and copied there, so too would copies of Israelitish books be made for the library of Jerusalem, or the originals themselves be deposited in it. It may be that after the capture of Samaria by the Assyrian king, Sargon, the wreck of its ancient literature was carried to the capital of the southern kingdom. There are traces that the writings of the northern prophet Hosea have undergone a revision at the hands of Jewish editors, and that they were put into their present shape in Judah is evident from the introduction, where the date of Hosea's ministry is fixed primarily by the reigns of Jewish sovereigns.

XII.

The historical books which are based on the work of the prophets lead us naturally to the books of the prophets themselves. But we are not to suppose that the prophetic books now contained in the Old Testament Canon represent the whole of the literary activity of that long line of prophets who, from the days of Samuel to those of Malachi, and in the northern kingdom as well as in Judah, announced the promises and the threatenings of God to a stiff-necked and rebellious people. Many of the prophets left no literary works behind them; others wrote histories only, fragments of which have been incorporated into the historical books or into the collected writings of the prophets themselves; while a large amount of prophetic literature must have perished altogether. This must have been more especially the case with the prophetic literature of the northern kingdom. But

much of it must have been lost in the South as well. Here and there we have quotations from an older prophet by one of his successors whose works have been preserved; or allusions are made to some ancient prophecy. Thus, Isaiah tells us that his prophecy against Moab¹ was one that had been made "long ago" (for such is the correct translation of chapter xvi, verse 13), and adapted by the prophet himself to the existing circumstances of the time.² Indeed, if Ewald is right, the older prophecy is broken off in the middle of a sentence: "And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, and he shall come to his sanctuary to pray, and shall not prevail"—the continuation being given in the new oracle which Isaiah was commissioned to announce: "But now the Lord hath spoken, saying: Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be condemned." A similar, though briefer, quotation from an older prophecy is to be found quite at the beginning of the Book of Isaiah.³ The same prophecy is also quoted by Micah,⁴ but with additional matter which must originally have belonged to it both at the beginning and at the end. Chronology, however, is against the supposition that Isaiah had the words of Micah before him. Micah was the younger contemporary of Isaiah, and the prophecy in question was delivered at the very commencement of Isaiah's ministry. There seems, therefore, but one explanation possible: Isaiah and Micah alike must have derived the prophecy from an older source.

A careful examination of these and similar quotations makes it clear that the words of a prophecy might be modified and changed so as to adapt them to the circumstances of the day. Passages might be omitted or added, and alterations might be made in the proper names. A prophet might revise his own prophecies in this way, as well as the prophecies of others. The object of prophecy was not to register the passing events of the time, but to declare the will of the Lord. And that declaration necessarily varied with the change of events, bringing with it a corresponding change in the language of prophecy. It might even happen that two versions—an earlier and a later one—existed of the same prophecy, so that when the prophet's writings were collected together it would be needful either to choose between them or to set them side by side, or finally to combine them one with the other. Many of the difficulties which we experience in explaining the Hebrew prophecies and fixing their respective dates are due to this cause. Mutually inconsistent notes of time

seem to be, as it were, interwoven together, one of them indicating a date or an occasion with which the other is incompatible, and at times we have a perplexing interchange of Ephraim with Judah which drives the commentator to despair.

It is only where a collection of a prophet's writings was made either during his lifetime or shortly after his death, that, with a few exceptions, they have survived. The works of the older prophets have perished, not so much because their prophecies were not written down, for such a view is inconsistent with the fact that men like Nathan and Gad composed books, as because no authorized collection was made of their oracles. It was not needful that the prophet himself should commit his utterances to writing. Baruch, as we know, was the scribe of Jeremiah, and the words of the herdman Amos, which he called upon the people to "hear" and not to read, must have been written down by others. The one important thing was that the utterances of the prophet should have been preserved in writing, and that these written utterances should have been collected into a book.

In most cases there is no question that the collection is restricted to the works of the prophet whose name it bears. But over the Book of Zechariah and still more over the Book of Isaiah a good deal of controversy has arisen. The controversy has been needlessly acrimonious, since so long as a prophecy is stamped with the marks of its divine origin it matters little to what individual age or prophet it may belong. It is not like a historical document, whose credibility so largely depends upon its date. Still less is it like the Mosaic law whose divine authority and signification for all future Israelitish history is so closely bound up with its traditional claim to antiquity. Questions of date and authorship do not affect the essential nature of prophecy or our belief in its truth.

Neither in matter nor in manner do the last six chapters of the Book of Zechariah harmonize with the eight which precede them. They presuppose a different political horizon—the age of the Assyrian rather than of the Persian empire. That the two collections of prophecies should have been bound up in the same volume is no more extraordinary than that books of various age and authorship should be bound up together in the same Canon of the Old Testament. It may be that the authors of both collections bore the same name, of Zechariah, or there may have been other reasons for including them in a single volume. What these reasons were we shall never know, and it would be useless to inquire.

In the Book of Isaiah, too, it would seem

¹ Isaiah xv, xvi.

² Isaiah xvi, 14.

³ Isaiah ii, 2-4.

⁴ Micah iv, 1-3.

that more than one collection of Hebrew prophecies has been joined together. The later chapters form a whole which, in style and language, as well as in their historical and geographical outlook, stand apart from the prophecies of the older Isaiah. Even in the English translation it is impossible to read them without feeling that we are transported into a new and different world, the world of Cyrus and not of Hezekiah. It is not that the prophet has been carried in spirit into a later age, but he moves in that age in actual reality. The atmosphere that surrounds him and his contemporaries is wholly changed from that in which the earlier Isaiah lived, whether as man or as prophet. The Jewish monarchy has passed away, with all the ideas and beliefs that gathered around it, and a new world of life and thought has taken its place.

Recent criticism would have us believe that the Book of Isaiah in its present form is almost as much a collection of works of different date and authorship as the Psalms themselves. The process of dissection and disintegration has been carried out with an unsparing hand, until comparatively little has been left to the Isaiah whom we know by name, the contemporary and counselor of Hezekiah, the patriot who delivered his message of hope and encouragement to his countrymen in their hour of extremest danger. But such minute analysis savors of that hair-splitting dissection of the Pentateuch which we have already had to consider, and the arguments which tell against the latter tell equally against the attempt to analyze the larger and clearly marked discoveries of the Book of Isaiah into a number of fragments. It is true that the historical chapters which separate the two great divisions of the book one from the other are a proof that the editor did not confine himself to the collection only of Isaiah's prophecies, and the Assyrian inscriptions have informed us that these chapters are but fragmentary—episodes extracted from a fuller story and arranged without any chronological order. But the fact does not authorize us to suppose that the book is a mere cento, into which the anonymous prophecies of the later Jewish monarchy and the Exile have been heaped pell-mell together. It is not improbable that in some cases where the critic fancies he has discovered the signs of a date later than that of the contemporary Hezekiah he has merely found passages which have been adapted to the needs of a later time.

In the majority of instances the introductions prefixed to the prophetic books state the periods to which they severally belong. Where this is not the case, speculation has been busy. The Book of Joel, formerly assumed to be of early date, has of late been relegated by certain

scholars to the post-exilic epoch. The date of Nahum, on the other hand, has been approximately fixed by his reference to the sack of Thebes¹ which, as we have learned from the Assyrian monuments, took place about B. C. 665. Among the minor prophets the Book of Jonah alone occupies a peculiar position. It is a book about the prophet, instead of being a collection of his prophecies. It reads, moreover, more like an extract from an Assyrian chronicle than like the history of a Hebrew prophet. But whatever view we may take of its character will have little bearing on the question of its age. Whether it was composed shortly after the lifetime of the prophet or whether it is a compilation of a much later date it is impossible to tell. All we can say is that the author could not have been personally acquainted with Nineveh itself, as he includes within its precincts not only Nineveh itself, but also the neighboring towns of Calah and Dur-Sargon, the last of which was not built until a century after the age of Jonah the son of Amittai. For those who knew of Nineveh only by hearsay the statement was practically accurate, but it could not have been made by one who had actually visited the spot.

We now come to the third and last division of the books of the Hebrew Canon. In this the Psalms take the foremost place. In New Testament times the whole book went under the name of "David," though it was known that many of the psalms contained in it were not the composition of the old Israelitish king. But David had been famous as the sweet singer of Israel, the founder of its psalmody, the inventor of its musical instruments,² and the psalms ascribed to him occupied a prominent position in the work. Other collections were subsequently added to the original one, until eventually the Book of Psalms came to consist of five collections combined into a single book for use in the services of the temple. As it is generally recognized that some of the psalms are as late as the age of the Maccabees, the final revision of the book must come down to a comparatively late period. Endeavors have recently been made to assign the whole work to the same late date, and to deny that any of the psalms are earlier than the post-exilic epoch. But the assumption is contrary to the universal belief of antiquity and is inconsistent with the internal evidence of many of the psalms themselves. Moreover, it has been proved that the text of the book is corrupt in several places. Had all the psalms contained in it originated at a period when the Septuagint translation was already in process of making, it is inconceivable that such should have been the case. The corruptions of

¹ Nahum iii, 8.

² Amos vi, 5.

the text imply that the Psalms had been long in use and that erroneous readings had crept into them even before they had been collected in their present form.

We may, in fact, see in the Book of Psalms relics of the psalmodic literature of Israel from the days of David down to those of the Maccabean war. That they are relics only, preserved, it may be, by their employment in the ritual, is evident from the existence of other psalms in the historical books which are not included among them. The song of "the bow," preserved in II. Samuel, i, 19-27, was extracted from the Book of Jasher and never found its way into the Book of Psalms, and the psalm composed by Hezekiah "when he had been sick"¹ is similarly wanting there. On the other hand, we meet with psalms in the collection which refer us to the later days of the Jewish monarchy or to the period of the Captivity. It is difficult not to agree with Hitzig that a psalm like the seventy-sixth is most naturally referable to the overthrow of Sennacherib's army, while psalms like the one hundred and twenty-sixth or the one hundred and thirty-seventh are full of memories of the Babylonish Exile. It is not easy to decide when the superscriptions attached to the psalms were first composed. That it was before the Septuagint translation of them was made is evident from the fact that they already appear there. But their historical value is slight, and the ascription to Moses of the only psalm (the ninetyeth) in which it is stated that the extreme age of man is four score years, shows with how small an amount of critical ability they were compiled.

The second book of the Hagiographa as usually printed is the Book of Proverbs.² Here again we have a compilation of older collections of a special form of literature. The bulk of the work is ascribed to Solomon, and though in modern times the ascription has been disputed, there is no reason whatever for doubting its correctness except a general desire to reduce the age of the Old Testament writings and to reject the common belief of the past. To the first and larger collection a second was added, consisting of the proverbs which had been republished during the reign of Hezekiah;³

¹Isaiah xxxviii, 10-20.

²The order followed is that of German manuscripts. In the Spanish manuscripts the general order is: Chronicles, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, and Ezra (with Nehemiah), while the Talmud arranges them as follows: Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra (with Nehemiah), and Chronicles. These variations are in striking contrast to the fixity of the order of the Mosaic and prophetic books, and indicate the later date at which this part of the Canon was finally settled.

³Proverbs xxv-xxx.

and to that again a third collection, in which were contained "the words of Lemuel the king of Massa, which his mother taught him." The cuneiform inscriptions have told us where Massa was. It was the district which lay in the northern part of Arabia, extending from Babylonia in the east to the land of Edom in the west. It adjoined Uz, the home of Job, as we may gather from Genesis, x, 23, and formed part of that "east country" whose wisdom was celebrated in the days of Solomon.¹

The Book of Proverbs is therefore fittingly associated with the Book of Job in the Hebrew Canon. Here, too, the hand of the modern disintegrator has been at work. The speech of Elihu has been declared to be an interpolation, and the introduction and conclusion of the book are denied to have originally belonged to it. But such judgments rest solely on the "subjective" views and "literary tact" of the critic; no solid and tangible argument can be brought forward in their favor. The critic has been more successful in suggesting a date for the composition of the book. It would seem to belong to that exilic age when the great question of the existence of evil began to assume an increased importance in the Jewish mind. The old doctrine that piety was rewarded and wickedness punished in this world had received a rude shock. The reforms of the good King Josiah had been followed by his defeat and death in battle, and God had allowed his temple to be destroyed and his people to be led into captivity at a time when, outwardly at all events, the law of Moses was better observed than in the earlier and more prosperous days of Jewish history. The old theory had broken down, and it had become plain that righteousness does not always bring with it worldly success, or evil-doing misery and disgrace. An answer was needed to the problem why the righteous is allowed to suffer, while the wicked flourishes, and it is this problem which the Book of Job is intended to solve.

The text of this book is exceedingly hard to understand, and the Septuagint translation shows that such was already the case in the second century before the Christian era. The fact may be due to two causes. It may be that for reasons unknown to us the text became corrupted at an early period, or it may be that the book was originally written in a Semitic dialect, not exactly the same as Hebrew though closely resembling it. If this had been so, some of the difficulties we experience would result from our ignorance of the words and idioms of the dialect in question, others from the corruptions introduced by copyists in an endeavor to assimilate the language of the

¹I. Kings iv, 30.

book to ordinary Hebrew. That Job was not a native of Palestine, and that the scene of the work is laid in Uz, eastward of Edom, gives a coloring of probability to the conjecture.

After Job comes the Song of Songs. Much nonsense has been written about this old relic of Hebrew lyric poetry by commentators whose heads were full of ideas concerning allegories and symbolical descriptions of the Church. But the book tells its own tale. It is a lyric drama, with the fair Shulamite as its heroine and her shepherd lover as its hero. That there are obscurities in the poem is true. But they are due to the difficulty of always knowing who it is that it is speaking, whether the chorus, or the bride, or her lover, or King Solomon himself. The poem shows us that, as in the modern East, lyric poetry existed also among the Israelites. That only one specimen of it should have come down to us may be regretted, but it need occasion us no surprise. It was the sole example of that form of literature upon which the seal of inspiration had been set. The Old Testament Canon includes and represents all the varied products of ancient Hebrew literary art; the spirit of God inspired them all alike; but where its inspiration should rest was not for man to say. As there is but one Book of Job, one discussion of the problem of evil, so also there is but one Song of Solomon.

That it should be called the Song of Solomon does not necessarily imply that Solomon was its author. It was because it related to the great king of Israel, not because it was his work, that the name was attached to it. Indeed, it is difficult to suppose that he could have written a poem which painted him in somewhat unfavorable colors. But that the work is of the age of the great king there is no reason for denying. The allusions in it, the atmosphere it breathes, are all of his age. And the philological arguments that have been urged in favor of a later date can none of them be sustained.

Next in order to the Song of Songs are placed the Books of Ruth and Lamentations. From an historical point of view they would more fittingly be appended to the Book of Judges and the prophecies of Jeremiah, the position they occupy in the English Bible. But their inclusion in the Hebrew Hagiographa indicates that they were not admitted into the Canon until after the list of the prophetic books had been closed. They had doubtless come down from an early period, but for reasons which we cannot now discover their authorship must have been questioned and their claims to canonicity disputed. It took time before these claims could be finally allowed.

We now pass on to Ecclesiastes or the Preacher. How late it was before this book was received into the Canon we have already seen. Modern research holds that it could not have been written until after the return from the Exile. Indeed, the Jewish scholar Grätz has endeavored to prove that its author was a contemporary of Herod, and the general opinion of scholars tends to refer its composition to the Maccabean age. That it cannot be of very early date is evidenced partly by the analogies we find in it to the ideas of Greek philosophy, partly and more especially by the fact that the language of it is late Hebrew. Even the so-called "waw conversive," that invariable characteristic of classical Hebrew, is (with three exceptions) absent from its pages. In putting the words of it, therefore, into the mouth of Solomon the author has adopted the usage of the Haggadist rather than of the historian. Solomon has ceased to be the historical king of Israel, and has become the representative of a class. He is "the Preacher," not the monarch of Israel.

The Book of Esther, which next follows, brings us back once more to the records of history. It is a book which has been especially dear to the Jewish patriot. During the middle ages, when the property and life of the Jew were constantly at the mercy of a fanatical mob or a mercenary king, it was a delight to him to hear the tale of the great deliverance that had once been wrought for his countrymen when they too were in similar peril. But to the Christian reader the book seems of lesser value. Not only is it distinguished by its exclusively national tone, it is further distinguished from the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures by the absence from it of the name of God. It reads more like an extract from the state annals of Persia, which has been edited by Jewish hands, than like those other biblical narratives to which the historical books of the Old Testament have accustomed us. It is, in fact, another instance of the way in which the Spirit of God made use of all the various forms of literary work that were current in the ancient eastern world, and how what is termed inspiration was not confined to one particular class of books. The breath of God "bloweth where it listeth," and in spite of the narrow limits within which our narrow prejudices might wish to inclose it we are taught the lesson that "what God hath cleansed" we may not call common or unclean. When the Book of Esther was written we do not know; all we can say is that it must have been after the accession of Ahasuerus or Xerxes the son of Darius Hystaspes, and the names of some of the chief personages mentioned in it—Esther, the Babylonian Ishtar, and Mordecai, the

Babylonian Mardukâ or "man" of Merodach — may perhaps indicate that Babylon, the second capital of the Persian empire, was the place in which it was composed.

XIII.

The Hebrew Canon places the Book of Daniel next in order to the Book of Esther. Like the latter, the Book of Daniel occupies an unique position in the Old Testament. It is a double work — double in language, in matter, and in character. Partly written in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic, it is also partly a history, partly an apocalypse. Over its date and the authenticity of its history heated controversies have arisen. The present writer believes that they have been settled finally and decisively by the cuneiform monuments. We now possess the annals of the last king of the Babylonian empire, and the history of the fall of his power officially composed just after it had taken place; we possess, moreover, the proclamation of Cyrus in which he justified his conquest of Babylonia and gave permission to the Jews and other exiles to return to their homes, as well as inscriptions of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylonia, in which the rise of Cyrus is described. Furthermore, a long series of contract tablets exists, recording the commercial transactions of the trading community of Babylonia, and extending month by month and year by year from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to that of Darius. The dates are always given in them, and we thus have a complete and very exact chronological register of the Babylonian empire. Though the name of Belshazzar occurs upon these monuments, he never became king. His father, Nabonidus, was the last of the independent monarchs of the Babylonian empire, and Nabonidus was an usurper, not descended from the royal house of Nebuchadnezzar. Of "Darius the Mede" there is no trace, and we learn from the inscriptions that there was no siege and no capture of Babylon. The city opened its gates to Gobryas, the general of Cyrus, after the defeat of the Babylonian army near Sippara in the north.

In the earlier chapters of the Book of Daniel we have, in fact, Haggadah and not history. They are a parable for our instruction, not a text-book for the historian. That unwritten history which has always been so popular in the East, and in which all historical perspective is lost and historical personages of various epochs are brought together, is the history that is reflected in them. The Book of Daniel introduces us to a new development of Jewish thought and literature, which was destined to become predominant as time went on, until it had banished all history, in the modern sense

of the word from the writing of the Rabbis. The keynote of later Jewish literature is the so-called Haggadah, and the beginnings of Haggadah are to be found in the Book of Daniel.

In the case of the Book of Daniel, therefore, the verdict of criticism is also the verdict of archæology. We cannot regard it as a record of contemporaneous events. Criticism assigns its composition to the age of the Maccabees, and the existence of Greek words in it seems to imply that this conclusion is right. The conclusion is further confirmed by its place among the Hagiographa. The Jewish Church has excluded it from the prophetic books, and in spite of the prophecies it contains has placed it among the books which, on account either of the lateness of their date or of the time when they first became officially known, were the last to be admitted into the Canon. The same testimony is borne by the numerous additions which were made to the narratives of the book. It was unprotected by the reverence which gathered round the older literature of the country, and stories like that of Susanna, or of Bel and the Dragon, were freely added to it.

The last four books of the Hagiographa are again different from those that precede them. In Ezra and Nehemiah we have important contributions to Jewish history. They are the sources of our knowledge of the events which followed upon the return from the Exile. In the Jewish Canon they form but a single book, and their present division cannot be traced back farther than the time of Origen. They appear, indeed, to have been compiled by the same author. Large portions of them have been copied word for word from the lost works of Ezra and Nehemiah, who, like the compiler, made use of official documents. In one place we have a narrative that must have been written by a contemporary of Zerubbabel, and a long passage in the Book of Ezra¹ is in the Aramaic language. It is taken from what has been termed the "Aramaic Chronicle," parts of which have been translated into Hebrew in other passages of the book. The compiler must have lived in the age of Alexander the Great, since Jaddua, the last high priest mentioned by him,² was a contemporary of the Macedonian conqueror, while Darius Codomannus, the last king of Persia, is called "Darius the Persian," as if the Persian monarchy had already ceased to exist.

The chronology of the two books presents insoluble problems, which are complicated by the fact that the chronology followed by Josephus, the Jewish historian, is irreconcilable with any solution of them that can be proposed.

¹ Ezra iv, 8 to vi, 18.

² Nehemiah xii, 11, 22.

On the one hand, Zerubbabel and his contemporaries—Joshua the high priest, and Haggai and Zechariah the prophets—are placed under the reign of Darius I.¹ With this agrees the genealogy of the high priests in Nehemiah, xii, 10, 11, as well as the express testimony of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah themselves. On the other hand, in Ezra, iv, 23-v, 5, their period is transferred to the reign of Darius II., a century later, while Josephus makes Sanballat, the adversary of Nehemiah, a contemporary of Alexander the Great, and asserts that Manasseh, who was driven away by Nehemiah,² was a brother of Jaddua and the founder of the temple at Samaria. The authority of Josephus may indeed be discounted, as the document he followed is plainly erroneous in other particulars. But the apparent contradiction in the Book of Ezra remains. We know, however, that it must admit of an explanation; even skeptical criticism does not impugn the historical trustworthiness of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah and allows that the materials of which they are composed are derived from contemporary sources. The fact is an instructive one, as it is a warning against the assumption that because there are seeming contradictions in our records, the records are, therefore, untrue.

Another problem which is raised by the two books is their relation to the apocryphal First Book of Esdras. The First Book of Esdras takes the place of the Book of Ezra in the Canon of the Septuagint and consequently in the Canon of early Christianity, and there are scholars who consider that its text is preferable to that of the Massorettes. At present the question is still in dispute.

The compiler of the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra, or of the First Book of Esdras if the Canon of the Septuagint is preferred, was doubtless the author of the Books of Chronicles. These latter close the list of the Hebrew Hagiographa and may be described as the history of Israel, and more especially of Judah, written from a ritualistic point of view. A comparison of them with the Books of Samuel and Kings makes this very clear. It is the temple and its services, the priesthood and the law, which occupy the chief place in the writer's mind. The history of the northern kingdom is almost entirely ignored; it was only in Jerusalem that the true and legitimate center of Israelitish religion was to be found. The details of secular history lose their importance when regarded under such an aspect, and become of value only in so far as they bear upon the history of the Jewish Church. Ritual, rather than history, is the primary consideration of the Chronicles. At the same time he makes use of historical

documents which are not quoted elsewhere in the Old Testament and thus introduces narratives into his text some of which have been verified by archaeological discovery in spite of the doubts that the "higher criticism" has thrown upon them. Some of these documents have to do with the genealogies which have been attached to the work on account of the necessity of determining who were genuine members of the Jewish community and church. The date of the work, which in the Hebrew Canon forms but a single book, is fixed by that of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. That all three works belong to the same author may be considered certain from the similarity of language, style and contents that exists between them, as well as from the fact that where the Books of the Chronicles break off, the Book of Ezra begins.

A survey of the Hagiographa brings two facts plainly before us. One of these is the extreme caution displayed by the Jewish Church of Palestine in regard to the admission of a book into the Canon of Scripture. It was long and keenly debated whether Ecclesiastes could be regarded as a book that "soiled the hands" by reason of its sacred character, and a similar discussion arose over the Song of Solomon. Even Esther and Proverbs were objected to, the one because the name of God is not mentioned in it, the other on account of the contradictions it was alleged to contain, and each had to fight its way to recognition. The second fact which results from our survey is the contrast presented by the Law and the Prophets to those tardily received books of the Hagiographa. No controversy ever arose about their sacred character, no question was raised in regard to their authorship, their claim to authority was never contested. Instead of being relegated to a class apart, at the end of the Canon, they were from the first set in the forefront of it. It has been reserved for modern criticism to reverse the verdict of Jewish antiquity, and to place the Law in a lower and later position than that of some of the Hagiographical books. The very fact seems to bring its own condemnation with it.

XIV.

The Greek Canon of the Alexandrine Jews disregarded the distinction which had been made between the Hagiographa and the other books of the Old Testament, and added to them several others most of which are now included in the Apocrypha. Some of these books—Tobit, Judith, the stories of Susanna, and of Bel and the Dragon—are examples of Haggadah in its full development. Of claims to historical credibility they possess but little, and such as they had have been set aside by archaeological research. The First Book of the

¹ Ezra iv, 3-6.

² Nehemiah xiii, 28.

Maccabees, on the other hand, is a historical work of great value, and takes up the story of the Jewish nation where it is dropped by the books of the Hebrew Canon. For the history of the great persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes, which extirpated the growing spirit of Hellenism in Judah, and brought the people back to a consciousness of their mission in the world, it is our best, if not our sole witness. In the Second Book of the Maccabees, on the contrary, the Haggadaic element once more makes its appearance. History is subordinated to the inculcation of a religious lesson, and we can no longer trust the historical accuracy of the details.

Of the other Apocryphal books, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, are by far the most notable. They belong to the same class of literature as the Book of Proverbs, and breathe the same exalted moral tone and the same fervid belief in the wisdom and righteousness of God. The divine wisdom of which they treat finds its prototype in the Proverbs of Solomon and prepares the way, through the writings of Philo of Alexandria, for the conception of the Logos of St. John. The spirit of wisdom which taught mankind religion and virtue, was shown by Christianity to be the eternal Word which became incarnate in the person of Christ.

The Book of Ecclesiasticus was translated into Greek, as we learn from the prologue, by the grandson of the author, in 132 B. C. The wisdom of Solomon probably belongs to the same period. They thus stand about midway between books like Tobit and Baruch, which were composed toward the close of the Persian epoch, and the Second Book of Esdras, that strange Apocalypse which seems to have been written in Greek about 90 A. D. Naturally, therefore, it was not included in the Septuagint any more than the Prayer of Manasseh or certain other works which laid claim to a certain kind of Scriptural authority but have never become canonical. Among these we may mention the Book of Enoch, which is quoted in the Epistle of Saint Jude, verses 14, 15, and enjoyed a large amount of favor in the Coptic and Ethiopic churches.

The Book of Enoch is an example of the apocalyptic literature which had so wide a circulation in the Jewish world in the age of our Lord, and it has been shown to be the work of different authors, the original nucleus having been written in Aramaic in the second century B. C. Other apocalypses of a similar nature were the Ascension of Isaiah, which professed to describe the martyrdom of the prophet by being sawn asunder,¹ and a vision

of the future which had been revealed to him; the Assumption of Moses which is supposed to be referred to by Saint Jude;¹ and the Revelation of Baruch, in which it is pretended that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was foreseen by the ancient Hebrew prophet. Of a wholly different character are the eighteen "psalms of Solomon," which it would seem were originally written in Hebrew not long after the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey (in 63 B. C.). The psalms declare that the Lord is about to avenge the sufferings of his people upon the foreign invader, and predict the speedy appearance of the Messiah. They illustrate the tendency of the time to ascribe the literary compositions of the age to the older inspired writers of Israel, and thereby to secure for them a currency and an authority which otherwise they may not have acquired. But the existence of all this mass of pseudonymous matter affords a full justification for the caution displayed by the Jewish Church of Palestine in its reception of the canonical books. It is a caution which a belief in the indwelling and guiding spirit of God alone renders explicable.

The period which saw the growth of the Apocrypha saw also the rise of the two great parties of the Jewish Church, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. But their history belongs rather to the age of Christ than to that of the Old Covenant. The Sadducee, for whom the religious development of Israel began and ended with the Mosaic law, and the Pharisee, who ranked orthodoxy of belief and practice above justice and mercy, were alike unable to recognize the change that was about to pass over the Jewish Church. It was among the self-denying and more spiritually minded Essenes that the first victories of the new faith were to be won. But to describe them would carry us beyond our scope. With the closing of the Old Testament Canon the Jewish Church had completed its work. A few more years and the exclusive Church of a single people had to make way for the Catholic Church of Christ. Israel after the flesh passed into the spiritual Israel of the whole world.

In tracing the history of Israel after the flesh there are three facts which stand out in relief. One of these is the indissoluble connection that exists between the history of the Hebrew people and the history of the Hebrew Scriptures. The one depends upon the other; we cannot understand either of them apart. It is the Old Testament which tells us of the divine mission to which Israel was called, and it is the history of Israel which guarantees and verifies the truth of the Old Testament. We cannot deny the truth of the history and retain our

¹ Hebrews xi, 37.

¹ Saint Jude, 9.

old faith in the Canon of Scripture, or deny the trustworthiness of the Canon and yet accept the history which it records. If the larger part of the Mosaic law is indeed the invention of the exilic age, we shall have to change our whole conception of what is meant by the "Word of God."

But, in the second place, we have learned how varied is the literature of the Old Testament and over how long a space of time it extends. In both respects it offers a marked contrast to the books of the New Testament. It represents, in fact, all that is left of what was once the literature of a highly cultivated nation. Law and history, poetry and drama, ethics and philosophy, as well as prophecy—that unique product of the Hebrew race—are all to be found within its pages. There is no dead uniformity of subject, of thought, or of expression. On the contrary, the books of the Old Testament are as diversified in manner as they are in matter. Each writer preserves his own individuality; and to argue from the usage of one to that of another is no more justifiable than it would be in the case of two modern authors. The length of time, moreover, covered by the Old Testament writings increases the differences observable among men. With the progress of the ages came new words and idioms, new conceptions, new enlargements of spiritual view. The work of a contemporary of David was not, and could not be, similar to the work of a contemporary of Ezra, whether linguistically, intellectually or theologically. The history of Israel is reflected in the history of its sacred books.

Then, thirdly, that history is seen to have been a slow education for the mission which Israel was created to fulfill. Little by little the Israelitish people were sundered from the nations that surrounded them and made to realize their own peculiar place in the world. But they were never taken out of the world; never, except for the brief interval of their wanderings in the Wilderness, were they planted in hermet-like isolation out of the reach of other men. From first to last they formed part of that great stream of civilization which we call the history of the ancient East. Babylonia had been their nurse, Egypt their schoolmaster, and

in their home in Canaan they found themselves the bridge and highway between the two great powers of the oriental world. In the shock of conflict with the Assyrian empire the northern kingdom perished, and Judah was left alone to represent the older Israel. But Judah, too, passed away as an independent nation, and in the Babylonian Exile its character was transformed. The Jewish Church arose out of the ashes of the ancient monarchy, while the nation itself became but an insignificant part of the great Persian empire. Though for a brief space the Maccabean victories once more gave to Judah temporal power and political independence, their effect was but transitory. It was not as a kingdom, but as a church; not as a nation, but as a religious community, that Judah henceforth affected and influenced mankind.

The spread of the Greek language through the conquests of Alexander of Macedon, followed by the empire of Rome with its common government and code of laws, caused Judaism to permeate the whole of the civilized world. Jewish colonies and synagogues were established from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, and Gentile proselytes joined them in the imperial city itself. Judaism was fast becoming a universal religion. But as long as it remained Judaism it could be universal in name only, not in reality. For such a transformation it was needful that it should cease to be the Jewish Church, and that it should become that kingdom of God which prophecy had discerned in the far future and of which the Jewish Church was the antitype and forerunner. In the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth the Old Testament was summed up and fulfilled. The Jewish Church had accomplished its work, and like the Jewish monarchy of an earlier day was called upon to make way for a newer and better order of things. Henceforth there was to be no distinction between Jew or Gentile, no antagonism between the chosen people to whom God's revelation had been made and the world in the midst of which they lived. The two streams of Jewish and Gentile history had united at last, and the message of God which had been revealed to Abraham in Canaan and to Moses on Mount Sinai was now made known to all mankind.

A. H. Sayce

CHAPTER I.

TRADITIONALIST AND MODERN CRITICAL VIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

EVERY student of the Old Testament has at least two questions to ask concerning it: (1) Whether we have the books which were first given by inspiration to the Old Testament Church? Hence the subject of the preservation and transmission of the original text of the Old Testament should have a place in the present work. (2) What is the origin of the Old Testament books? As there is much diversity of opinion with reference to the answer which should be given to this second question, it is thought best simply to indicate the views of the traditionalists¹ and of the evangelical modern critics in the barest outline.

Those who hold the traditional view regarding the origin and composition of the Old Testament books and the evangelical modern critics may be said to agree in the belief that God is in a special sense the author of the Old Testament, that "Men spake from God being moved by the Holy Ghost."² They also agree regarding the underlying purpose of the Old Testament, that it is God's revelation of his will, concerning the way of man's salvation and the Savior who was to come. They differ in their estimate of the concessions which the Spirit of God has made to human limitations growing out of the age, country, manners, customs, and literary habits of an ancient oriental people. The traditionalists postulate, not only a perfect revelation of God's purpose, but also a perfect vehicle in the original autographs of the Old Testament. This school maintains that where there are allusions to science, while popular language is used, the science of the Old Testament is fundamentally accurate, and if there is any seeming discrepancy between the science of the present day and that of the Bible a more profound study will show that the ultimate science and that of the Bible, stripped of its popular dress, will be found in full accord. So, too, they maintain that the inspiration which God gave his servants enabled them to write correct history, and that, aside from any changes which have taken place in the text during the 2,400 years of its transmission, a study of the monuments will show that all the details of the Old Testament

history, as far as we can follow them, are correct. This school affirms that if the science and history of the Old Testament are not substantially accurate in every particular we have no sufficient guarantee for the claim that God has made a revelation of himself to his people in the Old Testament Scriptures. Practically, inspiration is postulated not only for the doctrines but also for the facts of the Old Testament, hence the claim is made, not only for perfect moral and religious teaching, so far as the needs of the age were concerned, but also for perfect science and history. Hence, every allusion to the authorship of books in the Old and New Testaments is considered as a declaration of God's Spirit with regard to the men who wrote them. The words of Christ, "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?"¹ are considered the testimony of the omniscient Savior with reference to the authorship of the Pentateuch, and as final for every true disciple. While the traditional school fully admits the duty of Christian scholarship and investigation, it maintains that the results of criticism can only be to confirm the words of Christ and the New Testament writers regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch. The same position is taken with respect to the authorship of the second part of Isaiah. As one of the New Testament writers² quotes some of the words of this prophecy as from Isaiah, this form of quotation is considered the testimony of inspiration regarding the authorship of the passage quoted and practically of the whole book.

There are certain decided advantages in the position of the traditionalists as indicated. It is easily understood by all. Indeed, the first thought of almost every Christian who reflects on the subject, is that the Bible should not only be infallible in doctrine, but also in science and history. It is this conviction which has been, to a great extent, the inspiration of recent researches in Palestine, Assyria, and Egypt. The article by Professor Sayce shows not only the antiquity of literature among some of the Semitic peoples, but also the verification of the Old

¹ This term is used for want of a better.

² II. Peter i, 21 (Revised Version).

¹ John v, 46-47 (Revised Version).

² Matthew iii, 3; compare Isaiah xl, 3.

Testament at important points, and the early character of its sources.

In view of the discussions now in progress regarding the Old Testament with reference to its science, history, and chronology, the Church is studying the Bible as never before. Some, like Eli, are anxious for the Ark of God, and in view of the great expansion that is given to scientific studies in our colleges and universities many fear that the youth who are engaged in these studies are liable to be alienated from the book which has been honored and loved by their fathers. Evangelical modern criticism, however, claims to restore the Old Testament to its place of honor and confidence in the minds of all classes of Christian students by giving a faithful view of its origin and composition. While holding, as has been remarked, that God is the real author of the Old Testament, it claims that the questions of origin and composition, on the human side, are legitimate objects of the freest and deepest research, and that no genuine reverent criticism can cast a cloud upon God's Word because, as God is truth, the truth regarding his Word can only reflect honor upon it. They claim to find that, while God is the author, through his Spirit, of the Old Testament Scriptures, he did not change the literary habits and characteristics of the people to whom he gave his revelation by any miraculous exercise of his power; that, while his truth was supernaturally revealed, the men to whom he made the revelation were not like stenographers, to whom we dictate just the words we wish to have written, or even like a messenger, old or young, to whom we repeat a message that is to be given verbally to some person.

These analogies fail to state the case as apprehended by the critics. It must rather be represented as follows: the message itself is of an entirely religious character. If its religious purport depends on a historical fact, like the resurrection of Jesus, that fact must be established, but the credibility of the witness is not affected by his being an Oriental, unacquainted with modern science, history, and literary methods. Such a man, if converted, trained in the Christian religion and possessed of God's Spirit, could become an effective instrument in the conversion and salvation of his fellow-men. Indeed, he would undoubtedly be a better instrument of the Spirit, in this respect, to his own people than the greatest scholar living. His way of apprehending and presenting Christian truth, while not differing in any essential particular, would greatly differ in details from the presentation made by a graduate of one of our universities, who would utterly fail to reach an oriental people until he had become familiar with their life. This may serve as an

inadequate illustration of the position of the evangelical school of modern critics. They believe that God's Spirit inspired Israelitish lawgivers, prophets, and psalmists to a degree and in a way which was not granted to any other religious writers of that time or of any time outside of the Biblical books; but they maintain, as the result of their investigations, there is no evidence that God revealed the facts of history, or protected these writers from error in every detail in their use of history. They maintain that more competent, honest writers could not be found in that age. They reject the theory of pious frauds set forth by Kuenen,¹ but they hold that a critical study of the Old Testament shows it was not God's purpose to reveal history, or to utter prophecy for its own sake, but rather to give his truths to his servants and enable them to set forth the measure and kind of revelation that he designed for a given age. Therefore, he left them free in their literary methods, and in their use of materials, although guarding them in a supernatural way from error in the statement of divine truth. A remarkable illustration of this is furnished when we compare certain accounts which we have in the early chapters of Genesis with those which are found in the parallel Babylonian texts. In one case we have a simple, noble, monotheism, which can only have been insured by the controlling power of God's Spirit; in the other there is gross polytheism.²

The evangelical modern critics assert that they are not afraid of any scientific discoveries, or of any critical researches. They regard a science which rules God out of his universe, and a criticism which rules him out of the Scriptures, as without foundation.

From their point of view the utterances of Christ and the New Testament writers regarding the Pentateuch³ are not the verdict of inspiration with respect to the authorship of the five books of Moses, but simply the popular language of tradition, which neither raises nor decides the question, who wrote these books. They consider that in the Pentateuch, the law book of the Israelitish nation, we have a growth extending through many centuries; that this collection of laws received its name from Moses as its most distinguished founder and representative, who is said to have written parts of the Pentateuch,⁴ rather than the whole as we now have it; that all pentateuchal laws,

¹ "The religion of Israel," Vol. III, p. 75.

² Compare Genesis viii, 21, "And the Lord smelled the sweet savor," with Smith, ed. Sayce, "The Chaldean Account of the Genesis," pp. 286, 287, "The gods smelt the savor, the gods smelt the good savor; the gods like flies over the sacrificer gathered."

³ *E. g.*, Matthew xix, 7; Mark vii, 10, xii, 19; John i, 45, etc.

⁴ Exodus xvii, 14, xxiv, 4-7, xxxiv, 27; Deuteronomy xxxi, 9, 22, 24.

whatever their age, may be considered the material outgrowth of Mosaic laws and in their oral form as assigned to him.

It cannot be affirmed that evangelical modern critics disagree fundamentally with the traditionalists regarding the authorship of the Old Testament books, aside from the Pentateuch and Joshua, Isaiah, and Zechariah, although they differ in assigning a late date to

such books as Joel, Ecclesiastes, and Daniel. There may be said to be substantial agreement among recognized adherents of all evangelical schools with reference to the origin and purpose of the Old Testament books aside from those mentioned. Criticism certainly does not weaken the position that we have the very books which were first given to the Old Testament Church.

CHAPTER II.

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS NOT MERELY A SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

SOME might suppose that in the Old Testament we have simply a survival of the fittest. It is evident that an extensive Hebrew literature has perished, of which not a single trace remains, except as afforded by the quotations in the Old Testament.

The ancient world had poets before it had historians or any written literature. Snatches of poetry have been preserved in the Old Testament, which had evidently been handed down from mouth to mouth and never committed to writing. Lamech's "Song of the Sword,"¹ Canaan's Curse and Shem's Blessing,² and Jacob's Blessing,³ are examples. But we also have a quotation from the "Book of the Wars of Jehovah,"⁴ and two quotations from the "Book of Jasher,"⁵ which, if we may judge from these specimens, were poetical books in which ancient songs, long preserved by memory, were inscribed. We are not informed as to the character of these books, although we may infer that they were more secular than religious. Doubtless there were other books of poetry whose names have not come down to us, because no quotations from them have been preserved.

We also find evidences of an extensive historical literature. Joshua is said to have written in "the book of the law of God."⁶ What he wrote was certainly not our Book of Joshua. There is no further mention of such documents until the time of Samuel.⁷ From the time of David there seems to have been a recorder or chronicler in connection with the royal family until the extinction of the Southern Kingdom.⁸ There was also probably the same officer in connection with the Northern Kingdom. Subsequent to David, with the exception of Solomon, for the details of whose life "The Acts of Solomon"⁹ are referred to, after a short summary of each reign, there is a standing refer-

ence to the "Chronicles of the Kings of Judah" or of Israel.¹ These, of course, are not our Books of Chronicles, which were written by one author long after the Exile, but the books prepared by the royal recorders, and which were doubtless profane history, detailing the military and other exploits of each king. The chronicler also refers to a number of works as authority for his narrative of Jewish history, as the words of Nathan, the words of Gad,² the prophecy of Ahijah, the visions of Iddo³ the seer, the words of Shemaiah,⁴ the commentary of the prophet Iddo.⁵

The reason why these sources have perished, while the Old Testament books have been preserved, is not accidental. We may say that the sources, so far as we can judge, were mostly of a secular character; hence, when the nation that gave them birth passed away, they passed away with it. On the other hand, the books of the Old Testament are of a distinctly religious character. While having their roots in the religion of Israel, through their forward look to the Messiah, they have a world-wide significance. Hence, although Israel went down as a nation, it survived as a religious people, and as the medium of God's revelation of redeeming love to the world. No one can study the Old Testament in a sympathetic spirit without finding in it a well-ordered preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ, nor do the established positions of modern criticism affect the essence of this preparation. They simply change the point of view; but every believer may see Jesus Christ coming into the world,⁶ in the Old Testament Scriptures, whether he be traditionalist or modern critic. This fact, which admits of demonstration, not only sheds light upon the question as to the divine authorship of the Bible, but should also comfort those who deprecate any essential

¹ Genesis iv, 23-24. ² Genesis ix, 25-27.

³ Genesis xxvii, 27-29. ⁴ Numbers xxi, 14, 15.

⁵ Joshua x, 13; II. Samuel i, 18-27. ⁶ Joshua xxiv, 26.

⁷ I. Samuel x, 25. ⁸ II. Samuel viii, 16; I. Kings iv, 3; II. Kings xviii, 18. ⁹ I. Kings xi, 41.

I. Kings xiv, 19, xv, 7, 23, 31.

² I. Chronicles xxix, 26.

³ II. Chronicles ix, 29.

⁴ II. Chronicles xii, 15.

⁵ II. Chronicles xiii, 22.

⁶ Compare John i, 9 (Revised Version, margin).

change of view as to the origin and composition of the Old Testament books.

From the human side, we must consider the origin of these books as providential. So far as the Old Testament, as a whole, is concerned, we may be assured that each book, whether prophecy or history, grew up out of some historical situation, and that each psalm was largely the record of some spiritual experience. But God's purpose, which man faintly apprehended, was that these books should live. As the revelation of his Word, they were endowed with immortality.

In our English Bibles, we have no indication of the process by which the various parts of the Old Testament were received as Scripture, except in respect to the Law. Nor do we get any help from Jewish tradition. Indeed, anyone who has even the most superficial acquaintance with the Mishna and Talmud, and sees how the whole body of oral tradition, as well as written law, is assigned to a revelation received by Moses from Mount Sinai, will be persuaded of the need of caution in dealing with Jewish tradition, which frequently originated in Jewish speculation and is merely an opinion.¹ Hence, modern scholars are almost unanimous in dismissing the Great Synagogue as a factor in our investigation regarding the formation of the Canon, because the details regarding it have been found to be the invention of a comparatively late Judaism. But we have a solid historical foundation, which hardly any critic questions, with regard to the formal promulgation and adoption of the Pentateuch, substantially as we now have it, in the time of Ezra, 444 B. C.

Even those critics who deny that Moses was the author of the entire Pentateuch do not necessarily deny that it contains most ancient documents. Nor does the modern critical theory require that we should suppose there is a single law in it which the writer did not accept as transmitted from the hand of Moses, nor a

¹The so-called oral law of Moses is preserved in the Mishna. In Pirke Aboth I, we read: "Moses received the [oral and written] law from Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets delivered it to the men of the Great Synagogue. These said three things: 'Be careful in judgment, and establish many disciples, and make a fence about the law.'" Compare the whimsical reasons given in the Talmud, *Baba Bathra*, 15a, b, on the basis of the comparison of quotations in Job with those in other Old Testament books, for suggesting the authorship of Job in the days of Moses, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, of the spies, of the Judges, of Ahasuerus, etc. The Rabbis get at this last result by quoting Job xlii, 15: "And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job," and calling attention to the search made for beautiful women in the time of Ahasuerus (Esther ii, 3); for the same reason it is suggested that Job was written in the time of David, because they sought among the beautiful young virgins for a nurse (I. Kings i, 3).

single narrative which he did not accept as actual history. The theory of an invention of laws for the benefit of a favored class, which were assigned to Moses, and of the fabrications of history is simply the result of a realistic view which cannot appreciate the development of oral law and tradition by the side of written law and history.

According to the traditional theory, the entire Pentateuch had existed since the time of Moses, but had been neglected, forgotten, and even lost¹ during long periods. According to the modern critical theory the book known as the Law of Moses² was of much less extent and was enlarged at different periods until substantially the final edition was issued by Ezra. The narrative of his labors in its introduction shows that from 444 B. C. it became a most powerful factor in the life of the people. It was no longer a book of which there were perhaps one or two copies, but we may believe that through the scribes many copies came into existence. Hence, we find religious observance and private life substantially in harmony with its precepts from the time of Ezra, so far as we can trace the history.

We come now to the second division of the Old Testament, the "Prophets." Prophecy is oftentimes spoken of as revealed history. This is substantially the view of the traditionalists. It involves the necessity of surely proving that

¹I. Kings xxii, 8; compare *Succa 20a*: "The Torā was forgotten by the Israelites, until Ezra went up from Babylon and reestablished it."

²When we read the designation *Torath Moshe*—"Law of Moses"—(Joshua viii, 31, 32; I. Kings ii, 3; II. Kings xiv, 6, xxiii, 25), it does not necessarily indicate a legal system of the same extent as our Pentateuch. A good illustration of this is furnished by Gesenius' "Hebrew Grammar," of which twenty five editions have already been issued. The first as well as the last edition is known by the same name. The oral teaching of Moses would be called *Torath Moshe*. The passages, therefore, that we find in the historical books and in Malachi iv, 4, which mention the Law of Moses (*Torath Moshe*) cannot be quoted as proving the existence of our Pentateuch at the time in question. They do prove, however, what we cannot doubt—that there could have been no Pentateuch, so far as we are acquainted with the history of Israel, without the divinely appointed mediatorship of Moses. He received a revelation which entirely changed the character of Israel's history. He is as truly the creator of the Pentateuch as Christ of the Gospels. His name and influence grew after his death. His teachings were reverently treasured up. The stream of written and unwritten law which flowed from him rightly bore his name. Unwritten laws bearing the impress of his spirit, modified to meet the needs of later times, especially in connection with the reestablishment of the Jewish state under Ezra, may have been finally embodied in the original collection which was known as the Law of Moses. Such a theory does not require us to suppose that Ezra, who "was a ready scribe in the Law of Moses" (Ezra vii, 6), invented new laws, which he ascribed to Moses. We have rather to suppose that he codified laws, written and oral, which were known as the Torā of Moses, and that in this he was as truly inspired as the great lawgiver.

everything foretold in the Old Testament will literally come to pass, or at least in a spiritual sense. From this point of view there can be but two opinions regarding prophecy: (1) That the predictions of the prophets will have an objective reality, even in all the details of the Messianic kingdom; or (2) that the fulfillment of these predictions is to be real, though spiritual, as in the case of the Revelator's description of the new Jerusalem.

The theory of evangelical modern critics does not differ essentially from the latter view. It insists, however, that prophecy was first a living voice, addressed to a real congregation of men and women, before it became a book, designed for future generations, and that the power of Old Testament prophecy even now is not so much in its character as divine foreknowledge as in its ability to reach the conscience of men in every age. At the same time its portrayals of the future have as much objective value as the visions of the seer on Patmos. They are preëminently ideals, drawn in magnificent and shadowy outlines, rather than exact literal descriptions of future events.

After the Exile prophecy began to die out until with the prophet Malachi its voice was hushed. So long as an Isaiah or Jeremiah was raised up to speak to the people and teach them through the living voice, the writings of the prophets may have had no extensive influence; but when prophecy ceased and the history of the people proved the divine mission of the prophets, there was a demand for their writings. This demand was particularly felt during the Exile and especially after the official introduction of the Pentateuch by Ezra, when a new order, the scribes, became a power in the religious life of the people.

The prophets had been preachers of righteousness. Neither their promises nor their threatenings, in the divine plan, were considered absolute predictions, for their object was to bring the people to repentance and to avert the impending doom. Jeremiah expresses this clearly when he reports God as saying: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them."¹ The same principle is illustrated in the preaching of Jonah: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be over-

¹Jeremiah xviii, 7-10 (Revised Version).

thrown."¹ This message led to repentance, for we read: "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them; and he did it not." Jeremiah too had the repentance of his fellow countrymen in view when he dictated his prophecy to Baruch.² The rebuke and reformation of their Israelitish contemporaries was the great work to which the prophets were called.³ In the effort to bring about this reformation these inspired preachers used promise and threatening. The prediction of the birth of the Messiah from a virgin⁴ was divinely evoked by Isaiah's effort to dissuade King Ahaz from having recourse to the Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser III., in his fear of the Syro-Ephraimitic league. So, whatever may be our theory as to the authorship of Isaiah xl-lxvi, the main and primary object of the book is to prepare the Babylonian exiles for a return to their native land. It is true that the predictions thus called forth have a far wider sweep, but we shall fail to understand them if we do not regard them as first addressed to an actual congregation with a special end in view.

It is necessary that we should fix this fact firmly in mind, that we may properly understand the second division of the Old Testament, called in the Hebrew Bible "the Prophets." This embraces the "Former" and "Latter Prophets." The Former Prophets include Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings; the Latter Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets. An examination of the historical books named shows that they were not given for the sake of history, but history is used by the prophetic writers just as promise and threatening are used by prophetic preachers to produce the reformation of the people.⁵ This object stands in the foreground more than the use of exact history, or than definite fulfillment. The chief thing, then, in prophetic writing and preaching is not mere historic accuracy, or the literal fulfillment of every detail of prophecy, but the effort of the prophets is to lead their contemporaries to repentance. The prophet's use of history, considering the limitations of ancient writers, is singularly good; and there are instances of startling fulfillments of prophecy, but the most remarkable thing is that the prophet, whether as preacher or historian, builds better than he knows. While conscious that he is especially inspired of God to speak

¹Jonah iii, 4b. ²Jeremiah xxxvi, 1-7.

³Even Isaiah vi, 10, does not furnish an exception; compare i, 18, 19, ii, 5, etc.

⁴Isaiah vii, 14. The Hebrew *alma* signifies maiden; *bethulah* is the specific word for virgin.

⁵Examples are furnished in Judges ii, 11-23, iii, 7-12, iv, 1, 2, and often; compare II. Kings xvii, 7-23.

and write, we are not to suppose that he is aware of the important place that his prophecy is to fill in the Old Testament, or in the history of Christianity. He may have foregleams of the permanent significance of his ministry,¹ but he is simply a laborer on the building of the Old Testament. God alone is the architect. A divine power is controlling the prophet's preaching and writing, and in a supernatural way is making his ministry, as inspired author and preacher, a preparation for the coming of Christ and Christianity. This is not natural, but supernatural, and it is a more conspicuous evidence of the presence of the divine Spirit in the prophets than any amount of scientific history, or of detailed foretelling of future events. God is indeed able to cause his servants in their preaching to use nothing but exact history and not to promise or threaten anything which is not literally to come to pass. Yet we can say with equal emphasis, that, even if such a use of history and prophecy cannot be proved to have insured entire accuracy of statement and fulfillment, as the critics claim, nothing less than divine power and foreknowledge could have so consistently controlled the Old Testament Scriptures as a preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ. I emphasize this point because it has a most important bearing on the origin and authority of the "Prophets," or the second division of the Canon.

The "Former Prophets" are largely based on ancient documents,² but the motive of their authors, as has been said, was not so much to convey a mere chronicle of the times, for which they so often refer to official records,³ as it was to instruct the people from the examples of the past. They wished to accomplish the same results through history as through preaching. Indeed, they made a homiletical use of history. There is every reason to believe that they were honest in their use of materials, but they doubtless employed whatever sources were at hand which seemed to them credible, and which were adapted to their purpose. It is certain that the materials they employed, and the way in which they employed them, furnished a fitting vehicle for the transmission of God's revealed truth to the age with which they had to do.

It was, then, this character of these books, which were regarded as a practical application of the law and as containing so much religious history and fulfillment, that led the Jewish congregation, at least 150 years after the adoption of the Pentateuch as Scripture, to receive the "Prophets" also, both "Former" and "Latter," as books full of warning and instruction to

the people. It was thus that the second division of the Canon was undoubtedly formed. It was not in any sense a mere survival of the fittest Hebrew literature, but histories and prophecies had been prepared by prophets, named and nameless, under the direct and conscious superintendence of God's Spirit; not at first as parts of the "Prophets," for this was the design of the Divine Spirit, rather than of the authors, but being thus prepared under such superintendence they came to be recognized by the Old Testament Church at their real value, though not as we can prove at any known date.

As we have seen, the distinctive character of the first two divisions of the Old Testament is indicated by their names, "Law," "Prophets." The designation of the general and miscellaneous character of the last division, "Writings," is not less explicit. It includes: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles,¹ Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. These may be further grouped as follows: (1) The Book of Psalms which is the hymn book of the ancient Jewish Church. This collection, which, even according to Calvin, was probably not complete until the time of Maccabees, and hence was at least 800 years in the process of formation, beginning with the time of David, must have been subject to much rearrangement and editing before it was finally divided into five books. (2) Another group of writings is found in Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. These are an outgrowth of what is known as the Wisdom Literature, which had its origin in the time of King Solomon, and which continued until long after the Exile. (3) Canticles and Lamentations may also be connected together as examples of the joyful and plaintive elements of Hebrew poetry, although perhaps the combination of Job and Canticles as examples of dramatic poetry is even better. At the same time, they form an admirable contrast in their subject matter, for Job represents a man as subject to a supreme test, and Canticles a helpless maiden as withstanding the seductions of the most powerful monarch of Israel and remaining true to her shepherd lover. (4) Ruth and Esther furnish points of contact in their sporadic character and in the contrast which is furnished between the tender idyl of Ruth and the fierce tragedy of Esther. (5) Daniel has no special connection with any book of the Writings. We are not to suppose that the Jews made any mistake in placing this book in the third division of the Old Testament. It would seem to indicate their conviction regarding its late character. (6) Ezra, Nehemiah,

¹I. Peter i, 12.

²I. Kings xi, 41.

³I. Kings xv, 29, and often.

¹Another name for Song of Solomon.

and Chronicles are really the work of one author, who rewrites the history of Israel only with reference to the Southern Kingdom and from a priestly point of view.

It is thus easy to see how the miscellaneous character of the books in the third division of the Old Testament should have led to the choice of the name Writings as a designation for the collection; how the Jews should have assigned an inferior grade of inspiration to it, and how in the Septuagint Version apocryphal additions have found a place in connection with the books of this division. And yet the Old Testament would be deprived of its most precious jewels if this division were struck from the Canon, for we have no more spiritual utterances in any part of the Bible than are found in the Psalms. Hence, the divine wisdom is manifested in the gathering and preservation of these books, which, as a whole, bear abundant evidence of the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. We are to lay emphasis on the total impression made by this collection, rather than upon seeming incongruities which appear here and there.

The question may now be raised how we know that we have the original thirty-nine, or according to the Hebrew reckoning twenty-four, books.¹ We cannot put too much dependence on the account given in II. Maccabees as to the formation of a divine library by Nehemiah,² for the source is not in a book that is entirely trustworthy. We cannot infer that the books of the Old Testament were all collected and acknowledged as of binding character in the time of Nehemiah. This is a common view, but its only foundation is the shifting

¹The Minor Prophets were reckoned as one book. Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra (including Nehemiah) as each one. This leaves twenty-four books. It is often supposed that the number twenty-two, corresponding to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, was secured by reckoning Judges and Ruth as one book, and Jeremiah and Lamentations as one; but this is not certain.

²II. Maccabees ii, 13. "And the same things also were reported in the records, namely, the memoirs of Neemias; and how he, founding a library, gathered together the books concerning the kings and prophets, and those of David, and epistles of Kings concerning holy gifts."

sand of unsupported tradition. The earliest clear testimony which we have regarding the three divisions of the Old Testament is from the grandson of Jesus Sirach in his prologue to the book written by his grandfather. This clearly shows that in the year 132 B. C. there was a threefold division of the Old Testament such as we have in our Hebrew Bibles. We cannot say that the collection had been rigidly closed at that time, although we suppose it was essentially complete.

Philo, who wrote 20 A. D., quotes from all the Old Testament books except Ezekiel, Daniel, the twelve Minor Prophets—he quotes from Hosea and Zechariah—Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther and Chronicles. His neglect in quoting from these books does not indicate that they were not in existence, but simply that he had no occasion to make use of them.

Jesus Christ definitely refers to three divisions of the Old Testament as the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms,¹ and the New Testament writers make use of all the Old Testament books, except Obadiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Esther. Christ himself in another way seems to indicate the entire Old Testament Canon in a reference to Abel as the first martyr mentioned in the first book of the Hebrew Bible, including all the prophets to Zechariah, mentioned in Chronicles, the last book of the Hebrew Bible.² At least this quotation seems confirmatory rather than accidental.

The Jews did not officially recognize the Old Testament as Scripture until the council at Jamnia about the year 90 A. D., but the fact of highest importance for the Christian world is that Christ and the New Testament writers recognize substantially our Old Testament as Scripture. This fact, whatever may be proved by the critics, as to the origin and composition of the Old Testament books, is the inspired judgment of him whose authority the Church receives as supreme.

¹Luke xxiv, 44.

²Compare Luke xi, 51, with Genesis iv, 9, 10; II. Chronicles xxiv, 20-22.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WE come now to the languages used in the transmission of the original text of the Old Testament books. These books have been preserved to us almost entirely in Hebrew; a few sections only being in Aramaic, commonly, but erroneously known as Chaldee.

The Hebrew language belongs to the Semitic group of languages, which found their home from the Mediterranean on the west to the Tigris and beyond on the east, from the mountains of Armenia on the north to the coast of the Arabian wilderness on the south. The term Semitic comes from Shem, who is called the ancestor of the Shemites, or Semites; but Semitic languages were also spoken by people who were not of Semitic origin. The ancient Babylonian and the Syrian languages were Semitic; the Arameans, commonly called Syrians, whose capital was Damascus, spoke a Semitic language; the Phœnicians on the Mediterranean seacoast, the Philistines to the south of them, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Ammonites, and the Arabians, all spoke Semitic languages. Hebrew and Phœnician were simply dialects of the same language, and it seems certain that Hebrews, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites could easily understand each other. There is never any indication of an interpreter being employed between these peoples, and we may believe they could communicate as freely as Swedes and Norwegians do to-day.

A study of Hebrew clearly shows that it was not the primitive language as some used to imagine. Indeed, a large class of roots seems to indicate that it passed through a monosyllabic and mimetic stage. Its grammatical structure represents at least centuries of development. The best suggestion of the original Semitic language, from which the various tongues mentioned are derived, is found in the Arabic. It is only a suggestion, however, and not the original language itself. Modern grammatical study of Hebrew has shown, in connection with great simplicity of construction, remarkable power and beauty of expression.

As a written language we cannot show that we possess any memorials of it before the time of Moses. None of the sister languages in Palestine have left monuments as ancient as those found in the Hebrew. The oldest is the Moabite Stone from the ninth century B. C.¹ No Phœnician inscriptions have been discovered from an earlier date than about the sixth century B. C. If, however, we turn to Assyria

we find a document, according to Hommel, that dates from the fourth millennium B. C.

There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet. All these are consonants, although four of them came to be employed to indicate vowels before specific signs of vowels were invented by the Massorettes. The mistaken opinion once prevailed that the vowel signs, in accordance with Jewish tradition, might be traced back to the time of Ezra or even to Moses and as received from Sinai.¹ This position was regarded as essential, both by Jews and Christians, to the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament, for without the vowels, one set of consonants might have several different meanings. But the truth prevailed. It was proved beyond a peradventure, that the vowel points were invented during the time of the Massorettes (600-1000 A. D.) when the traditional meaning of the words was in danger of being forgotten. So long as Hebrew was a living language there was no real difficulty about understanding the meaning of words even when written only with consonants. While the vowel signs, invented by the Massorettes, have a fixed value, the pronunciation of them differs greatly, so that it is quite likely that the modern Jew, whether Polish or Spanish, would have great difficulty in understanding Isaiah.

The alphabet in Hebrew has passed through various stages. There is more difference between Hebrew letters, as seen on the Moabite Stone² and on the Siloam inscription of the time of Hezekiah,³ than there is between Old German and modern English. While some scholars are inclined to derive the Hebrew alphabet from the ancient hieroglyphics of the Assyrians, more favor its derivation from the hieratic characters of the Egyptians by the Phœnicians. These hieratic characters were formed by the Egyptian priests from the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, which consist of outlines of various natural objects. These outlines can still be traced in the hieratic characters by the practiced eye, although the transition to letters is complete. These letters are thought to have been still further transformed by the Phœnicians, so that they resemble the characters which we find on the Moabite Stone. These characters, more or less modified, were doubtless used in the transcription of the Old Testament books until after the time of Ezra. Their essential character is still preserved in the

¹ For a representation and description of this stone see page 391.

¹ Graetz, "*Geschichte der Juden*," Leipzig, 1877, Vol. IX, p. 214.

² See page 391.

³ See plate on opposite page.

Samaritan alphabet, and this may be the reason why the Jews finally introduced the square characters, found in a modernized form in Hebrew Bibles and manuscripts, as the Hebrews were probably unwilling to use the same characters for writing as the Samaritans.

The consonantal form of the text was easily read by the Jewish scribes on account of their entire familiarity with the original until the knowledge of Hebrew began to decay. Then vowel letters were introduced and finally special signs were gradually invented by the Massoretes to indicate the vowels, the place of the tone syllables, the punctuation and the musical cadence to be observed in the worship of the synagogue. While most of the books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, after the Exile certain passages were written in Aramaic. This language goes back to a remote antiquity. One Aramaic word is preserved in the parting of Jacob and Laban.¹ Even Jacob himself is called an Aramean.² In the course of time Aramaic became the language of com-

merce, like the French language a hundred years ago. It was closely related to the Hebrew, although it could not be understood by the common people in the time of Isaiah.³ As the language of interchange, with the Jews and their enemies, after the Exile, the king of the Persian empire sends and receives letters in the Aramaic language. These are quoted in the Book of Ezra. A part of Daniel is also composed in the same language. After the Exile and in the time of Christ, Aramaic had completely displaced the Hebrew as the language of the country. Jesus himself, so far as the New Testament furnishes evidence, spoke in Aramaic, which is inaccurately called Hebrew.⁴ When he said *Talitha cumi*, "maid arise,"⁵ *Ephphatha*, "be opened,"⁶ and *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"⁷ Aramaic words were on his lips. From this prevalent use of Aramaic arose the necessity, as we shall see later, of an Aramaic interpretation of the Hebrew passages read in the synagogue.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXT.

WHEN we consider the written transmission of the Old Testament text we discover that we have no Hebrew manuscript which can be positively proved to be older than the "*Codex Petropolitanus*," preserved in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, which dates from the year 916 A. D. and contains only the Latter Prophets. At the first blush it may seem strange that, while we have manuscripts of the New Testament dating back to the fourth century of our era, no ancient manuscripts should be in existence of the Old Testament. We shall find that there are good reasons for this, and that after all it is not a serious element in the problem, if we are content with an essential inspiration of the Old Testament. All the converging lines of testimony, as drawn from what we know of the origin of the Old Testament books and their transmission, will, I think, show that, while we have abundant evidence of the essential inspiration of the Old Testament, we are not in a position to prove more.

We shall divide the history of the Old Testament text into three periods: that of the scribes, 444 B. C. to 70 A. D.; that of the Talmudists, 70 to 600 A. D.; that of the Massoretes, 600 to 1000 A. D.

To begin with the first division of the Bible, the Law, we have two first-class witnesses to

the condition of the text of the Pentateuch in the first period. One of these dates back at the latest to the time of Ezra.⁸ It is the Samaritan Pentateuch. The enmity which existed between the Hebrews and the Samaritans excludes the idea that the Samaritan text has been affected by that of Hebrew manuscripts; hence it becomes an independent witness to a text, which in all that is vital, barring such changes as have been made from the standpoint of the Samaritan religion and many minor differences, is one and the same in all essentials with the Hebrew.

Another witness within 200 years of the time of Ezra is found in the text of the Septuagint, or Greek version, which was prepared in Alexandria to meet the wants of the Jewish congregation there in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 B. C.).⁹ While this text has been

¹ II. Kings xviii, 26. ² John xix, 13, 18. Gabbatha and Golgotha are both Aramaic forms.

³ Mark v, 41. ⁴ Mark vii, 34. ⁵ Matthew xxvii, 46.

⁶ The traditionalists maintain that the Samaritans inherited the Pentateuch from the ten northern tribes whom they succeeded.

⁷ The interesting fable regarding the translation of a magnificent copy of the Law for the Alexandrian Library, under the fostering care of Ptolemy Philadelphus, at the suggestion of Demetrius, by seventy-two Jewish scholars, on the Island of Pharos, need not detain us. While the name of the version, Septuagint or Seventy, came from this story, it may first have been written down after the Law had long been orally interpreted in Greek to Alexandrian Jews in their synagogues.

¹ Genesis xxxi, 47.

² Deuteronomy xxvi, 5.

subject to disturbing influences, especially since the time of Origen (185-254 A. D.), whose efforts at improving it by placing different versions in parallel columns only served to corrupt it, as these versions in the process of time became more or less mixed, it is in all essential respects a mirror of the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch as it existed about 250 B. C. The critic does, indeed, find some points of difference between the Hebrew, as we have it in the Massoretic text and as it existed in the ancient text from which this Greek version was made, especially in the arrangement and codification of laws in Exodus xxxv-xl, which easily give the impression of an edition differing from that in our Hebrew Bibles, and at least of some freedom on the part of the ancient Jewish Church in dealing with the text, although its essential character is in no respect affected.

With regard to the remaining two divisions of the Old Testament, the Prophets and the Writings, we have only the witness of the Septuagint version, which was prepared by many persons, and was not completed until about 150 B. C. While this translation is of varying degrees of excellence, due perhaps in some cases to the translators' imperfect knowledge of Hebrew, and while some passages are omitted, as in Samuel,¹ and the prophecy of Jeremiah appears with a somewhat different arrangement of chapters, and is abbreviated in the Greek version so that there are 2,700 words less in Greek than in our present Hebrew text, and on the other hand there are additions,² there is no question that we have a witness who would be admitted in any court as corroborating in every essential particular the language, facts, and doctrines of these Old Testament books. Indeed, our Lord and his disciples honored this translation, which was current in Palestine, by making the great bulk of their quotations from it. In view of the differences between this version and the Hebrew, and the agreement in all essential respects, we may perhaps get light as to the relative value which we should put on the spirit of the Old Testament as distinguished from its letter. It may be conceived of as bearing the same relation as the soul to the body.

In the second period of the transmission of the text (70-600 A. D.) we have at least eight witnesses—not to introduce others—all more or less independent of each other. Of these the Talmud, which is composed of the "Mishna" (edited 220 A. D.)—repetition of the Law—and the Gemara or commentary, which long

existed orally before it was written down in its Babylonian (365-427 A. D.) and Jerusalem (390 A. D.) editions, is through its quotations an early and valuable witness to the essential character of the Old Testament books. Its testimony in this respect is not affected by such variations as may be found in it, due to a lapse of memory or even to the existence of a different text, while its directions with reference to the transmission of the Law, as we shall see when we come to consider the manuscripts, show a conscientious anxiety to preserve all the characteristics of the consonantal text.

The Targums, especially the Targum of Onkelos,¹ which is limited to the Pentateuch, are also valuable witnesses, although on account of the theological bias, which is found in all of them, and their character as paraphrases, and in some cases almost as commentaries, with the exception of that of Onkelos which is usually a literal translation, they need to be used with the utmost caution. They are in Aramaic, and, so far as they run parallel, existed for centuries as the oral interpretation of the Law. Everything was done to impress the people that they were not the Scripture itself. The interpreter, called Meturgeman, who stood beside the reader of the Law might be blind or wear ragged garments, as if to throw reproach on his office, and his interpretation was not permitted to be written down lest it should be regarded as Scripture. But in the Targum of Onkelos, and the first Jerusalem Targum, aside from the paraphrase, the language of the Pentateuch has been preserved in such a way as to show that there must have been a fixed text. The Targums on the other divisions of the Old Testament, however, are of far less value for determining the text.

Three Greek translations from the Hebrew text, made in the second century, deserve mention here as independent witnesses, although only inconsiderable fragments of them have come down to us. Nevertheless, they are of importance; because they tend to confirm the general characteristics of the Hebrew original. Discontent with the Septuagint version, owing to a reaction against it, because it became such a weapon against Judaism in the hands of the Christians,² prepared the way for the slavishly literal rendering of the Jewish proselyte Aquila (first half of second century A. D.). Theodotion (before 160 A. D.) attempted to revise the Septuagint in accordance with the Hebrew text. Although his knowledge of Hebrew was very

¹ The Septuagint omits I. Samuel xvii, 12-31, 55, xviii, 1-5.

² *E. g.*, the LXX. changes Genesis iv, 8, so that it reads: "And Cain said unto Abel, his brother, let us go into the field."

¹ "Edited about the end of the third century A. D."—Deutsch.

² "The day when the Septuagint was made was considered a day of distress like the one on which the golden calf was cast, and was actually entered among the fast days."—Deutsch.

superficial, his testimony is also of value for our purpose. To this we may add the translation of Symmachus, made in the same century, who mediates between the slavish exactness of Aquila and the superficial scholarship of Theodotion. The Old Latin versions which were current before the time of Jerome and which became very corrupt, because they were not in high repute, are of no special significance in this connection, as they are based on the Septuagint. We have another important witness from the second century in the Syriac version, called the Peshitto—that is simple, or for the common people. The Old Testament is the work of several translators, and is in the main a careful rendering from an original Hebrew which corresponds to our Massoretic text. We cite one more witness of highest standing, Jerome. He was the most learned man that the Church afforded for many centuries. He had enjoyed a careful classical training and after arriving at Bethlehem, where he lived thirty-four years, he perfected his knowledge of Hebrew through the instructions of a Jew who came to him by night that both of them

might be free from suspicion. He began his translation in the year 392 A. D., and finished it in twelve years. In this work he had the assistance of some most eminent Jewish scholars, at great expense, which is supposed to have been met by his devoted friend Paula, a noble Roman lady. If we take his translation as a mirror of the Hebrew text of his time, we find that it does not differ from the Massoretic in important respects, although its agreement is not perfect. Nevertheless, we must remember that his translation was subject to certain corrupting influences which came through the manuscript copies of the Old Latin renderings of the Septuagint.

Now, if we consider the testimony of our witnesses we shall find that for all practical purposes they really supply the place of Hebrew manuscripts in the Talmudical period. While they furnish data to the Old Testament text critic for his work, they agree in representing a text, during that period, which does not differ in any essential elements from that exhibited in the manuscripts of the following Massoretic period.

CHAPTER V.

ROLLS AND MANUSCRIPTS.

WE consider the history of manuscripts in connection with the Massoretic period (600-1000 A. D.). While, as we have seen, Assyrian memorials have come down from 4000 B. C., and the most extensive literature on clay tablets, and a profusion of fragile papyrus rolls have been found in Egypt, some of which reach back to the third millennium B. C., and more recently an extensive correspondence between Palestine and Egypt, in the Assyrian characters of the Tel el-Amarna Tablets, about the year 1500 B. C., not one manuscript remains of the Old Testament which we can affirm with certainty is older than the tenth century A. D.

For this there must be sufficient reasons stronger than the perils through which the Jewish manuscripts passed at the hands of their enemies;¹ one of these reasons is really in the living character of the Old Testament, as a collection of sacred books for Jews and Christians, while the memorials mentioned are simply like the petrified remains of extinct peoples; another is in the stereotyped character of the text, in the time of the Massoretic and perhaps of the Talmudists, which doubtless occasioned the destruction of all manuscripts containing a variant text, and a superstitious reverence for their sacred books, which

led the Jews to bury ancient and defaced rolls and manuscripts. From their point of view manuscripts containing other readings were to be destroyed; new clean manuscripts were better than old and soiled ones.

The Hebrew word for book was really more flexible than ours. It could be applied to a letter,¹ or a treatise of less than a page.² It seems to indicate the ordinary material on which writing was made, as a preparation of skins. There are two accounts in the Old Testament which indicate that certain parts of it were preserved in a monumental way. The Ten Commandments were inscribed on tables of stone,³ and after the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, Joshua is said to have inscribed a part of Deuteronomy on plaster.⁴ There is no mention of papyrus, or of clay tablets as used in the transmission of the Old Testament Text,⁵ but the roll is mentioned many times, especially in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.⁶ Probably in a very literal sense, which we usually fail to recognize, the Old Testament was a library. The Pentateuch, on account of

¹ This usage is frequent. II. Samuel xi, 14, 15, etc.

² Genesis v. ³ Exodus xxxi, 18.

⁴ Deuteronomy xxvii, 2-8; Joshua viii, 30-32.

⁵ The title used by Ezekiel iv, 1-3, served a different purpose.

⁶ Jeremiah xxxvi, 14, 20, 23, 25-29, etc.

¹ I. Maccabees i, 56, iii, 48; compare Taanit iv, 7.



ESTHER ROLL, FROM THE LIBRARY OF PROFESSOR CURTISS.

Esther i, 1-11.

its extent, was rolled around two sticks, according to the custom which we know to have prevailed for centuries among the Jews,¹ although it may also have been preserved without the sticks; other books may have been rolled around one stick, or even preserved without. Probably one roll was often used for each of the larger books of the Old Testament. If the entire Old Testament was found in the synagogue in the time of Christ, not to mention other books, it might contain a library of many rolls.² Before the invention of parchment, rules for the manufacture of which are given in the Talmud, the skins of clean animals were used. Rolls of such a description, made from goat skins, may be seen in the University library of Cambridge, England.

At what period the rolls of the Old Testament were gathered in more convenient book form we cannot tell. The custom of the Romans must have had an influence upon the Jews. At any rate we find evidence in the Talmud of the existence of manuscripts of the Old Testament in book form.³ It is not unlikely that the Jews began to preserve their sacred books in this way not very long after the beginning of the Christian era.

While we have found evidence of even more freedom in the transmission of the Old Testament text in the time of the scribes (444 B. C.-70 A. D.) than is apparent in the transmission of the New Testament books, the attitude of the Talmudists toward the Old Testament shows a reverence which precludes the idea of their attempting anything but its most careful transmission so far as the resources of the time allowed. This attitude did not exclude an elementary kind of text criticism, as we learn that in the case of a disputed reading the Rabbis consulted three manuscripts. As they found two in agreement against the third they adopted the reading of the two.⁴ They counted how many words, verses, and letters there were in the whole Bible and in different sections of it;⁵ they gave special attention to all that was characteristic of manuscripts that were considered correct. All these matters during the Talmudical period were handed down by tradition. Their view of the sacredness of Scripture prevented them wittingly from taking any liberties with the text. Even the tanning of the skins to be used for the preservation of the Scriptures was regarded as a religious act, which, if omitted, made the product of the tannery illegal for this sacred purpose.⁶ So, too, the scribe must consciously recognize that his

work was for the glory of God.¹ Even the most celebrated Rabbi, who knew the Jewish Law by heart, might not presume to write one letter from memory.² He must have an authentic copy before him. This attitude of the Talmudists toward the Law, which they regarded as the holy of holies, and in general toward the rest of the books of the Old Testament, especially the Prophets, taken in connection with the other sources which we have mentioned for determining the text, makes it clear that even in this period the text of the Old Testament has been transmitted with a faithfulness which does not appertain to any Greek or Roman author, or even to such a comparatively modern work as Shakspeare.

When we reach the time of the Massorettes we find a system of rules observed for copying the Pentateuch, and, to a modified extent, the other books of the Old Testament, which insured absolute accuracy in the transmission of the text so far as that is possible for the hand of man. While the various readings of a Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali are interesting to scholars, and the slight differences in readings, such as Baer presents in his text, are of service to the critic, they show conclusively, that practically, during the time of the Massorettes, there is but one text worth considering. If a demonstration were needed this has been furnished by Kennicott³ and De Rossi,⁴ whose labors, extending to the examination of hundreds of Hebrew manuscripts, show beyond a question one type among all classes of manuscripts.

When we examine the rules for the preparation of a synagogue roll of the Law and of manuscripts we see this could not be otherwise. It was considered meritorious that every Jew should prepare a copy of the Law, either by his own hand or through a scribe.⁵ Neither woman, child, servant, apostate, nor Gentile might engage in this sacred work.⁶ The skins were to be prepared from clean animals after a fixed recipe⁷ only by an orthodox Jew, who, before engaging in this work, had consecrated himself to it by repeating this formula: "I tan this skin on purpose that a roll of the Law may be written upon it." They were to be ruled with a hard piece of wood or iron that would not leave a colored mark.⁸ Exact directions were given as to the preparation of the

¹ Shabbath, 144b. ² Megillah, 18b.

³ "Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum Variis Lectionibus," Oxonii, 1776, 1780.

⁴ "Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti ex Immensa MSS. Editorumq. Codicum Congerie Haustae" Opera ac Studio Johannis Bern. De Rossi, S. T. D., Parmae, 1784, 1786.

⁵ Maimonides, "Sepher Torah," vii, 1.

⁶ Maimonides, "Tephillin," i, 13. ⁷ *Ibid*, i, 10.

⁸ Megillah, 16b; Gittin, 6b; Yebamoth, 106b.

¹ See the Baraita to *Baba Bathra*, 14.

² It is recognized that the Old Testament might be written on a small number of rolls, but still it had the form of a library. ³ See *Baba Bathra*, 13b.

⁴ Sopherim vi, 4. ⁵ Qiddushin, 30b. ⁶ Gittin, 40b, 54b.

ink.¹ The letters of a word were to be uniform and not more than the breadth of a hair asunder, words were to be separated by the space of a small consonant;² sections by the space of nine letters;³ books of the Pentateuch by the space of four vacant lines.⁴ The length of the lines was to be thirty letters, and every column of a roll was not to have more than sixty nor less than forty lines.⁵ The scribe while writing must follow an authentic copy. He might not even write the smallest letter, yodh, from memory. He must observe a special formula of consecration when he wrote the name of God. He must say: "I am ready to write the name of the Lord with mind and understanding." If he omitted this formula once the roll was unlawful. He must not dip his pen in ink to write the name, but must begin with the last letter of the preceding word. Nor might he recognize the greeting of the king of Israel while engaged in writing the name of God.⁶ The following regulations were made regarding the correction of a roll. It must be revised in thirty days.⁶ It might be corrected even though it had three inaccuracies in every column; "but if there were four mistakes in half or more of a number of columns, even though there were no other faults at all, then the roll might not be corrected and must consequently be buried,"⁷ or might be used in the schools for purposes of instruction. Rolls that were buried because decayed or unlawful must be placed in an earthen vessel and under the ground near the grave of some learned man.⁸ Only plain ink was allowed in the preparation of synagogue rolls, no gilding, and no illuminations such as were permitted in the manuscripts of the Old Testament.

The order observed in preparing ordinary manuscripts was as follows: the consonants were to be written first, afterward the vowels and accents, next the revision, then the masora or tradition regarding the text, the lesser between the columns, of which there might be several according to the width of the manuscript, and the greater on the margins, and last the scholia or comments. Sometimes this work was performed by five different persons, sometimes by one,⁹ as appears from the subscriptions, which in a few cases have recently been added by dealers in manuscripts who wished to enhance their value by branding them with an antique trade-mark.

The Tora rolls of the present day exhibit neither titles nor book, chapters nor verses.

¹ Maimonides, "Tephillin," i, 5.

² Maimonides, "Sopher Tora," vii, 4. ³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7. ⁵ Sopherim v, 6. ⁶ Alphas, 347b.

⁷ Maimonides, "Tephillin," vii, 12.

⁸ Burton & Drake, "Unexplored Syria," Vol. I, p. 328.

⁹ Eichhorn, "Einleitung in das Alte Testament," Goettingen, 1823, Vol. II, pp. 467-549.

The whole Pentateuch is divided into fifty-four sections for reading in the synagogues on the Jewish sabbath. The five books and the various sections, larger and smaller, are simply indicated by an initial or important word at the beginning. The same custom is prevalent among the Assyrians. While the verses are pretty clearly marked by parallelism, their present arrangement is due to the Massoretes. The division of the Old Testament into chapters was adopted from the Latin Vulgate.¹ Nor was the designation of the other books of the Old Testament any more explicit. They follow, even in the Prophets, as indicated in the "*Codex Petropolitanus*," without any titles. The only heading which exists is simply that which is found in the first verse of each book, as "Vision of Isaiah, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem," etc. "*Codex Curtisianus*, I," furnishes an interesting example of the use of the margin of a manuscript for a treatise which has no bearing whatever on the elucidation of the text. Such a custom, as well as the use of margins for comments, arose from the scarcity of writing material. It is quite probable that in the age of the scribes, some of these comments, used in the explanation of the text, may have become embodied with it. We can say, however, that the preservation of the Old Testament text, especially in the time of the Talmudists and the Massoretes, is little less than miraculous, and even in the time of the scribes does not affect the essential character of Scripture.

There are two answers which we may return, with all confidence, to the question of the origin and transmission of the Old Testament text: (1) That God's word was given in the Old Testament, through man to man. Hence that word is both human and divine. But its divinity does not abate one jot from its humanity. Its divinity is seen in its progressive character, in its perfect adaptation to the men to whom it was first given, in its preparation for him who is the only Key to Law, Prophecy, and History, and in its adaptation to all times. These are more sure marks of divinity than perfect style, science or history; for perfect style, science, and history might have made it an enigma to the men for whom it was first written. (2) These books have been transmitted in the original languages² with the utmost care, and yet we see that God's revelation does not depend upon the mere letter, any more than the human spirit is dependent upon the possession of the same

¹ In the editions of the Hebrew Bible by Bomberg, Venice, 1521; Frobenius, Basel, 1536; and Robert Stephens, Paris, 1539-1544, there is no division into chapters.

² Besides the Hebrew, Aramaic passages are Daniel, ii, 4b, to vii, 28; Ezra iv, 8, to vi, 18. vii, 12-26.

particles and the same appearance in manhood as in youth.

God has not removed the possibility of unbelief regarding his Word. In every age there are those to whom Christ could say, as of old: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe."¹ But to every honest student of the Word, these signs and wonders are not necessary for the confirmation of the record. The Bible itself, in what it is and does, is a greater wonder than the most marvelous

confirmation which the hand of man can bring. These are not unimportant, but it is well to see that the Bible has a character which no amount of criticism, whether higher¹ or lower,² can shake. These things no more affect the settled deeps of God's truth than the tempest-tost waters disturb the depths of ocean. Critics may come and go, "But the Word of our God shall stand forever."³

¹ Examination of the origin and literary character of the books.

² Examination of the text. ³ Isaiah xl, 8.

¹ John iv, 48.

Samuel Ines Curtis.



MOSES RECEIVING THE TABLES.

BOOK II.

FROM THE CREATION TO THE DAWN OF HUMAN HISTORY.

BY REV. FREDERIC W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL SURVEY.

THE task which I am bidden to undertake is to set forth the lessons and explain the religious significance of those opening chapters of the Book of Genesis, from the first to the eleventh, which cover the vast period—of unknown length—between the creation and the dawn of history. Those chapters contain all that holy men of old, illumined by the light of the Holy Spirit—which in greater or less degree lighteth every man when he cometh into the world—were guided to preserve for us from the immemorial traditions of the Semitic race. The form which this revelation assumed, whether it be regarded as poetic or mythic, or as literally historical, is, in any case, of incomparably less moment than the idea which it enshrines. The view taken by learned seekers after truth of the date, origin, and character of the Biblical records, has, in the last century, undergone an immense though silent revolution.

All Christians have held that the Bible is, in a general sense, and as a whole, and with reference to its final teachings, "inspired"; and that it contains the most perfect revelation of God which has ever been vouchsafed to humanity. But no dogmatic definition of inspiration, and no definition of it which demands implicit belief either in the genuineness and authenticity of all its books, or the absolute inerrancy of all its details, has ever been promulgated for the acceptance of the Christian Church. On the other hand, the flood of light which modern criticism has poured on the composition, origin, and meaning of the Scripture has not only left undisturbed every one of the great eternal verities of which Scripture is the chief vehicle, but has brought those verities home to us with incomparably greater force and vividness by disencumbering them from masses of crystallized superstition and traditional error. We no longer need to stare at Scripture as at some sphinx which devours those who cannot read her riddle, but we gaze at it as at some "human face divine"—human, indeed, and speaking with human lips,

and marked by human limitations, but illuminated from within by an eternal knowledge, sympathy, and compassion.

It is no part of my task to write an introduction to the History of Modern Criticism. That has already been done in many volumes—English, American, French, Dutch, and especially German. These works have been based upon life-long, indefatigable, and deeply conscientious researches. They set forth the conclusions which are now universally accepted by the foremost European scholars because they appeal with irresistible cogency to their reason and moral sense. But as my comment on these sacred records and traditions of primeval history will be silently modified throughout by the most recent results of critical inquiry, a few words on the subject are here indispensable.

As the result of the labors of indefatigable scholars and profound Hebraists, one broad and general result may now be regarded as absolutely proven: namely, that the Pentateuch as a whole, together with the Book of Joshua, which properly belongs to it, is based mainly on the combination of four independent, original, and in most instances easily distinguishable documents.

These four constituent documents of the Hexateuch are not only marked by the existence of minor repetitions and divergencies, but each of them has its own moral and religious coloring, its own prominent conception, its own predominant aim, its own marked style and method, outline, and favorite expressions. They are thus separated from each other by material differences in the substance and object, and also by formal differences in style, in phraseology, in numbers, in facts, and in religious standpoint, as well as the name by which they speak of God. And these differentiating marks are concomitant. They are not isolated nor do they occur in the narrative indiscriminately. They are numerous and reappear. It is even possible with approximate probability to conjecture the age in which each of the four

documents was written, the region in which they first saw the light, and the school of thought from which they respectively emanated. The induction which has led to their separation is based on many different lines of observation—especially the study of history, of worship, of the Hebrew language, and of Hebrew literature. The four main documents of the Hexateuch are as follows:

(1) P. There is one document which forms the predominant stratum in which all the others are imbedded and which is traceable throughout the Hexateuch. It is most commonly and conveniently designated by the letter P as forming a part of the Priestly Code. It is in its main purpose a book of laws. It is much later than E and J and tells the story of Israel from the creation, from the standpoint of priestly enactments which many critics regard as post-exilic.

(2) E. A narrative by an Elohistic writer, who all but invariably uses the name Elohim. It is predominantly a book of Judaic history, beginning with the patriarchs and extending through the Book of Joshua.

(3) J. A narrative by a writer who from the first uses the name Yahveh (Jehovah) and is therefore called the Yahvist. It is an outcome of the prophetic schools and breaks off with the blessing of Balaam.

(4) J E. The additions of an editor who appears to have combined the works of Elohistic and the Yahvist (E and J) into one narrative before they were interwoven with P by one or more later editors. The separate traces of this Redactor are, however, less easily and less certainly distinguishable than those of the others and are, from the nature of his task, of subordinate importance. The result of his labors was that "there were two historical works in existence (P and J E) both running parallel from the creation to the settlement of Israel in Canaan." The history of worship alone involves four marked stages of progress. The Yahvistic (850 B. C.); the Deuteronomic (621 B. C.); the Ezekelian (573 B. C.); the Priestly (444 B. C.). These vary from each other as to the four particulars of time, place, mode, and persons of Jewish cult; and there is an observable difference, not only as to the facts but also as to the general tone and spirit of the worship.

The main distinguishing characteristics of these four documents are as follows: (1) The Priestly writer (P). This document is especially important to us in the opening eleven chapters because it forms the greater part of them. It runs through the entire Hexateuch and is essentially the law book of Israel. It was designed to set forth the ordinances, rights, customs, and usages which prevail among the

chosen people as a congregation rather than as a kingdom. The history is only used as furnishing the basis of institutions, and as the explanation of their origin. Thus the opening chapters are intended as a sketch of the great phases of divine government, by which, even from the foundation of the world, the holy nation was elected by God to be "a people of his own possession," and was separated by marked epochs of advancing disseverment from the other tribes and nations of the world. It is with this view, and not solely for their own importance, that the writer narrates the creation, the deluge, the covenant with Noah, the dispersion of mankind, the overthrow of haughty world-empires, the call of Abraham, the covenant with Abraham, and a covenant with Israel. One indication of this purpose in P is the tenfold recurrence of the phrase "these are the generations of," literally, "the begettings" or "genealogies." This phrase forms a sort of running headline, to mark off the stories of (1) The creation of heaven and earth (Genesis ii, 4, ff.). (2) The story of the descendants of Adam, through Seth to Noah (v, 1, ff.). (3) The story of Noah and his sons (vi, 9, ff.). (4) The story of the sons of Noah, and the nations descended from them (x, 1, ff.). (5) The line of Shem down to Terah, the father of Abram (xi, 10, ff.). (6) The line and descendants of Terah to the death of Abram (xi, 27, ff.). (7) The line of Ishmael and the Arab tribes which sprang from him (xxv, 12, ff.). (8) The line of Isaac, and the story of his two sons till Isaac's death (xxv, 19, ff.). (9) The line of Esau, and his descendants (xxxvi, 9, ff.). (10) The line of Jacob, and the story of his family till the death of Joseph (xxxvii, 2, ff.).

Another characteristic of P is its annalistic style. The narratives are presented in a somewhat bare and dry form, with elaborate statistics, genealogies, and chronological statements, which are in entire subservience to a Levitic purpose. The writer dislikes all gross anthropomorphisms and omits stories of the patriarchs which offend his moral sense. He abounds in recurrent and somewhat technical expressions. His work is systematic in its structure and concrete in its delineations. It avoids poetic terms and pictures. We infer, especially from large parts of Leviticus which belong to it, that this narrative originated among the priesthood of Jerusalem, in all probability after the days of Ezekiel and in the epoch of the Exile. The writer is chiefly occupied with the theocracy rather than with humanity. His promises are limited to Israel, and his interest is in Levitic ceremonialism rather than in the deep universal problems of theology and the passionate yearnings of the human heart. This document is marked in character and singularly homo-

geneous. The part of it contained in the first eleven chapters of Genesis is meant as a vestibule to the great temple which it desires to construct. It dwells on the creation, the deluge, and the covenant with Noah as pre- ludes to the covenants with Abram, Jacob, Moses, and "as an introduction to the systematic view of the Theocratic Institutions which are to follow in Exodus to Numbers, which it is the main object of the author to exhibit."

2. THE ELOHIST (E). The document E is distinguishable by the use of the name Elohim for God till Exodus iii, together with the other characteristics which separate it decisively from P. I believe it to be largely based on oral tradition. It is generally agreed that the writer was a citizen of the Northern Kingdom. It abounds in special details about names, incidents, antiquities, sacred cities, and facts of local interest; and shows special regard for the dominance of Joseph and of the tribe of Ephraim. Unlike P it refers freely to the angels and dream-revelations, and has none of the marked antipathy of the Priestly Code for local sanctuaries, nor even for Matseboth and Tera- phim. This document is of less importance for these earlier chapters of Genesis, since it first makes its distinct and continuous appearance in chapter xx. Its narratives appear to be often mingled with those of J, and the ultimate analysis of these two documents is not always certain in details, though agreed upon in general outlines. E is more objective than P; less consciously tinged with ethical and theological reflection. In the matchless narrative of Joseph the writer shows his delight in didactic history.

3. THE YAHVIST (J). The third or Yahvistic document adopts from the first the name Yah- veh, and may be described as distinctively the prophetic narrative. In Dillmann's opinion it emanated from Judah—a conclusion which he deduces from the exaltation of Judah¹ and from the interest displayed in the Negeb, or South country.² The Yahvist goes over many of the same facts as the author of P—the crea- tion, the flood, the race of Noah, parts of the history of Abram, etc. His narrative is the most graphic and literary in form. Many of his passages are "masterpieces of narration"; they are flowing, eloquent, tender, graceful, and marked by an infinite charm and pathos. He is also a deeper and more earnest psychol- ogist than the other writers, as is shown by his account of the Origin of Sin, and "the method of God's compassion" in dealing with it, and obliterating its ominous effects on the world and man. At the same time he speaks

of Jehovah with frank and anthropomorphic simplicity.¹ "His characteristic features," says Professor Driver, "may be said to be the fine vein of ethical and theological reflection which pervades his work throughout, and the manner in which his narrative, even more than that of E, becomes the vehicle of religious teaching." It is by no means easy to settle the relative ages of E and J. The latest writers think that the date of J is about 850 to 800 B. C.; and the date of E not later than 750 B. C.

4. THE REDACTOR (J E). The Redactor, whose work it was to unite the separate narra- tives of J and E, naturally occupies a place of subordinate importance. He was rather an editor than an independent author.

It is agreed among critics that E is brief, terse, and archaic in his style. J is poetic and descriptive; his imagination and fancy are ever active. He is annalistic and diffuse. He del- ights in precision and completeness. The log- ical faculty prevails. In the first eleven chap- ters of Genesis it seems probable that the narra- tives must be divided as follows:

J—Genesis ii, 4b-25.
 iii, 1-24.
 iv, 1-16, 25, 26.
 v, 29 (or J E).
 vi, 1-4, 5-8.
 vii, 1-5 (and other separate verses, e. g., 12, 16b, 17-22).
 viii, 2b, 3a, 6-12, 13b, 20-22.
 ix, 18a, 19-27.
 x, 8-19, 21, 24-30.
 xi, 1-9, 28b-30.

P—Genesis i, 2-4a.
 v, 1-28, 30-32.
 vi, 9-22.
 vii, 6, 11, 13-16a, 18-21, 24.
 viii, 1, 2a, 3b-5, 13-19, 23b, 24.
 ix, 1-17, 28, 29.
 x, 1-7, 20, 22, 23, 31, 32.
 xi, 10-27, 31, 32.

^a Refers to the first clause of the verse mentioned.

^b Refers to the second clause of the verse mentioned.

If it be asked in what way do these irrefra- gable critical conclusions affect our estimate of the Bible and modify our traditional views of the dogma of inspiration, the question de- serves, on every ground, a serious answer.

1. As regards the Bible, those who love the Bible most—those who have most deeply prof- ited by the divine teaching it contains—ought to be more jealously careful than any others that they do not blindly and willfully adopt for it a claim which it never makes for itself. The more deeply we reverence the Holy Scrip- tures the more earnestly ought we to shrink

¹ Genesis xxxvii, 26, ff., xliiii, 4, ff., etc.

² Genesis xxi, 33, xxxi, 23-25, etc.

¹ Genesis ii, 15, ff., vi, 6, vii, 16, viii, 21.

from injuring them by false assertions, and the more carefully should we examine them to find out what they are, instead of forming *a priori* hypotheses as to what we should expect them to be.

2. The question of Inspiration is entirely vague. The word has never been defined by the Church, nor is it once explained in the Scriptures. It is capable of multitudes of diverse senses; it must be used in very different connotations, according as it is applied to every separate phrase or section, or only to the Bible as a whole, and as finally represented by the ultimate perfection of its teaching in the life, the words, and the example of Christ. Two truths, however, about the Bible remain unshaken, and never can be shaken; and to them Science and the Higher Criticism have set their seal as firmly as bibliolatry itself.

a. One is that, "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."¹

b. The other is that, though the Bible is not one book but sixty-six books; though it is not a book but a literature, and as Edmund Burke said, "an infinite collection of the most varied and the most venerable literature"; though different parts of it are of very unequal value; though its morality and spiritual teaching are not from the first complete but show a gradual and progressive amelioration from the "times of ignorance which God winked at" to the full light of the glorious Gospel; though even its distinctive teachings are not in all passages homogeneous; though the written Word is not our only method of knowing God; yet the Bible, as a whole, is one of the most sacred, one of the most inestimable, gifts of God to man, and without it mankind would have walked for ages in a darkness which might be felt.

3. A few of the very varied testimonies given to it by some of the greatest statesmen, thinkers, and scholars may serve to express its unsurpassable—nay, its absolutely unapproachable—value; and these testimonies, so far from having been impugned or weakened by the higher criticism, have only been set by it in a more beautiful and vivid light.

i. Speaking of the Bible, "Its light," said Cardinal Newman, "is like the body of heaven in its clearness; its vastness like the bosom of the sea; its variety like the scenes of nature."

ii. "The literature of Greece," said Theodore Parker, "which goes up like incense from that land of temples, has not half the influence of

this book of a despised nation. The sun never sets upon its gleaming page."

iii. "What a book!" exclaimed Heinrich Heine, after a day spent in the unwonted task of reading it; "Vast and wide as the world, rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven! Sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfillment, birth and death, the whole drama of humanity, all are in this book."

iv. "I have been seriously perplexed to know," says Professor Huxley, "how the religious feeling, which is the essential base of conduct, can be kept up without the use of the Bible. For three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history. It forbids the veriest hind, who never left his village, to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past stretching back to the farthest limit of the oldest nations of the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary interspace between two eternities and causes the blessings or the curses of all time according to its efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they, also, are earning the payment for their work."

v. "In this little book," said Ewald to Dean Stanley as he stooped to pick up a New Testament, which had fallen from the table, "in this little book is contained all the best wisdom of the world."

vi. "*Après tout*," said Renan, "*le Bible est le grand livre consolateur de l'Humanité.*"

Here, then, are the opinions of a Romish Cardinal, of an American Unitarian, of a Jewish litterateur, of an English agnostic and man of science, of a German student, and of a French critic: they are all at one, and hundreds of similar testimonies might be quoted from men of every clime, and age, and tongue.

4. Let it not, then, be said for a moment that the frank recognition of the human elements in the Bible in the slightest degree weakens—much less obliterates—our sense of the mercy which granted this boon to erring and suffering men; of the grace of superintendency which, amid all the accidents of more than 3,000 years, preserved its preciousness; of its necessity and priceless value to the human race; of its infinite adaptability to all nations, all ages, all orders and degrees of men; of the truth that "every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work";¹ of the

¹Sixth Article of the Church of England.

¹II. Timothy iii, 16-17 (Revised Version).

truth that in its pages "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; of the truth that it contains the words and messages of God to the creatures whom he has made. "Its eclipse would be the return of chaos, its extinction the epitaph of history." "If we be ignorant," wrote King James' translators of 1611, "the Scriptures will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reform us; if in heaviness, comfort us; if dull, quicken us; if cold, inflame us. *Tolle, lege: tolle, lege.*"

5. And as regards the eleven chapters which it will now be our duty and pleasure to examine, while we cannot but perceive that they are not, and were never meant to be, taken in all their details for accurate science or for literal history, we shall be able abundantly to recognize their unique grandeur, their transcendent value, and their supreme spiritual importance. There may be in them the elements of naturalistic myth, of idealizing moral fiction, of immemorial tradition, of historic legend; but, while the form in which they are cast does not permit us to regard them as supernaturally dictated, we shall see that they exhibit the very loftiest and purest degree of inspiration in the sublime and eternal verities which they enshrine as an indefeasible possession for the entire race of man till time shall be no more.

6. We shall see that they are absolutely unique. Nothing comparable to their wealth of divine instructiveness could be gathered from all the vast agglomeration of the literature of the world, including all its sacred books. They are unique in scope, for in these chapters alone does the Bible deal with the general history of mankind before the flood; unique in concentration, for they cover 2,000 of the 4,000 years of traditional chronology between the creation and the coming of Christ; unique in the majesty of their themes, since, among others, "they deal with the origin of life, the origin of sin, the beginnings of civilization, the dispersion of nations, and the confusion of tongues; unique in choice of selection, since the writers have only dealt with eight or nine events in 2,000 years; unique, also, in bringing us more directly than any other part of Scripture face to face with what has been idly called 'the conflict of the Bible with Science'—but, as it should far more accurately be stated, the true relations between the letter of parts of the Bible and that immense and glorious revelation which God has vouchsafed to human inquiry and human toil, in the certain results of astronomy, geology, ethnology, philology, and the various branches of physiological and biological science."

7. And they are not only unique but unquestionably and unapproachably supreme. There

are many parallels to them, of a striking and deeply interesting character; parallels which sometimes extend even to minute particulars—in the Sacred Books and primitive traditions of the Semitic, the Aryan, and the Allophylian races; but not the most poetic, the most recondite, or the most philosophical of these—not even those which we find in the Vedas of the thoughtful Hindoos; or in the Hesiodic and Homeric poems, or in the philosophemes of the brilliant Greeks; or in the immemorial lore of Egyptian hierarchies; or in the striking myths of Babylon and Assyria—do we find any single document which could for one moment be compared, in purity, in majesty, in simplicity, in the unadorned and awe-inspiring sublimity of their spiritual conception, with the drama of the creation of the world, and man, set forth in the first two chapters of Genesis. It does not lose itself in the monstrous polytheisms and endless complications of other cosmogonies, but sets forth with all the authority of a sacred oracle those truths which are at once the most elementary and the most essential; the truths on which the wisest and the noblest of nations have molded their religious obligations and their fundamental theology. The investigations of Mr. George Smith, and the discovery by him of Assyrian tablets on the site of the palace of Assur-bani-pal at Kuyunjik, have restored to us the Chaldean story of the deluge. A glance suffices to show us that the manifold resemblances to the Scripture narrative, even in details and expressions, cannot possibly be fortuitous, although the Chaldean legend is perhaps older than the Jewish by hundreds of years; but it shows us at the same time that the superiority of the account of this catastrophe in Genesis is in all respects immense.

In examining the records of such surpassing interest and value, our aim will be to disentangle them from the false conceptions of Jewish Rabbism and Christian Scholasticism, and to set them forth in their divine perfection as the clearest, earliest, and most sacred teaching of eternal truths.

And our method will be first to examine each chapter as it stands on the sacred page, and to illustrate it to the best of our ability in the limited space at our disposal by such truths as have been furnished to us by the accumulated knowledge and progress of the world. We may here note that Genesis is divided by the Jews into twelve sections, of which the first section is Genesis i, 1, to vi, 8, which is called *Bereshith*, the beginning; the second (vi, 9, to xi, 32) is called Noah; the third (xii, 1, to xvii, 27) is called "Get thee out"; the fourth (xviii, 1) "And he appeared," and so on.

CHAPTER II.

(GENESIS I-II.)

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND MAN.

P.

(GENESIS I, 1.)

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The words "in (the) beginning" take us back to the dawn of all time, and of all existence. The writer knew as little as we know—as little as any men have ever known—of those inexpressible secrets which it is impossible for the mind of man to grasp. The ultimate origin and nature of things, the beginning of all beginnings in the Being of God, is concealed from human ken by an impenetrable veil. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" asks Zophar; "Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."¹ Of molecules and protoplasm, of physical theories of the universe, of the origin of species, of the struggle for existence, of natural selection, of the laws which determined the formation of the stellar universe, of the impossibility of understanding anything in itself since all knowledge is nothing but a modification of an incognizable Ego by an incognizable non-Ego, of the countless discoveries and theories of modern science, the Hebrews knew little or nothing; and, even after they came into contact with Greek and other civilizations, few of them showed the smallest interest in such questions. Their speculative genius occupied itself with entirely different problems. Their appointed function among the races of mankind was to be the upholders to the nations of the banner of righteousness, and the revealer of the Unity, the Power, and the Love of God.² And their tendency was as little metaphysical as it was scientific. As they had no one word for the Universe, so they had no one word for eternity; and perhaps but few of them had faced or grasped eternity as an abstract and undefinable conception.³ Such a phrase as "ages of ages," or "forever and beyond," ordinarily sufficed them. The Hebrew chronology, treated constructively, makes the age of the existing order of the world and man only extend backward to the petty limit of 6,000 years; but there is nothing to prove that the writer did not mentally date back the primordial movements of creation to untold

ages of the past. In that case, the phrase "in the beginning" would be as absolute as it is in the mighty opening of the prologue of the Gospel of Saint John, where "in beginning" (without the article) not only takes us back to "the initial moments of time and creation,"¹ but to a time when Time itself was not, seeing that time is but a mode of thought necessitated by human limitations, and it is only our weakness which "somehow shapes the shadow time"; whereas to the Almighty One it does not appear as "a phantom of succession" but "is and was and will be" are but *is*.

In dealing with Holy Writ, the deepest spirit of reverence, no less than the sacred demands of truth, compels us to sweep away the manifold glosses of later interpreters, whereby they endeavor with artificial manipulations to force out of the language of Scripture the conceptions which, in accordance with a preconceived theology, they think that it ought to contain.

i. Thus we reject the gloss of the Jerusalem Targum in which the writers, imbued with the conception of the *chokmah* or Sapiential literature, represented "in the beginning" by the words "with wisdom," that is, "by his Word, the Logos." The conception is perfectly true that "He hath established the world by his wisdom,"² and Proverbs viii, 22-31, is a development of this thought. There Wisdom cries: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. . . . When there were no depths, . . . before the hills was I brought forth, while as yet he had not made the earth. . . . When he prepared the heavens; . . . when he gave to the sea his decree, . . . when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, . . . and I was daily his delight." But to find that truth in this phase is to sanction that system of exorbitant inferences—the "ever-widening spiral ergo from the narrow apertures of single texts"—which has been the curse of all sane and honest exegesis.³

ii. The Jews did not stand alone in applying this false method. We know that it was Christ, the Logos, the Divine Word "by whom also all things were made." "He was

¹ Job xi, 7-9.

² This is constantly insisted on in Scripture. See Exodus xiii, 9; Deuteronomy xxxiii, 2; Psalm lxxviii, 5; Isaiah i, 10; Hosea iv, 6, viii, 12, etc.

³ Their phrases were "To ages of ages," "unto all generations," etc.

¹ Compare Isaiah xl, 21.

² Jeremiah x, 12.

³ The Doctrine of a personal Logos is first prominent in Philo. The nearest approach to it in pre-Christian literature is in the Wisdom of Solomon (ix, 1, xvi, 12, xviii, 14-15).

in the world" said Saint John, "and the world was made by him."¹ Following a false method, some of the Fathers—for instance Clement of Alexandria and Saint Augustine²—tried to read that truth into this opening word of Genesis. But it is one thing to say that all the details of a truth are *implicitly* contained in the broadest utterance of a truth, and it is quite another to assert that all those details of subsequent revelation were present to the mind of the Priestly writer who penned this chapter. Luther saw how untenable was this casuistry, and Calvin, with the robust and honest common sense which distinguished him in all cases where his immediate prejudices were not involved, says "it is too frivolous to interpret the word 'beginning' as meaning Christ."

iii. With the preposterous fancies of the Jewish Kabbala we shall not concern ourselves, but we may here give one specimen of it. Because by anagram *Bereshith* becomes *Beth-isri*, they said that the world was created in September (*Tisri*);³ and the Law, they said, begins with "B" because it is the first letter of *Berakah*—blessing.

2. "In the beginning God created." The word here used for God, as all but invariably by the Priestly writer (P), is Elohim. The word suggests important inquiries.⁴

i. It is a plural word and many Christian writers have believed that the plural indicates the mystery of the Trinity, since "it is usually construed with the *singular*, both of the adjective and of the verb, except when it signifies the idols of the heathen." But the same remark applies to this view as to the fanciful and arbitrary interpretations of the word "Beginning." Great Christian writers so much opposed to each other as Calvin and Cardinal Bellarmine have rightly rejected this suggestion of Peter Lombard, the Master of Sentences.⁵ To Christians, of course, the idea lies in the word, but there is no trace that it did so to the ancient Israelites.

ii. Nor, again, is it a correct view that the plural name of the one God is a survival of

¹ John i, 10 (compare Psalm xxxiii, 6); Hebrews i, 2, xi, 3; Ephesians iii, 9; Colossians i, 16; Revelation iv, 11.

² Augustine "Confessions," XI, viii, § 9.

³ For other specimens see my Bampton Lectures on "The History of Interpretation," pp. 34-37.

⁴ I do not enter into the etymology of the word, because it still remains highly uncertain.

⁵ The Fathers, in the infancy of criticism, were misled by ignorance of facts. Tertullian rightly observes that the name Jehovah rendered in the LXX. *κύριος*, "Lord," does not occur till after the account of the creation, but is unaware that the reading *κύριος*, which represents the form Adonai, of which the vowels were superstitiously substituted for those of the ineffable Tetragrammaton, Yahveh. Chrysostom went altogether astray in supposing that Elohim and Yahveh were equivalents arbitrarily interchanged.

polytheism; on the contrary, as Rabbi Jehudah Halevi says, in his "Cozri" (twelfth century), the word Elohim is rather a protest against the idolatry which gave the name Eloah to each personified power. He rightly says that Elohim represents God as the God of nature, with reference to his manifested power; whereas Yahveh refers to his personality, his relations to man as the God of Grace, and, above all, the covenant relation in which he stood to his people, Israel. Sack interprets Elohim as meaning "a certain infinite, omnipotent, incomprehensible existence, from which things finite and visible have derived their origin."¹ Naturally, then, "Elohim" was the *general* name of the Deity, and was mainly used in speaking of him to the heathen, whereas Yahveh was his covenant name to Israel in particular.

iii. Nor, again, does the name Elohim imply the conception of God as mingled up with that of the heavenly host. Angelology assumed no distinct and definite prominence in the minds of the Israelites till the days of the Exile and their familiarity with the religion of the Persians.

iv. There seems to be little doubt that those Rabbis were right who interpreted the word "Elohim" as a simple "plural of majesty," known grammatically as the "*pluralis excellentiæ*." The word connotes God in all his preëminence of infinitude and universality; just as in Proverbs ix, 1, the plural *chokmoth* is used for the singular *chokmah*, to express wisdom in the abstract "as including all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." In the same way, the plural is used for Lord in Isaiah xix, 4; and "Baalim" in Exodus xxi, 29; and *Qedoshim* for the Holy One in Hosea, xi, 12.²

v. The tablets found at Tel el-Amarua, in Upper Egypt, show that in Babylonia also "God" was used for one supreme Deity. The usage became part of "that language of Canaan" (Isaiah xix, 18) which the Hebrews adopted, and it must consequently have gone back to the earliest days of their history.³

3. "In the beginning God *created*." The word for "created" is the Hebrew *Bārā*, a word almost exclusively set apart for the work—and especially the free creative work—of God, whether physical or spiritual. (Psalm li, 12.)⁴ Nothing is here distinctly said about "creation out of nothing"; but it is implied throughout. It is first distinctly formulated in II. Maccabees vii, 28: "God made them of

¹ Sack, *De usu nom. Dei*.

² In the Hebrew, Hosea xii, 1: "Faithful toward the All-holy One" (*Qedoshim*).

³ Sayce, "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," p. 86.

⁴ Exodus xxxiv, 10; Isaiah lxv, 17; Psalm cxlviii, 5; Jeremiah xxxi, 22.

things that were not; and so was mankind made likewise." In Hebrews xi, 3, we read the much more moderate expression "so that what is seen hath not been made out of things that do appear." Contact with Greek philosophy had made the Jews shy of speculating on that which lies beyond all human apprehension. The writer of Wisdom, therefore, says that "God's almighty hand made the world out of formless matter," as in Plato, *Timaeus*, § 30. But no preëxistent matter is here even alluded to; and we must say with the Psalmist (xxxiii, 6): "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth;" for as Philo says: "With God to speak is to do."¹

4. "In the beginning God created *the heavens and the earth*."

i. The particle "eth" before "heaven" and "earth" is merely the sign of the accusative. Nothing but the idlest perversion of fancy could dwell on the fact that its two component letters, aleph and tau, are the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet; or see in it any cabalistic mystery referring to the ultimate essence—as it were the Alpha and the Omega—of heaven and earth.

ii. The Hebrews used "*heavens and earth*" to express the word "Universe," for which they had no one word, any more than the Greeks had till Pythagoras gave them the fine word "*Kosmos*," or "Order." Jeremiah used the phrase "the All" to express the same idea—"He is the former of the All" (Jeremiah x, 16).

iii. The School of Shammai maintained that the heavens were created first and then the earth; but, since in Genesis ii, 4, we have "Yahveh Elohim created the earth and the heavens," the School of Hillel declared that the earth was created first. The Mishnaic Rabbis declared that they were created at the same time; for in Isaiah xlvi, 19 (Authorized Version), we read, "My hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread out the heavens: when I call unto them they stand up together."²

I. In this simple, majestic verse is summed up the inmost and the fullest significance of the entire story of the creation. If "every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of the Lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning"³—if man can attain to no truth save by that Holy Spirit, who is the Light that "lighteth every man as he cometh into the world"⁴—then this verse expresses in

the highest degree the result of a divine revelation to the Jewish race. For in five grand authoritative words it corrects and sets aside the errors of millions of mankind during millenniums of the world's history. And this was its object: not the inculcation of scientific facts which were undreamed of till many centuries after it was uttered. The discovery of those facts was *also* a revelation; the progress of science was the appointed way in which God made known much more than man could otherwise have ascertained of the means by which his Almighty power and wisdom had set in motion and controlled all material forces, thereby bringing order out of confusion and light out of darkness. The results of science were both a revelation of true knowledge and a source of stupendous power. They were granted to man in reward for the reverent use of his heaven-implanted faculties of reason and observation, applied to the study of God's work. The revelation vouchsafed to us in Holy Scripture belongs to a wholly different order.

The opening section of Genesis neither was, nor was intended to be, a chapter of physiography. Indeed, its details, regarded as facts and not as a philosopheme, are in some instances irreconcilable with science, or only reconcilable with it by the adoption of hypotheses so violent as to shock our sense of honest interpretation. But these details are but an accident, an expansion, an ornamental environment of the one essential revelation. Given the central fact, which was of infinite importance, that the Universe was the work of one All-wise and All-powerful Intelligence, it was natural that this inspired and inspiring truth should be expanded in accordance with immemorial human tradition, in such a way as seemed most in unison with observed phenomena, or with the inferences which they might naturally suggest. Writing of prehistoric ages in prescientific days, nothing was farther from the wildest dreams of the sacred writer than an exposition of the rudiments of astronomy, geology, or general physics. "The Scriptures," as Archbishop Sumner said, "have never revealed a single scientific truth." Nay, the abuse of their isolated expressions to distort them into a false and purely semblable agreement with "the long results of time," is a method which was only resorted to after they had been, for ages, warped in an opposite direction from their true purpose. Scripture had been mishandled by the ignorance of priests, to oppose each science as it dawned; to retard the progress of mankind; to persecute and torment its best benefactors, and to disparage each new discovery of heaven-illuminated genius. The Scriptures have nothing to do with science. They belong to a different and a higher sphere. Intense as

¹ Philo, "The Sacrifice of Abel," § 18. See Bishop Westcott's note on Hebrews xi, 3. ² Tamid, 31b.

³ James i, 17 (Revised Version). ⁴ John i, 9 (Revised Version, margin).

is the intrinsic interest of science, and vast as is the importance of its achievements for the material comfort of man, its importance is absolutely subordinate to the more inward revelation of himself which God vouchsafes to the spirit of man. In this sense it remains true that science can but be the handmaid or the sister of theology, and can but illustrate and reinforce the data which man derives from his unimpeded access to God through the inbreathing of Christ's Holy Spirit.

II. Consider, then, in this light the infinite and far-reaching importance of these five opening words of the Book of Genesis.

The vast majority — all, indeed, but an insignificant fraction of mankind, of all races, in all ages, in every phase of civilization or of savagery, from the refined and brilliant Greeks to the wild North American Indians — have fallen in many forms into fundamental errors which these few words firmly and finally correct.

i. The vast majority of mankind have been polytheists; they have worshiped "gods many and lords many."¹ They have deified the heavenly bodies; or the forces and operations of nature; or their own worst passions; or birds and beasts and creeping things. Against countless millions and all generations of polytheists in the past and in the present this verse reveals and declares that there is *One God* — not many gods.

ii. Some races of mankind like the Persians, and some religious bodies like the Manichees, have believed that there are two gods — Ormuzd and Ahriman — one good and one evil. This verse declares that there is *One God* who is All good and All holy, and that there is none beside him.

iii. Some isolated thinkers, and those whose natural and instinctive impressions they have disturbed, have been atheists; they have declared that there is no God. This verse affirms that there *is* a God, and *One God*.

iv. Many have imagined and taught that God is nothing but the *anima mundi*, or soul of the universe; and that, apart from it, he has no separate existence. They have given a literal and exclusive meaning to the view described by our own poet, that

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the Soul;
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow in the stars and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent."

These lines are perfectly true in the sense that "God is *in* all things." A false sense is given

II. Corinthians viii, 5. The Hindoo and other mythologies involve a belief in thousands of gods.

to them when it is believed that "God *is* all things." That is Pantheism. This verse teaches that God exists apart from, and was anterior to, all his works.

v. Many have believed that there is indeed a God, but that there is no Divine Providence; that the Supreme Being is careless of, indifferent to, the creatures whom he has made. This verse implies, and the whole subsequent revelation affirms, that he is a Father to all creatures whom he has created, that his tender mercies are over all his works, and that all his works are very good.

vi. Many have assumed that, though there is one God, yet matter is eternal and preëxistent; that nothing could be made out of nothing; that matter, therefore, coexisted with God from the beginning; that matter is inherently evil; and that the existence of all evil in the world arises from the fact that matter existed apart from and independently of God. The sacred writer, without in any way entering into the question of matter, declares that God "*created*" the heaven and the earth — *i. e.*, the Universe, "the All."

vii. Many have believed that, though God *is*, we cannot know anything respecting him. That is agnosticism. This verse implies, and all the subsequent revelation affirms, that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead"; that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork"; that he hath "left not himself without witness"; that "in him we live, and move, and have our being"; that "we may know him"; and that to know him is "life eternal."

viii. Almost every error, then, of mankind, in general — every fundamental religious aberration, whether of philosophers or of savages — on the subject of the Supreme Being, is corrected in these few words: Polytheism, Totemism, Sun-worship, Ditheism, Atheism, Pantheism; the denial of Divine Providence; the belief in the preëxistence and inherent evil of matter; the denial of our ability to know anything of God. To correct those errors was the object of the Revelation, and at the same time to set forth as an unquestionable eternal verity that "there is but One living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible."¹

VERSE 2. "And the earth was without form (or waste) and void."

i. i. This is a description of the original chaos, the "matter without form," as it is

¹ Article I of the Church of England.

called in Wisdom xi, 17, out of which God educated his kosmos. Up to some indeterminate moment in the ages of the eternal silence, there had existed only the vast abyss of substance in which "all form was formless, order orderless"; the "material beginning"¹ or the "material essence"² of Aristotle; colorless, shapeless, indistinguishable, without accidents, infinitely plastic.

ii. It is a mistaken exegesis, contradicted by the whole of Scripture, which treats this verse as a statement separate from the first, and maintains that this waste void was the already-existent *material* out of which God made the world. It is clearly meant to be part of the "heaven and earth" which the previous verse has told us that God "created." The sacred writer is not guilty of the error of Philo, who must have believed in the eternity of matter, since he emphatically repeats the aphorism of Aristotle, "from nothing nothing comes," and says that there are four causes of creation: the agent, God; the instrument, the Word; the *material cause*; and the *final cause*, or end, which is God's goodness.

2. "Without form and void." These words in the original are very interesting because they form a sort of descriptive paronomasia or assonance—*tohoov va bohoo*. Such assonances, so far from being immature or childish, belong, in their due place, to the inmost mystery of language, and add no little to the force and fascination of words. They are in consequence found in very solemn and beautiful passages of Scripture.³ Any attempt to distinguish accurately between the two words seems impossible, though Rabbi Nachmanides refers *tohoov* to "matter" and *bohoo* to "form."

iii. This conception of the primitive chaos is common to all cosmogonies.

3. "And darkness was upon the face of the deep."

The question whether darkness (the inseparable concomitant of chaos in all cosmogonies) was a separately existing entity, and something more than the mere absence of light, was not probably one which at all presented itself to the mind of the writer.

The word for "deep" is *tehom* (Psalm xlii, 7) from the onomatopoeic root "*hoom*," "to bubble" or "boil." It presents an interesting analogy to the *Tiamat* of the Assyro-Babylonian myth of creation, in which the chaos is reduced by Merodach to order and beauty.⁴

¹ ἰζὺ κός ἀρχή.

² ἰζὺ κή οὐσία, Metaphysic iv, 7, §1; Ueberweg, "History of Philosophy," i, 123.

³ Job xxx, 19; Isaiah liv, 8, xxviii, 10, 13; Psalm xviii, 8; Nahum ii, 11; Zephaniah i, 15, etc., and see my chapter on Language, "Language and Languages," p. 232.

⁴ Sayce, "Chaldean Genesis," pp. 59, 109, 113.

4. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water."

i. By "the Spirit of God" (*Ruach Elohim*) some have understood nothing more than "a wind sent from God"¹ which dried part of the waters. This does not accord with the context, which implies the action of God's Spirit or Breath. (Compare Psalm xxxiii, 6—"By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Also Psalm civ, 30.)

ii. "Moved" is rendered by the LXX. ἐπιπέτετο; but the truer sense is given in the margin of our Revised Version, "was brooding upon," as in Deuteronomy xxxii, 11, of the eagle gently hovering over her nest and young. The sense of the verb is exactly expressed in Milton's

"Dovelike sat'st brooding o'er the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant."

5. "Upon the face of the water."

Here again it is needless to raise questions which either were not present to the mind of the writer, or, if they were, remained unsolved. We cannot tell whether he regarded the primordial chaos as being itself a watery mass, or whether, as in Psalm civ, 6, he thought of the earth as a solid mass lying beneath it. The question is not decided by verse 9. He may in some sense have shared the cosmogonic conception of Thales, found also among the Chinese, Egyptians, Mexicans, and others, that water was the primary element.

WORK OF THE FIRST DAY.

VERSE 3. "And God said 'Light be' and 'Light was.'"

i. In the original there is an indescribable grandeur in these four words. They are so remarkable as even to have excited the admiration of a pagan like Longinus, who, in his treatise on "*the Sublime*," quotes them as an instance of majestic speech. The best comment on their grandeur is that exquisite passage in Haydn's "Creation," in which the thrilling, pulsating, swelling waves of delicious sound end, as in the bursting of one splendid billow of music, in the crash on the one word "Light."

ii. "God said." "Of course," as Luther observed long ago, "by '*said*' is not intended a voice in the air." God's words represent his essential and self-effecting will. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast" (Psalms xxxiii, 9, clxviii, 5).

iii. Light is here conceived of as something apart from the celestial bodies. Thus, too, it

¹ So most of the Rabbis; Abn Ezra, Rashbam, etc., and the Targum of Onkelos, and Philo.

is thought of in the Book of Job, chapter xxxviii, 19, 20:

"Where is the way to the dwelling of light,
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof;
That thou shouldst take it to the bound thereof,
And that thou shouldst discern the paths to the
house thereof?"¹

The same conception recurs in many cosmogonies. The throne of Ormuzd is from the beginning a throne of light, and Indra the god of light is the firstborn of gods in the Hindoo mythology.

VERSES 4 AND 5. I. The glorious refrain which expresses God's approval "*that it was good*" is repeated seven times in this chapter.

i. The sacred artificiality of numbers is observable from the first. Three and Seven, the two numbers which dominate this chapter, are, throughout Scripture, mysterious and symbolic numbers. *Three* expresses the concrete and perfect unity, especially of the Deity; *Seven* implies holiness and religious sanctification.

ii. There is a divine and encouraging optimism of the loftiest character in this sevenfold blessing on the six days' work. The division between the light and the darkness, and the names of Day and Night, given them by God, show that even the darkness is still, as Homer calls it—"welcome, thrice-prayed for."² The light-worshipping Persians also regarded darkness as having its own sacred and beneficent necessity.

iii. When we are told that God called the light "Day," and the darkness "Night," it would be a silly literalism to take that clause to imply that God revealed the two Hebrew words *yom* (day) and *laylah* (night); or to infer from an incidental explanation, added for the sake of clearness, the supernatural inspiration of full-blown language. The origin of language is not here touched upon at all, and can only be ascertained as the facts of the material universe are ascertained—by patient observation and induction.

2. "And there was evening and there was morning, one day."³

i. The "one day" meant undoubtedly one *civil* day, not millions of years as harmonists idly and arbitrarily suggest. One object of the narration is to indicate the institution of the sabbath in accordance with the unvarying tendency of the Priestly narrator to describe the origin of sacred ordinances. This object would be rendered meaningless if Day and Night were taken to mean anything we choose. Day can only mean what it means throughout the chapter and throughout the book. That the day of

twenty-four hours could not have been marked by sunrise and sunset before the sun was created is not a consideration which crossed the mind of the writer. He knew nothing of the earth's revolution on its axis, and he is moving in a sphere of the purely spiritual conceptions, with which alone he felt the smallest concern. The attitude of pragmatic literalism and prosaic lack of all imagination is the most entirely fatal to any right apprehension of this "Epic of Creation" in its ideal grandeur.

ii. "Evening" is mentioned first in agreement with a natural and therefore universal conception that darkness must have preceded light. It is for this reason that the Greeks called a full day "a night and a day," and we describe a week or two weeks as *sennight* or *fortnight*. An old border oath was: "By God who made the world in six days and seven nights." We find the same mode of reckoning among Athenians, Arabs, Moslems, Gauls, and Germans.

SECOND DAY.

(VERSES 6 TO 8.)

1. God next created an expanse "in the midst of the waters," to divide the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. He called the expanse "heaven"; and evening was and morning was—a second day.

i. The sky is here—ideally or actually—regarded and spoken of as a solid substance. The Hebrew word *rāqia* (expanse) is derived from a root which means to "beat out,"¹ and the word implies in the strictest sense, a *firmament*. The notion of the heavens as a crystalline sky, in which the stars were fixed as golden nails, was held by some of the Old Greek philosophers; and the Greek poets speak of heaven as "iron" or "brazen." This firmament supports the upper clouds and reservoirs of rain, and divides them from the rivers and seas. It has, in poetic descriptions, doors and windows, and is supported by pillars.² The writer may have had the more scientific conceptions which we find in other parts of Scripture,³ but they had no bearing on his present idea.

ii. It has been noticed from the earliest times that after this day alone is omitted the blessing "And God saw that it was good." This is, indeed, added in the Septuagint after the sixth verse. Abn Ezra accounts for the omission by supposing that the work of the second day is only really *completed* on the

¹ See Exodus xxxix, 3.

² Genesis vii, 11; Ezekiel i, 1-22; Job ix, 6, xxvi, 11, xxxvii, 18; II. Samuel xxii, 8; Psalms lxxviii, 23, civ, 3, cxlviii, 4; II. Kings vii, 2.

³ Genesis ii, 6; Job xxvi, 7, xxxvi, 27; Jeremiah x, 13; Psalm cxxxv, 7.

¹ Revised Version; compare Job xxvi, 10.

² ἄσπασιν, τρίλλιστος, "Iliad," viii, 488.

³ Not "the first day" as in Authorized Version.

third day. Some Talmudists suppose that the approving word was withheld because Gehenna was created on the second day.¹ In any case an eightfold repetition of the formula would have interfered with the concinnity of sacred numbers which prevails throughout the chapter.

THIRD DAY.
(VERSES 11 TO 13.)

The creative work of the third day consists in the separation of the sea from the dry land and the clothing of the earth with vegetation — herbs, grass, and all seed-bearing plants; trees and all arboraceous shrubs which have their seeds in their fruit. Three kinds of vegetation are mentioned: "greenness" or green grass (*deshe*), which was believed to grow spontaneously; vegetables and grain (*eseb*); and, collectively, all trees and fruit-bearing plants (*etz*). With this account we may compare the poetic description in Psalm civ, 5-16:

"He laid the foundations of the earth,
That it should not be moved forever;
Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a vesture;
The waters stood above the mountains
At thy rebuke they fled:
At the voice of thy thunder they hasten away;
They went up by the mountains, they went down
by the valleys,²
Unto the place which thou hadst founded for them.

"He watereth the mountains from his chambers:
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy work.
He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,
And herb for the service of man.

"The trees of the Lord are satisfied;
The cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted."

FOURTH DAY.
(VERSES 14 TO 19.)

On the fourth day are created the celestial orbs which divide the day from the night and serve to mark the distinction of seasons, and days, and years,³ as well as to shed light on earth from the firmament of heaven. The two great lights, sun and moon, are specially placed in heaven to rule the day and night. Two sublime words — "And the stars" — suffice to describe in the original the stupendous creation of the whole stellar universe.

The *M'oroth* are "orbs" of light. The Septuagint renders the word by "lamps," the

¹ See P'sachim, 54a. "But," it adds, "that the work of the second day was also good is implied in the word 'everything' in verse 31." To this day, for this reason, Monday is regarded as an unlucky day by orthodox Jews.

² Or, as in the margin, "The mountains rose, the valleys sank down."

³ Perhaps the expression "for signs" may refer to the universal ancient belief that the movements of the heavenly bodies portended changes of time and States.

Vulgate by *luminaria*. The verses, short, unadorned, and simple as they are, constitute the firm protest of the chosen people against the worship of the Sun, which was so predominant among the Persians; against the cult of the great Moon-god of the Babylonians; against the worship of the "Host of Heaven"; which has been so characteristic of many forms of polytheism. That the heavenly bodies have far wider and larger purposes than to give light to this fractional atom of a planet, which, for instance, only receives 1-230,000,000th part of the sun's light, was, of course, unknown to the writer, and practically unrevealed to the human race till the days of Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Laplace. Neither the Priestly writer nor any of his nation, during long millenniums, had the faintest conception of the unfathomable abysses of the aerial ocean, with its uncounted galaxies. Neither was such knowledge, intense as is its interest, and infinitely as it expands the narrow limits of our imagination, in any way essential to the salvation of the human race, or its deliverance from the idolatry of the creature to the worship of the Creator.

The system of the Hebraic cosmogonist is, of course, geocentric, and to him all the stars are like cressets hung in the sky.¹ But what is of essential and eternal significance is that to him the Sun in all its indescribable splendor, "going forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a giant to run his course,"² though

"His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
And his circuit unto the ends of it;
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof,"²

is still nothing but a created thing — a creature of the Being who has set his glory above the heavens. The Hebrew can admire and glory in the work of God's hands, and climb by these sunbeams to "the Father of the Lights."³ He can join — even with his imperfect and limited knowledge of the scientific facts which are now the heritage of every child — in impassioned bursts of poetry on the glory of creation; but the burden of them all is the goodness of the Almighty Creator, which inspires the incessant refrain:

"O give thanks unto the Lord: for he is good:
For his mercy endureth forever.

To him that made great lights:
For his mercy endureth forever.
The sun to rule by day:
For his mercy endureth forever.
The moon and the stars to rule by night:
For his mercy endureth forever."⁴

¹ It need hardly be said that nothing could possibly be farther from the mind of the sacred writer than the nebular hypothesis of Laplace.

² Psalm xix, 5, 6. ³ James i, 17. ⁴ Psalm cxxxvi, 1-9.

The glory of the Hebrew is that he is never a materialist. Other nations — Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians — “worshiped and adored the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore.” But to the chosen people God has revealed himself as the Creator of the Universe. To the Jew it was always Yahveh himself, who “covered himself with light as with a garment, and spread out the heavens like a curtain”; he could appeal to God and say

“If I beheld the sun where it shined,
Or the moon walking in brightness;
And my heart hath been secretly enticed,
And my mouth hath kissed my hand:
This also were an iniquity to be punished by the
judges:
For I should have lied to God that is above.”¹

FIFTH DAY.

(VERSES 20 TO 23.)

On this day took place the creation of the fishes and the birds. The waters were bidden to swarm with swarms of living creatures, and the air with flying fowls. The great monsters and the fishes of the deep are called into being, and winged fowl, and God blessed them and bade them be fruitful and multiply.

i. In speaking of the fish the conception of their teeming multitude is given in the word *sharats*, inadequately rendered by the LXX. “bring forth,”² and the Vulgate’s “produce.”³ It is rather as in the margin of our Revised Version: “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures.”

ii. In the *tanninim*, “great monsters,” some see an intended distinction between the mammiferous cetacea — which, like the whale, suckle their young — and other fishes. This is unlikely, because we find no trace of it anywhere else in the Bible; and *tannin* is simply derived from the root “*tānan*” to stretch, including creatures like the serpent and the crocodile.

iii. It is not implied that the “birds of wing” were produced out of the waters, though this was the rendering of the Targums, of Luther, of the LXX., the Vulgate, and even of our Authorized Version. There is no certain reference to the belief that birds and fishes are closely akin. The translation is not “Let the waters teem with the moving creature . . . and fowl,” but rather, as in the Revised Version, “Let the waters bring forth . . . ; and let fowl fly above the earth.”

iv. The paronomasia of the blessing “Be fruitful and multiply,” is again repeated to the human pair in verse 28 and in chapter ix, 1.

SIXTH DAY.

(VERSES 24 TO 31.)

These verses describe the crowning work of God in the creation of all animals and creatures of the earth, and of man, as the glory and summit of created things, made in the image and likeness of God, intrusted with dominion over all living things, and with the duty of subduing and replenishing the earth. After the sea has teemed with fish and the air with birds, the earth also has to be filled. Whether the writer regards animals as made of the dust of the earth or springing out of it, as in Milton’s famous description, is not stated; but it is a conception which we find in the Yahvist (ii, 19) and in other parts of Scripture (Psalm civ, 29; Ecclesiastes iii, 20), as well as in classical writers.

VERSE 26. “And God said, Let *us* make man.”

i. The same question rises here as in the use of the plural Elohim. We ask with Isaiah (xl, 13, 14), “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge and shewed to him the way of understanding?” The word “us” has been regarded as implying God and Wisdom (or the Logos); or the Trinity; or God in conjunction with the Angels (iii, 22). It is probably only another instance of the plural of majesty. Dillmann, indeed, makes the objection that the use of the plural by kings or great potentates was not a custom of the Hebrews until they derived it from the Greeks and Persians, as in Ezra iv, 18; I. Maccabees x, 19; but, as the date of the Priestly writer is late, he may have been acquainted with their usage, or may even have adopted it from natural reverence. Thus in Joshua xxiv, 19, we have the plural for “a Holy God,” in apposition to the singular pronoun “he.” It is, however, something more than a mere plural of excellence. It involves the self-consultation of one whose manifold glories can only be indicated by a plural word. The LXX. read the plural, though the Talmudists say that to prevent mistake (and, Rashi adds, especially to exclude dualism) they read it in the singular, and that they made the same change in Genesis xi, 7.

ii. “*Man*” — “Adam.” The derivation of the word is uncertain; it cannot be from *adamah*, earth. The earth creatures are distinguished under three classes: The *behemah* (of which the plural is behemoth) implies the larger grass-eating cattle, including the elephant; the *remes*, all sorts of worms and reptiles; and the *chayyath haaretz*, the wild beasts. These are not specially blest, because they form but a part of the sixth day’s work.

¹ Job xxxi, 26-28.² ἐξαγαγῆτω.³ Producant.

iii. In our image (*tselem*) and in our likeness (*d'moth*). Attempts have been made to draw a distinction between the two words *tselem*, "image," as implying general outward aspect, and *d'moth*, "likeness," as describing inward resemblance; but in usage they do not seem to be markedly separate, and either may be used alone, as *tselem* in Wisdom ix, 6, and *d'moth* in v, 1. The latter word is slightly more abstract in significance and is here used to intensify the former.

iv. Wherein does the likeness and similitude of man to God exist?

a. Not in moral perfection, for man instantly fell; but solely in man's God-given faculties—in reason and conscience, in self-realization, power of thought and imagination, and in freedom of the will.¹

b. It is, of course, in no sense corporeal, since—except in poetic anthropomorphism—God is invariably represented throughout Scripture as a Spirit, without body, parts, or passions.² Other nations imagined that their gods were simply men of surpassing size and beauty; but not so the Hebrews. It was needless, therefore, for Symmachus, in his version, to tone down the expression into "he made man *erect*"; or for other ancient versions in other places (Psalm viii, 5; Genesis v, 1, ix, 6, etc.) to make the likeness to Elohim a likeness to angels. It is true that there was the sign of man's dignity in "the human face divine." "The vital spark of heavenly flame" was enshrined in a mortal tabernacle more perfect than that of all God's other creatures, and such as inspired dread and awe into them (Genesis ix, 2); but the likeness of God is not transient and outward; it is subjective; it is eternal.

c. And this was always rightly understood by the Jews. Thus, the son of Sirach says (xvii, 1-13) that "The Lord created man of the earth, and turned him into it again"; but that "He made them according to his image," in strength, dignity, dominion, understanding, speech, counsel, knowledge; in giving them the law of life for an heritage, making with them "an everlasting covenant," shewing them his "judgments" and "the majesty of his glory," that they might declare his works with understanding.

d. Again, in the Book of Wisdom, we read "God created man to be immortal, and made him in image of his own eternity." A passage in the Talmud mentions five points in which the soul resembles God: (1) It fills the body as God fills the heavens. (2) It sees and is un-

seen. (3) It supports the body as God supports the Universe. (4) It is pure as he is pure. (5) It is like God, hidden in innermost recesses.¹ But to these particulars of resemblance must certainly be added, with Saint Basil, man's prerogative of the freedom of the will.

e. It is in these senses, then, that God made man "a little lower than Elohim,"² and "crowned him with glory and honor," however much he may be "a thing of naught whose days pass away like a shadow." In himself he is thus "the image and glory of God" (I. Corinthians xi, 7) and "made after the similitude of God" (James iii, 9); and when he has dimmed, though not obliterated, that divine image, Christ restores to him "the new man, which is renewed unto [full] knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Colossians iii, 10)—"the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians iv, 24, Revised Version).

f. This affinity of man with God was not unknown even to the heathen. Saint Paul reminded the philosophers of Athens of this fact, quoting to them Aratus and Callimachus.³ "The God," he said, "that made the world . . . giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said:

'For we are also his offspring.'

Thus we find Sophocles, in his splendid chorus, dwelling on the mighty intellectual victories and attainments of man; and the Pythagoreans spoke of "man's kinsmanship with God." Xenophon says "the soul of man and other human qualities partake of the nature of the Deity;" and Cicero speaks of men as "like the gods" (*Similes Deorum*). Lucretius sings that "we are all sprung from celestial seed." Hipparchus calls our soul "a part of heaven"; Horace describes it as "a particle of divine breath"; and Juvenal says that we alone have had assigned to us an intellect worthy of veneration, and are "capable of divine things," and "have received, transmitted to us from heaven's high citadel, a moral sense which brutes, prone and stooping toward the earth, are lacking in." Exactly the same conception is found in the cosmogonic mythologies of the Babylonians and Persians; and in the Greek myth of

¹ See I. Corinthians xi, 7; Ephesians iv, 24; Colossians iii, 10; James iii, 9.

² Exodus xx, 4; Deuteronomy iv, 12; Isaiah xxxi, 3, etc.

¹ Berachoth xvi, 1a.

² Psalm viii, 5; Hebrews ii, 7-9.

³ Acts xvii, 24-29.

man's receiving a soul from Athene after he had been fashioned in clay by Prometheus.

g. Nor was this any idle theory born from the fumes and hallucinations of human pride. On the contrary, it was the central truth which gives grandeur to the beatings of man's heart, inspires holiness into his aims, and hope into his life. Moses, again and again in his laws, founds the feeling of humanity and of common brotherhood on the divine affinities of man. "I am the Lord" is a consideration which suffices as the basis for the most loving and tender regulations, just as in the New Testament there is an infinite pathos of appeal for all who suffer in the words "for whom Christ died." No one has expressed the sanctifying dignity of these thoughts more nobly than Milton in his "Reason of Church Government," when he writes: "He that holds himself in reverence and due esteem both for the dignity of God's image upon him, and for the price of his redemption which he thinks is visibly marked upon his forehead, accounts himself both a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds, and far better worth than to deject and defile with such a debasement as sin is, himself, so highly ransomed and ennobled to a new friendship and filial relation with God. Nor can he fear so much the offense and reproach of others as he dreads and would blush at the reflection of his own severe and modest eye upon himself, if it should see him doing or imagining that which is sinful, though in the deepest secrecy."

h. In verse 27 the writer, filled with the sublimity of his own narration, seems to break into spontaneous rhythm to express his gladness:

"So God created man in his own image,
In the image of God created he him;
Male and female created he them."

So mighty a thought seems to require emphatic repetition, for no question is raised here, nor any indication given, as to whether God created mankind in a single pair or in many pairs; nor is any difference of time indicated between the creation of Adam and that of Eve.¹ Such inquiries were foreign to the writer's immediate aim. It is an error to assume that the divine image has been altogether displaced by sin. It is appealed to, even after the Fall, as a reason for the punishment of every murderer.² Saint James says of the tongue "therewith bless we the Lord and Father, and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God."

In verse 28, man, though classed among the *terrena animantia*, is endowed with dominion over all the living denizens of earth, and air,

and sea, but in verse 29 he receives no permission to take their lives for food.

i. To man is granted for his daily sustenance every herb, and the fruit of every tree; and every green herb is set apart also for the use of all the living creatures of air and earth. It is clear that the writer takes the view adopted in so many cosmogonies, that men in the golden age of their infancy were vegetarian in diet, and that man did not sustain his own existence by robbing innocent animals of theirs. This, too, is the state which, in the ideal of the prophets, is to replace the present ages of bloodshed and rapine in the golden Messianic days; "The wolf shall . . . dwell with the lamb, . . . and the lion eat straw like the ox."¹ Such a belief formed part of the religion of the Brahmins and Buddhists, as it did of the ancient Pythagoreans and Manichees.

ii. It might have been objected to this view that, by the very law of their construction, the world of creatures is a world of rapine and prey, and that "Nature, red in beak and claw with rapine," shrieks against this creed. The answer is that the revealer of the past, like the prophet of the future, is not troubled with such difficulties. It did not occur to him to ask how carnivorous animals could eat straw like the ox. He is dealing not with the actual but with the ideal—not with "ruined world and sinful man," but with man in the time of his first innocence, and with an ideal world into which death had not yet intruded.

iii. On the other hand, he does not disturb us with pictures of the superhuman size and impossible perfection of Adam. This is a favorite theme of the Rabbis in the Talmud, and such fancies continued till later times—as when South says that "a Newton was but the rubbish of an Adam."² The writer of this chapter attributes to the first man no such supereminence, either of beatific vision or of moral perfectness. He presents him to us simply as the father of the race, created after God's similitude, which his posterity inherit, though much obscured by sin.

VERSE 31. At the close of his creative work, God contemplates it all and pronounces it to be not only "good" but "very good." Not only did "the morning stars sing together and all the sons of God shout for joy," but God himself, the Lord himself, rejoiced in his works. And evening was and morning was; the sixth day.

THE SEVENTH DAY.

(GENESIS II. 1 TO 3.)

The division of chapters is here altogether unfortunate. These verses belong, on every

¹ Isaiah xi, 7. lxxv, 25.

² Sermon "On the State of Man before the Fall."

¹ Compare Matthew xix, 4. ² Genesis ix, 6.

ground, to the first chapter and form part of the narrative of the Priestly writer (P).

They furnish, in fact, one of the reasons for the preceding narrative, which, though it serves vastly higher ends, was doubtless intended by the writer, in accordance with the uniform design which runs through his entire work, to narrate the institution of the sabbath and explain its deepest sanctions.

Six days sufficed for the completion of the heavens and the earth and "all their host." The word "host" is here used generally of the stars of heaven and the living things of earth. Usually the word is applied to the stars only; or to the angels for whom they might stand as bright symbols; or to the forces of nature, the winds and lightnings.¹ In Nchemiah (ix, 6) "the heavens with all their host" are distinguished from "the earth and all that is therein."

"And on the seventh day God ended his work."

In the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, the old Syriac, the Book of Jubilees, and the Bereshith Rabbah, for "the Seventh day" we have "the Sixth day" and it is not wholly impossible that the seventh (Hebrew, *hashsh'bt'i*) may have been confused with "the sixth" (*hashshishi*), or may have been corrected into "the sixth." Another but dubious way of removing the difficulty is to translate "finished" as a pluperfect "had finished";² or the phrase may merely mean that the work ended with the beginning of the Seventh day.

"And he rested on the Seventh Day."³

When we speak of the "rest" of God, we are clearly in the region of analogy and anthropomorphism, in which things divine and incommunicable are shadowed forth by the only language which is humanly intelligible. In another and higher sense God's work never ceases.⁴ "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"⁵ And in another sense, there is never any pause in the divine operations; they are unresting as they are unending. Jesus answered them "My Father worketh even until now, and I work."⁶ Again the word "labor" involves only a dim and distant analogy. To speak is not to labor, to will is not to toil. But God gave the sabbath as a boon—a necessary as well as a blessed boon—to man; and in order to sanctify it he based it on some incommunicable fact in which

there is a sympathy between the divine and the human. "Ye shall keep the sabbath . . . it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Yahveh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."¹ This is the reason why God blessed the seventh day, and why the writer emphatically repeats what he had said respecting the rest of God. How intensely the institution of the sabbath swayed the imagination and occupied the thoughts of the later Jews, we see from endless passages in the Talmud. It is related of Shammai that "all his life he was planning for the honor of the sabbath." But Hillel had another way; all he did was in the name of heaven, as it is said (Psalm lxxviii, 19, Revised Version, margin), "Blessed be the Lord, day by day."

It is only in the Priestly document that we find any account, or any traces, of a pre-Mosaic sabbath. The writer desired to place that merciful institution under loftier and earlier sanctions than such as arose from its being a simple ordinance of humanity, or a redemption from bondage (Deuteronomy v, 14, 15).

Moreover, also, we read in Ezekiel (xx, 12, Revised Version, margin), "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I the Lord do sanctify them." Although the Jews were the only nation which gave to the idea of the sabbath its richest and most sacred meaning, yet the Assyrians also possessed the word sabbath, and called it a "day of the rest of hearts." In a calendar of the intercalary month Elul we find the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th days marked as *dies nefasti*, in which no work can be done, but they are also days of evil omen on which no sacrifice can be offered.

VERSE 4a. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created."

i. All critics are practically agreed that the narrative of P ends here, to be resumed in chapter v, and many have supposed that this verse originally stood before the first verse of Genesis and was placed here by the Redactor who united the various documents of Genesis into their present form. Certainly in the nine other instances of the recurrence of the phrase "These are the generations," it stands at the beginning of a narrative, not at the end of it; and the *tol'dôth* (as in v, 1, vi, 9, x, 1) refers to what follows, not to what precedes. It is a phrase only found in P.

ii. The word *tol'dôth* is usually applied to persons, not to things, since it properly means "generations"; *i. e.*, "begettings." It is here applied by analogy to the material Universe.

¹ See I. Kings xxii, 19; Joshua v, 14; Psalm ciii, 21.

² So Calvin, Eichhorn, Gabler, Kalisch; but Dillmann calls this ungrammatical.

³ The name "Sabbath" is derived from the Hebrew verb "to rest."

⁴ Psalm civ, 27-32. ⁵ Isaiah xl, 28

⁶ John v, 17 (Revised Version).

¹ Exodus xxxi, 14-17.

(Compare Psalm xc, 2). It is from this expression (*sepher to' dōth*), rendered by the LXX. Book of the Genesis (in Genesis v, 1), that we derive the name "Genesis" for the book which the Jews called from its first word *Bereshith*.

iii. In the Hebrew word "when they were created," the "h" is written small. This was probably meant by the Massorettes to indicate that there was a variant reading. The Kabbalists gave mystic reasons for the small letter. They said it indicated that all things should also fade and perish; or that, by transposition, the word may be read "on account of Abraham." Here, then, at the close of one account of the creation, we must pause for some separate consideration, which want of space compels us to treat in the briefest manner.

1. It should be noticed as regards the Six Days' work that it is arranged according to a definite scheme in two parts, thus:

First Day, Light.

Second Day, Water and the heavens.

Third Day, Dry land and vegetation.

Fourth Day, The orbs of light.

Fifth Day, Fishes, the inhabitants of the waters, and birds of the heavens.

Sixth Day, Animals and man.¹

It is obvious that the two triads of days have some relation to each other. The first three complete the inanimate creation; the fifth and sixth the animate creation. The first three days have been called "the three separations of light from darkness, water from water, and land from water." The fourth day seems, in this respect, to break the order; and some have imagined that there is a silent reference to the ancient and widespread notion of the constellations as living creatures; but of this there is little or no certain trace elsewhere in any of the conceptions of the Hebrews.

2. The notion that God is the cause or creator of evil, though there is a different and secondary sense in which God, as the permitter of catastrophe and misfortune, may be called its creator²—is carefully excluded. Moral evil is due exclusively to the abuse of the free will of man.³

3. The parallels to the Hebrew cosmogony are numerous and cannot be stated at length.

a. The Babylonian account of the creation is given in a composite form by the Chaldean Berosus in his "History of Babylonia." It forms part of an epoch which has been discovered in the cuneiform tablets of Babylonia and Assyria. It is perhaps not older than the seventh century B. C. It begins with describing the

¹Saint Thomas Aquinas pointed out long ago that the first three days were mainly days of preparation and separation, the last three of adornment and use.

²Amos iii, 6; Isaiah xlv, 7. ³James i, 13.

chaos of the deep (*Tiāmat*); recognizes six days; and follows much the same order of creation as Genesis. The resemblances extend even to words; but the confused polytheism and materialism of the Babylonian cosmogonical myths are in sharp contrast with the simplicity of the Bible. Where the Assyrian or Babylonian poet saw the action of deified forces of nature, the Hebrew writer sees only the will of the one Supreme God. The Assyrian poem is mainly a pæan in honor of the Sun-god, and the triumph of light over darkness. There is no such antagonism in Genesis. "The Tel el-Amarna tablets have proved that Babylonian influence was strongly felt in Canaan before its conquest by the Israelites."

The following words occur in the Chaldean account of creation (first tablet):

"When the upper region was not yet called heaven
And the abyss of Hades had not yet opened its arms,
When the chaos of waters gave birth to all of these,
And the waters were gathered into one place."

From the fifth tablet we find that the Babylonians also made the sabbath coeval with creation:

"He fixed up constellations whose figures were like
animals,
And from the days of the year he appointed festivals.

The moon he appointed to rule the night,

Every month without fail he made holy assemblies.

*On the Seventh Day he appointed a holy day
And to leave all business he commanded.*¹

b. One of the oldest of the Hindoo cosmogonies may be found in the Laws of Manu, i, 5, ff.

c. The Greek views are given by Hesiod, "*Theogonia*," 116, ff., and are examined in Zeller, "*Philosophie der Griechen*," I, pages 71-89.

d. The Egyptian are given by Brugsch, "*Rel. u. Mythologie*," 1888.

e. The Phœnician views are found in Philo Byblius (preserved by Eusebius, "*Præparatio Evangelica*," I, 10).

f. The Persian are given in the "Zend Avesta." In all the other cosmogonies there are points of resemblance more or less close to the sacred narrative. They prove the wide diffusion of a common tradition. It is unnecessary and impossible here to enter into details. A brief but admirable sketch of ancient cosmogonies is given by Dillmann, "Genesis," pages 1-12.

4. The blessed and eternal truths which are predominant in this chapter, of which the institution of the covenant-day of rest is the attestation, are:

i. That God is the Almighty Creator of the Universe. This is the most fundamental truth

¹See a full translation in George Smith, "Chaldean Genesis," pp. 61-112.

of all, and its truth has been again and again attested even by men of marked skeptical bias, who have, indeed, in many instance, been led to the full acceptance of it after long years of agnosticism or unbelief.

ii. That he created all things in absolute accordance with his own will, and after the archetypal ideas in his own mind.

iii. That man is the supremest among the works of God's earthly creation.

iv. That all which God creates is good, and not evil. Thus the writer flings the only bridge which can be thrown over those vast and inconceivable abysses which separate the organic from the inorganic, and the animate from the inanimate; which separate the mineral from the vegetable—say, the rock from the faintest film of gray or orange-colored lichen which grows on it; which separate even the highest form of vegetable life from the lowest animal life; the oak from the tiniest insect on its leaves; and which separate the highest of the animals from man.

5. The story of creation may be understood in various ways. In former ages, and down to our own days, it was for the most part understood in strict literalism; but that view is now all but universally abandoned, and it may be seriously doubted whether such was ever the intention of the writer.

i. It has been subjected to all kinds of violent hypotheses—by which, for instance, day may mean millions of years, or in which millions of years may be supposed to elapse between the second and third verses—in order to force it into decent accord with the certain discoveries of astronomy and geology. Such attempts are wholly unsuccessful; the narrative cannot, by any extremes of conjecture, be made to harmonize closely or continuously with scientific facts. The notion that the earth was made in six days; that each of the great phases of creation sprang into immediate being at an instantaneous word; that the present world was created only 6,000 years ago; that the sun and stars were called into existence *after* the earth; that all kinds of vegetation were created first, then all cetaceans, fishes, and birds, then all beasts and reptiles, and then man, are views which stand in discord with what we have been taught by the splendid labors of science. The faintest semblance of harmony between Genesis and physical science can only be obtained by a licentious artificiality and casuistry of exegetic invention. "That the earth is a ball which is always turning upon its axis and at the same time pursuing its rapid course round the sun; that the whole earth which seems so great to us is no more, in comparison to the universe, than a single grain of sand on a seabeach thousands of miles in length; that the sun alone is a

million and a half times larger than our globe—all this was unknown to the Israelites. For them the earth was a disk washed round by the ocean, over which the firmament rose like a giant cupola, while sun, moon, and stars moved on the inner surface of this vault."¹ We repeat that "The Scriptures have never yet revealed, nor were they ever intended to reveal, a single scientific truth." The false prejudice which led men to assume that they were meant for this purpose led to the cruel priestly tyranny and violent religious intolerance which has for so many centuries hindered knowledge, thwarted progress, and persecuted those great benefactors of mankind who set forth to us the revelation of God in his works. Romish priests made Galileo abjure, on his knees, the truth of the Copernican system. Spanish priests denounced the enlightened views of Columbus as a blasphemous heresy. English priests imprisoned Roger Bacon, and abused and anathematized the pioneers of geological science. By such conduct they injured the cause of God and man. They behaved like the Chinese who piled up their sacred crockery in the path of the first locomotive, hoping thereby to stay its course. It is time that we should prevent the sanctity of Scripture from being ever again abused, as it has been in the past, by ignorance, dogmatism, and pretended infallibility, to arrest progress and darken counsel, to light the balefires of the Inquisition, to sanction the falsities of the casuist, and to rivet the fetters of the slave.

ii. The narrative has been interpreted *ideally*, and this at least is certain, that the ideal interpretation, while it leaves, on one side, all questions which have their origin in preconceived dogma, and does not attempt to remove self-created difficulties by schemes of impossible harmonizing which alienate straightforward minds, yet goes to the heart of the instruction which the writer most certainly regarded as supremely precious, and tries to grasp those truths which are at once indisputable, and are of intrinsic and eternal significance.² The object of the writers of Holy Writ was not to anticipate scientific discoveries, but to make known all that is necessary for the inspiration of man's life and the salvation of man's soul.

Let me quote on this subject the testimony of a late eminent geologist, Dr. Buckland, dean of Westminster. He saw, as many men of science have seen, the true meaning of the

¹ Oort, "The Bible for Learners," Boston, 1878, Vol. I, p. 39.

² No reconciliation of the six days with geological periods is necessary. It is certain that the author of the first chapter of Genesis, whether Moses or someone else, knew nothing of geology or astronomy.—Bishop of Worcester, "Dictionary of the Bible," Vol. I, p. 763.

first chapter of Genesis. "The earth," he says, "from her deep foundations unites with the celestial orbs that roll through boundless space, to declare the glory and show forth the praise of their common Author and Preserver; and the voice of natural religion accords harmoniously with the testimonies of Revelation in ascribing the origin of the universe to the will of one eternal and dominant Intelligence, the Almighty Lord and Supreme First Cause of all things that subsist, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, 'before the mountains were brought forth, or even the earth and the world were made, God from everlasting and world without end.'"

The true comment on the significance of the first chapter of Genesis is the eighth Psalm:

"O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is thy name in all the earth!
Who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The Moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained:
What is Man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor.
Thou madest him to have dominion over the work of
thy hands:
Thou hast put all things under his feet.

O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is thy name in all the Earth!"
(Revised Version.)

CREATION AND EDEN.

(GENESIS II, 4b TO 25.)

We now begin the separate narrative of the creation by the Jehovistic writer (J). He is a writer who throws over his narrative an intensely interesting and human coloring. His style is vivid, earnest, simple, frankly anthropomorphic (ii, 7, 19, 21, 22, iii, 8, 22, etc.). He occupies himself very little, or not at all, with legalistic and ceremonial institutions, but deals exclusively with the highest moral considerations.

That the authorship is different from that of the previous chapter is obvious at once from the wide diversities (1) of object, (2) of details, and (3) of style.

1. In this chapter, though he gives a summary account of the creation, the author is far more concerned with the deepest and most absorbing of all human problems—the nature and the fall of man.

2. His retrospective narrative of the origin of the world cannot have been meant to be *supplementary* to the former, because it differs very widely from it. "In the first cosmogony vegetation is immediately produced by the will of God (i, 11, 12); in the second, its existence is made dependent on rain, and

mists, and agricultural labors (ii, 5, 6): in the first, the earth emerges from the waters; in the second, it appears dry, sterile, and sandy: in the first, man and his wife are created together (i, 27); in the second, the wife is formed later, and from a part of man (ii, 21-23): in the former, man bears the image of God, and is made the ruler of the whole earth (i, 26, 27); in the latter, his earth-formed body is only animated by the breath of life, and he is placed in Eden to cultivate and to guard it (ii, 7, 15): in the former, the birds and beasts are created before man (i, 20, 24, 26); in the latter, man before birds and beasts (ii, 7, 19)." It is true that the differences are mainly in subordinate, and so to speak incidental, details; and it is also true that they can be explained away by false grammar (*e. g.*, by turning perfects into pluperfects) and all manner of untenable casuistries. But these differences—which are wholly unimportant as regards the lofty spiritual purpose of the narrator—lie patent before every clear and truthful reader.

3. The style of the writers also differs.

In P the word for God's creating is *bara*; in J it is *asah*, and *yálsar*. In P we have "beasts of the earth"; in J "beasts of the field." In J we have frequently recurring phrases which in P do not occur, or only rarely. Above all, in J we have Yahveh ("Jehovah") almost throughout; in P we have *Elohim* throughout till we come to Exodus vi, 3. "The whole of this second narrative," says Dean Payne Smith, "is evidently anthropomorphic." In the previous history *Elohim* commands and it is done. Here he (or rather Yahveh) "forms, and builds, and plants, and breathes into his work, and is the companion and friend of the creatures he has made."¹

In chapter ii, 4b, we are at once met by *Yahveh-Elohim* ("the Lord God") in the place of the *Elohim* of the first chapter. It is remarkable that except in Genesis the combination *Yahveh-Elohim* only occurs in the Pentateuch in Exodus ix, 30. If the Yahvist originally used the combination here, it could only have been to point out that by Yahveh he meant the *same* One and Supreme God as the one mentioned in the previous chapter. But, since the date of P is probably *far* later than the date of J, and since, therefore, this is the *earlier* of the narratives, it is most probable that the combination of the two divine names is really due to the final Redactor—whether Ezra or another—who united into one book the ancient narratives.

We are here shown a rainless earth (verses 5 to 7) on which was no vegetation; on the surface of this dry plain arose a fertilizing rain

¹ "Genesis," p. 19.

which watered the ground. Then Yahveh-Elohim formed the man (*ha-adam*) out of the dust of the ground (*adāmah*), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

i. We note first that Adam is rather a collective than an individual name—not Adam, but “*the Adam*.”

ii. Next, by one of those deep-reaching paronomasiae of which the sacred writers are fond, *Adam* is connected with, if not derived from, *adāmah* (earth), just as in Latin it was (erroneously) fancied that *homo* was connected with *humus*. The Jews were “analogists,” not “anomalists”—that is, they believed in the innate force and sacredness of words; hence they supposed that language was stamped with an inherent and sacred fitness which gave mysterious meanings even to its accidental associations.

Further, since man's mortal body “returns to the dust as it was” (iii, 19; Ecclesiastes xii, 7; Job x, 9), it was natural to regard it as made of dust or clay. We find a similar belief alike among the polished Greeks, the practical Romans, the thoughtful Hindoos, and the wild North American Indians.

iii. The word Adam is not, however, *derived* from *adāmah* “earth.” Josephus derives it from *adam*, “red,” because virgin earth is red.¹ Others derive it from the same root as *d'môth* (Ezekiel xix, 10, Revised Version, margin), because man is made in the image of God. From the inscription on the sarcophagus of the Phœnician king, Eshmunazar, we find that *adam* was sometimes used in the sense of *dam*, “blood.” It is hardly worth while to mention other conjectures, and, in point of fact, the true derivation of the word Adam remains undiscovered. It was a far deeper part of the writer's object to point out that the soul of man is a breath, a gleam, an effluence of the Divine. “Thou hast granted me life and favor,” says Job, “and thy care hath preserved my spirit.” Man became a living being “in whose nostrils is a breath” (Isaiah ii, 22).

iv. Of the various heathen parhelia, so to speak, of this narrative we may specially note the legend how Prometheus made a man of clay which the gods inspired with life. There is a fine ancient gem representing the helpless clay form upheld by the hands of its fashioner, while over its head Athene holds a butterfly—the Psyche, or type of life. In the Koran, the first man was called “Adam,” “the chosen of God.”

VERSE 8. “The Lord planted a Garden in Eden, eastward, and there he placed the new-made man that he might till it.”

¹ Josephus, “Antiquities,” I, 1, §2.

The primeval “Garden in Eden”¹ is found also in many primeval mythologies, and man was, by the nature of the case, primitively an agriculturalist. These statements belong to the simple framework of the lovely and pathetic narrative which enshrines the deep psychological philosopheme of the Fall of Man. In all man's speculations on his earliest past he has imagined a golden age—an age of simplicity and innocence. Here the innocence is rightly represented as only passive and negative. It is not the innocence of formed choice, but the nescience of positive ill-doing, before the *conscience* was awakened by the first act of transgression. There is in the calm sanity of the sacred story, no trace whatever of the fantastic Rabbinic legends which represented Adam as a giant of immense strength, angelic beauty, and superhuman intellect.

VERSE 9. Having placed the man in the garden, God clothes it with a rich and pleasant vegetation, and in the midst of it he placed the Tree of Life,² and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Whether there were any other mysterious reasons for the choice of the symbol of the Tree of Life growing in the midst of the garden we cannot tell, but there is probably a deep significance in its juxtaposition to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for according to the Yahvist it was only after the plucking of the forbidden fruit that Yahveh said, “Behold the man is become as one of us.” This implied that the plucking of the fruit, if it had ruined and perverted his nature, had also in some measure widened its horizon, and made it necessary to prevent the eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life. A tree in its exceeding beauty is naturally regarded as an emblem of life, and is hence found in many mythologies. We find it on the frescoes of Babylon and Assyria. It resembles “the king of trees” of the Persians, the India *pilpel* of immortality; and the ash-tree, *Ygdrasil* of the northern sagas, whose leaves are the lives of men.

1. The next five verses (10, 11, 12, 13, 14) are occupied with a description of the position of the Garden of Eden. From Eden went forth a river (*nahar*), and branched thence into four heads (*roshim*), Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates.

i. The Euphrates is simply mentioned without any description of its course, since its name would be familiar to Hebrew readers, to whom, as often in the Old Testament, it was known as “the great river,” and even as “the

¹ For allusions to the Garden of God see Genesis xiii, 10; Joel ii, 3; Isaiah li, 3; Ezekiel xxviii, 13.

² The “Tree of Life” became a proverbial phrase. Proverbs iii, 18, xi, 30, xiii, 12, xv, 4; Revelation ii, 7, xxii, 2, 14.

river." The etymology of the name remains uncertain.

ii. Scarcely less well known was the Hiddekel, or, to give it its Aryan name, the Tigris, called from the old Bactrian *tighri* "an arrow," the swift or arrowy stream.¹ It is vaguely described as flowing "before," literally "in front of," Assyria.

iii. The Pison is described as "compassing the whole land of Havilah," which produces gold, bdellium, and the shoham stone. *a.* The name Havilah is of very uncertain meaning. In Genesis x, 7, Havilah is a "son" of Cush, and in x, 29, a son of Joktan. From this we cannot tell whether the inhabitants were originally descendants of Ham (Ethiopians), or were Semitic, or a mixture of both. The name is perhaps derived from *chól*, "sand." Havilah and Shur are distant extremes of the realm of Ishmael's descendants in Genesis xxv, 18 (I. Samuel xv, 7). Perhaps Havilah is a country between the Arabian and Persian gulfs. There are no certain traces of the name. In Genesis x, 7, 29, we find it in juxtaposition to Sheba and Ophir. Various writers have previously identified it with Colchis, with Chlavisci on the Caspian, with Kampila in Northwest India, and other places. *b.* The productions of the country do not help us to recognize it. Gold is found in many countries. What bdellium (*b'dolach*) is remains uncertain, as well as the derivation of the word. It may be a fragrant and transparent gum, or crystal, or pearls. *c.* The *shoham* stone may be the beryl, or chrysoptase, or the onyx. It has also been identified with other varieties of chalcedony—the sardonyx and sardius.

The name Pison means "the burster forth."

iv. The Gihon is described as "compassing" the whole land of Ethiopia. This name also means "the burster forth." No one has ever identified the Pison or the Gihon, or made the geography indicated otherwise than wildly impossible, if the names of countries be taken in their only recognized significance. Of what use can further inquiry be when scarcely any two inquirers even now agree with each other? The Pison has been taken for the Nile (Saadia, etc.), the Ganges (Josephus and the Fathers), the Indus (Cosmas Indicopleustes), the Phasis (Reland, etc.), the river Baisch, in Arabia (Sprenger). The Gihon has been identified by the Fathers with the Nile (which would then have to rise in Asia, and flow round Ethiopia), the Ganges (Cosmas and Bertheau), the Indus (Redslob), the Araxes (Reland, and others), the Phasis (Link and Rôsemüller), the Halys (Kitto), the Danube (Ephrem Syrus), and many other rivers, including the Jordan. Friedrich

Delitzsch regarded it as a canal; others as an arm of the sea, such as the Persian Gulf, and Josephus as part of the Ocean Stream.

Is it not, then, worse than idle to enter into interminable, tedious, and wholly useless disquisitions as to the site of Eden? One theory is that the courses of all the rivers have been entirely and permanently altered by the Deluge—in which case further investigation is certainly superfluous.

"The Garden was in Eden." The name tells us nothing. The LXX. and Vulgate make an etymological error in connecting Eden with the meaning "delight," "loveliness," for as Schrader shows, the word is not Semitic at all, but is the Assyrian word *i-di-nu* "a field," or "a plain."

Hosts of writers have devoted many pages and even entire books to the discovery of the site of Paradise. The results have been so monstrously discrepant as to show the utter futility of such disquisitions. It has been located by different inquirers in Palestine, in Arabia, in Persia, in Bactria, in India, around the Caucasus, in Syria, in the Canary Islands, and outside the earth altogether—beyond the Ocean Stream. Indeed, scarcely any part of the habitable globe has remained without the honor of being regarded as the happy abode of our first parents. Warren, in an elaborate monograph, placed it at the North Pole, and others at the Mountains of the Moon. And if we had sufficient data to show us what exact spot was intended, wherein should we be the wiser? All that we can say is that the sacred writer seems to place the cradle of mankind, as the Persian legend does, somewhere on the tablelands of Armenia; but his concern with geographical questions was quite infinitesimal. His much deeper aim is to indicate the origin of sin in the heart of man. Only two considerations seem possible.

i. Some suppose these verses (10 to 14) to be a later gloss of a pragmatic character, inserted into the text by one who saw in the story of the Fall a material history rather than an ethopœia. There is no evidence, textual or otherwise, in proof of this view.

ii. The other sees nothing more than an indication of the general conviction that the human race, or at any rate those families of the human race with which alone the writer was immediately concerned, originated somewhere in Central Asia. In attempting a closer geographical indication the Yahvist could write only from the standpoint of the universal lack of geography in an age when there were no maps, and no surveys, and only very limited voyages or travels; and in which knowledge of the earth's surface was of the most elementary description. The writer, perhaps seven

¹ Daniel x, 4.

centuries before Christ, hardly shows greater unacquaintance with the subject than is shown by Cosmas Indicopleustes, who wrote more than five centuries after Christ. If even Josephus, writing 90 A. D., could be capable of an error so astounding as to regard the Ganges and the Nile as branches of the same river, how can we be surprised at similar ignorance of details, wholly apart from his general purpose, in this ancient Hebrew whose knowledge in such subjects was simply that of his own day?

The general conception of Eden corresponds with that of the Greek Hesperides; the Hindoo Mount Meru, guarded by dragons and watered by four rivers; the Persian Heden, where Ahriman tempted the first men in the shape of a serpent; and the Chinese Kuen-lun, with its four streams which fertilize the world.

THE FIRST MAN AND THE FIRST COMMAND.

(GENESIS II, 15 TO 17.)

The Adam is brought to the Garden and is placed there in a region of delight, but not that he may luxuriate in idleness. He is set to till and to guard it. The tilling we can understand, for it would be very easy and delightful, not in "the sweat of the brow" as in the stubborn soil which brought forth thorns and thistles (iii, 17). What is meant by "guarding it" we are not told. In the Persian legend Ormuzd bids men guard their home of bliss from the cruel demonic forces of nature, which are under the sway of Ahriman; but there is no room for such a view here, though Delitzsch adopts it. The old Jewish Book of Jubilees says (chapter iii) that the man was to guard Eden against wild beasts; but neither is that easy to understand. The man is allowed to eat of every tree, even of the Tree of Life. In accordance with the universal belief of the ancients he is a vegetarian. But he is sternly forbidden to eat "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and that for his own sake, since "in the day—*i. e.*, when—thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt die." The death spoken of is, as so often in Scripture, spiritual and moral death, so that sin is death. It is perhaps needless to render with Symmachus, "thou shalt become liable to death."

The paradise of the race is here assimilated to the paradise of childish innocence in the childhood of every individual, before the child has learnt "to refuse the evil and choose the good" (Isaiah vii, 16). It is the knowledge, and the subsequent choice, of evil instead of good which is the perverting and deathful force in the soul of man.

THE CREATION OF WOMAN.

(GENESIS II, 18 TO 24.)

Man was lonely. In the narrative of P (Genesis i, 27) we are told of man, as of the beasts: "Male and female created he them." Here he is solitary in the midst of paradise, and God pitying his condition, seeks a helpmeet for him; literally "at his side." So, to give man companionship, God made the beasts and the birds out of the ground. The attempt to harmonize this with the first chapter by rendering the verb "had made" is a grammatically untenable resource of harmonists.

In the next verse we have a curious glimpse into the views of the sacred writer respecting the Origin of Language. The notice could appear to him by no means important, because, in the "analogist" views of the Jews, the *name* of anything seemed to bear a stamp of its essential nature. Nothing is more probable than that animal names formed a main part of the earliest attempts at human language, and that, as was the all but invariable primitive resource, they were onomatopoeic, *i. e.*, in vocal imitation of natural sounds.

Man exercised his heaven-implanted faculty of language in naming the animals; but there was no real companionship for him with them; no sufficiently close homogeneity of nature.¹ "Adam," says South, "came into the world a philosopher, which sufficiently appears by his writing the nature of things upon their names." There is an unfathomable abyss between the intelligence of the most advanced animal and the lowest of the human race.

Then God created² woman (Genesis ii, 22). The formation of Eve is narrated in the most naïvely anthropomorphic manner. God cast Adam into a deep sleep; he took out one of his ribs. God molded it into a woman, and brought her to the man.³ He instantly recognized the intimate closeness of her relation to himself, and called her woman (*ishshah*) because she was taken out of man (*ish*). The Vulgate keeps up the assonance by rendering "woman" *virago* and "man" *vir*, as Luther afterward did by his *männin* and *mann*.

This story embodies a vivid ideal upon which the writer bases a truth of eternal validity—the indissoluble sanctity of the marriage bond, as forming the commencement of a new

¹ "A helpmeet for him"; literally, "A help as before him," or "corresponding to him."—Spurrell. In the clause above "Adam" appears as a proper name; in this chapter and elsewhere it is generic, "the Adam"—"the man."

² Literally, "buiided."—Revised Version, margin.

³ The word for rib is in every other passage translated "side" (Vulgate, *costa*). "This is *now* bone, etc.": "now" means rather "at last" (literally, "this time"). In some Semitic dialects "bone" is equivalent to "self."

home-life, which is even to supersede the sacred home-life of earlier years.¹

Then the chapter concludes with one of those swift, luminous touches, which, in the briefest space, contains a world of significance. To indicate the natural and unclouded innocence of souls, to which as yet evil was unknown, the writer adds that "they were both naked; the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." As Milton writes—with that majestic purity which enables him to speak as spirits less starry and virginal than his would hardly have dared to do:

"Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honor dishonorable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind,
With shews instead, mere shews of seeming pure,
And banished from man's life his happiest life—

Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
Of God or angel; for they thought no ill."¹

But the *literal* acceptance of this picture-idea of the manner of the creation of woman from a rib of man, would be childish. This same remark applies to much of this early narrative. "The expressions of Moses," says Archbishop Sumner, whose orthodoxy no one will call in question, "are evidently adapted to the first familiar notions derived from the sensible appearances of the earth and heavens; and the absurdity of supposing that the literal interpretation of the terms of Scripture ought to interfere with the advancement of philosophical inquiry would have been as generally forgotten and renounced if the oppressors of Galileo had not found a place in history."²

CHAPTER III.

(GENESIS III.)

THE TEMPTATION—THE FALL—THE PENALTY AND THE CURSE—ADAM AND EVE—THE EXPULSION FROM PARADISE, AND THE CHERUBIM.

WE now enter on the consideration of a chapter which, if we read it solely with a view to understand and profit by the essential lessons which it was meant to teach, is as simple as it is profound; but which becomes baffling and inexplicable, if we attempt to push the interpretation of it into minute and irrelevant details. I have long been convinced that interminable commentaries recording all the vagaries of human fantasy and all the laborious futilities of human learning which have been heaped up by wandering exegetes, both Jewish and Christian, during century after century, are worse than useless. Guesswork, based on idle literalism, is alike inconclusive and unsatisfactory. It only tends to divert the mind from spiritual truths. In this chapter, as in all the deeper parts of Scripture, the real Word of God is "living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."²

The enormous difficulties which have been discovered, or created, in this chapter arise solely from neglecting the spirit of the narrative, and dwelling with unintelligent stolidity on every secondary detail of its form. They are difficulties due to the many ages which have elapsed since this deeply instructive and

divinely profitable allegory of the dawn of sin in the human soul was written. They arise also from the vast differences between Eastern literature and the mode of thought and expression among those who have been molded under the wholly changed forces of modern civilization. Most of the insoluble problems which have been so interminably discussed with reference to this narrative of the Fall are such as would not have occurred at all to the ancient writer or to his contemporary readers. There are improbabilities, difficulties, etc., which would not have troubled either him or them since they are, as a Greek tragedian would have said, "outside the narrative." They in no wise interfere with the intended lessons.

I have used the word "allegory." Let no reader unaccustomed to the progress of modern thought be startled by the word. If he is uninstructed enough to regard it as a matter of faith and piety to understand literally the talking serpent, and the trees of Life and of Knowledge, there is nothing to prevent him from clinging to a belief which need not necessarily disturb for him the spiritual import of the story, but which otherwise has no concern with religion or with any truth of vital importance to the soul of man. And if, with the common methods of abuse and denunciation, he tries to enforce the same literalism on others of wider learning and stronger intelligence, he may be forgiven for a survival of the old tyrannical spirit of ecclesiastical dogmatism

¹ Matthew xix, 5: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh."

² Hebrews iv, 12 (Revised Version).

¹ "Paradise Lost," iv, 314-321.

² Archbishop Sumner, "Records of Creation," I, p. 270.

which at present will do no harm to anyone but himself. Further, if he considers it a profitable or intelligent use of time to discuss with rabbinites and medieval interpreters, whether the serpent originally stood erect, whether it had legs, whether—as represented in medieval paintings—it had a human head, etc., it is perfectly open for him to do so. All that need be said is that, if in any other Eastern book we met with magic trees¹ and talking animals, we should not have a moment's hesitation in separating the symbolic forms from the inward meaning; and that even English theologians—who have always been so intensely conservative as only to admit new truths long after they have become the merest commonplaces of German theology—have, as far back as the days of Bishop Warburton and Bishop Horsley, admitted that it is in no sense a matter of faith to give literal acceptance to emblematic teaching.²

The Adam and his wife are living in paradise. Their state of innocence consists in ignorance of any commandment but one, and in total inexperience of the consequences which arise from that changed relation to God which is always caused by the violation of his behests. It is a type of that condition through which all souls pass in the days of childish innocence. "The holiness of children," says Cardinal Manning, "is the very type of saintliness; and the most perfect conversion is but a hard and distant return to the holiness of a child." Such an absolute return is indeed impossible. The perfect innocence of a little child, as yet unconscious of the existence of evil, can never be restored; but God, who "has many bests," and who restores to even greater fullness of blessing his returning prodigals, can grant the grander innocence of evil known and refused for the untempted innocence which consists in nescience of forbidden things.

How long did Adam and Eve continue in this state of paradisiacal bliss? The writer knows as little on that point as we do. Some conjectured that Adam—or in the wild Rabbinic legend of him and his first wife Lilith, by whom he became the father of all the demons—continued in Eden for an age. Others make his innocence last only for a moment. The Book of Jubilees says that he enjoyed paradise for seven years. A very common view has been that his Eden bliss lasted but for a single day. All such conjectures are the idlest of idle talk.

¹ Why should the Tree of Life be less a symbol in Genesis than it is in Revelation ii, 7, xxii, 2-14?

² "The ideas which this language conveys are indeed allegorical, but they inform us of this, and of nothing but this, that immortal life was a thing extraneous to our nature."—Warburton, "Divine Legation," vii, 1, §1. Bishop Horsley, "Sermon XVI."

They did not concern the sacred writer. He is an instructor of the world, sent forth from God to illuminate man's soul, not to gratify his curiosity; to warn him against the peril of temptation, not to make him an expert in prehistoric history. His object, as we have said, was to answer the perplexing, agitating, most important question, "What is the origin of human sin."

Whence does sin find entrance into the soul of man?

I. It is a question which has occupied the mind of man in every climate and every age. It is touched upon in every form of pagan mythology, and in many such mythologies receives an answer in some respects analogous to the one here indicated. It may, however, be said with the most indisputable truth that no mythological ethopœia shows anything like the marvelous depth, sanity, and simplicity of this narrative of Holy Writ, or is half so well calculated for the warning and instruction of the soul.

i. All alike have seen—all human beings who have attained to years of discretion have learnt by experience, more or less sad, more or less fatal—that the sources of sin are twofold. These sources are from without and from within; and sin results from the human soul succumbing to the union of the two. Whether there is a force, not ourselves, which *per se* makes for unrighteousness, is a question beyond our apprehension, which in any case does not concern us, but that there is such a force relatively to ourselves, depending on us for its deadliness, and causing all kinds of moral evil by our coöperation with it, is a matter of universal experience. "The tempting opportunity meets the susceptible disposition." Saint James gives a psychological analysis of temptation which is of intense and searching accuracy, and which forms a perfect commentary on the narrative, when he says (i, 14, 15), "Each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust" (the 'evil impulse' of the Rabbis) "when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." Every child of Adam sins "after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (Romans v, 14).

ii. Externally this force, this principle of evil, is described, symbolized, personified, so to speak incarnated, in the language of Scripture as an Evil Being of portentous reality for the human race—at once the Tempter, the Accuser (*Diabolos*, devil), and the Destroyer—Abaddon, Apollyon. He first leads us into sin; then with fiendish malignity charges us with the sin; lastly, unless we coöperate with the Power of Salvation for our own rescue, destroys us utterly by means of the sin which he has

instigated, which is its own punishment, and which contains in itself the germs of its own overwhelming retribution. This evil without us is called Satan — "The Satan" — the Enemy, as though there were no other.

iii. The power of this external force of evil is indicated by the fact that Satan is called by Saint Paul "The prince of the power of the air,"¹ and even (by a very strong expression), "the god of this world."² Our Lord said of him, "the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me."³

iv. This foe of mankind is sometimes compared to a lion, sometimes to a serpent. He is compared to a wild beast very early in Scripture. God says to Cain (Genesis iv, 7), "And if thou doest not well, sin croucheth at the door" — like a tiger with fell claws and a glare in his hungry eye, ready at any unguarded instant to crawl out upon thee from the thicket where it lies hid, to trample thee into the mire, to rend thee limb from limb. "Be sober," says Saint Peter, "be vigilant because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."⁴

v. But if the power of outward evil is compared to a lion because of its fearful, sudden, lashing spring, it is also compared to a serpent because it glides upon the unwary noiselessly, gradually, all but imperceptibly, as through the deciduous leaves of careless moments and wandering thoughts. Hence, too, the devil is called "that Old Serpent,"⁵ and we are warned lest we should be led astray by him, as the serpent seduced Eve.⁶

vi. Evil, then, either springs upon the human soul with sudden and overmastering violence or is suffered to slide into it by slow degrees. But of the two symbols that of the serpent was, on every ground and obviously, the best suited to convey the sacred teaching here. Fatal temptation cannot spring upon the innocent, "terrible and with the tiger's leap," until innocence has become incipient guilt. The wild beasts roar after their prey in thickets where the serpent has already made its home.

vii. If we look still more closely at the emblem we see that it stands for that which occurs so incessantly in the later Jewish writings as the *Yetzer ha-ra*, or evil impulse. It symbolizes that lust of the flesh, called in Greek "the mind of the flesh," "which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affec-

tions, some the desire of the flesh":¹ A nature which has once suffered itself to be infected by this corruption "is not subject to the law of God." It sinks into a state which Saint Paul describes as carnalism, as "the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members."²

viii. The serpent is described as "more subtle than any beast of the field." This creature has always been regarded by the families of man as something uncanny alike in its loathliness, its fascination, and in the swift deathfulness of its attack and spring. It fascinates with full, round, glittering eye; it approaches noiseless and unseen; it crushes with its voluminous folds; it can glide over every fence and barrier, into every corner and recess. "It lies apparently dead for months, yet when roused it can outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish, outleap the zebra, outwrestle the athlete, and crush the tiger."³ The embodiment of temptation in the form of a serpent indicates the insidious power of inward evil. The writer introduces it with fearful suddenness, without giving a moment's thought to its shape, or position, or to any surprise which Eve might have been supposed to feel at hearing it emit human utterance. It never occurred to him to make Eve ask

"How cam'st thou speakable of mute?"

All this was entirely alien from his purpose. He is dealing with a symbol, which merely as a symbol is nothing to him; the serpent to him means the voice of revolt and seduction in the heart of man. Talking animals are universal in all the allegories of the world.

II. The serpent said to the woman, "Yea, hath God said . . . ?" This is an admirably idiomatic rendering of the abrupt original. And it is significant that the serpent only uses the more general name Elohim, as though the sacred Tetragrammaton, the name of Yahveh the covenant God, were too "sacred and significant" to be put into those polluted lips.

i. How marvelous is the divine insight into the nature of sin which is here displayed! There is nothing really sudden in the approach of the serpent. Its voice is only the voice of a doubt, already admitted into the soul of Eve, already tampered with by her wandering thoughts. It is the dawn of self-will; the first slight arrow wound launched at that unquestioning obedience which rises from perfect faith in God — it is self-persuasion in the direction of desire. The serpent ought to have been hateful to Eve. "The burning color of the serpent;

¹ Ephesians ii, 2.

² II. Corinthians iv, 4.

³ John xiv, 30, xvi, 11.

⁴ I. Peter v, 8; compare Luke viii, 29, ix, 39-42.

⁵ Proverbs xxiii, 32; Isaiah xxvii, 1; Revelation xii, 9-15, xx, 2.

⁶ As far back as Eusebius "the serpent" is regarded as a metaphor.

¹ Ninth Article of the Church of England. See I. Peter ii, 11; II. Peter i, 4, ii, 10; James i, 14, 15; Romans vii, 7; Galatians v, 16, etc.

² Romans vii, 23.

³ Dr. Marcus Dodds, "Genesis," p. 20.

the cloven, vibrating tongue; the poison-swollen teeth; the horrid hissing; the stealthy and tortuous but dart-like motions; the irascible temper; the contemptible craft"—all these would naturally make the creature an object of horror and disgust; but already for Eve the first stage of temptation is so far past that she has evidently permitted herself to feel "the bewitching power of the ever-watchful eyes." There is in her none of the start and shrinking back of innocence at the first touch of assuagement. The serpent does but articulate the voice of her own already inborn doubt. "Our great security against sin lies in being shocked at it. Eve gazed and reflected, when she should have fled."

ii. VERSES 2 AND 3. And although in words she repudiates the doubt, yet there is an accent of self-betraying exaggeration in the phrases she adopts. They might eat of the trees of the garden but—"alas"! she seems to sigh—there was one tree, and that in the very midst of the garden as though from its choiceness of preëminence, of which God had said, that they must not eat, neither must they touch it, lest they should die. God had not said that they were "not to touch it," and it is possible that the writer meant to imply a little impulse of rebellion in the over-emphasis with which the prohibition was repeated. Moreover, there was another tree in the midst of the garden, of which they had not been forbidden to eat, the Tree of Life; and she does not mention the name of the forbidden tree "of the knowledge of good and evil," because the very name would have sufficed to show that the object of the restriction was pure compassion. Perhaps, then, even already, the Yahvist means to shadow forth the lurking sophistry of sin, a certain selfishness of will, and infatuation of desire, and darkening of intellect. Eve felt already a certain possibility of and even indefinite attractiveness in independence and disobedience. "The history of the first sin," says Kalisch, "describes the nature of all human failings in every succeeding age. The simple narrative embodies truths which neither philosophy nor experience have been able to modify or to enlarge."

iii. The writer left much to human imagination and thought; otherwise he might have pointed out how infinitely wiser it would have been for Eve to keep away from the vicinage of temptation. If the fruit was forbidden, it was the worst of follies to linger in the scene of moral danger. We are all of us lingering near the fatal tree when we give willing harborage and hospitality to evil thoughts, and one of the lessons of this chapter is: "Guard well thy thoughts, for thoughts are heard in heaven." All wickedness of every kind be-

gins, and only can begin, in evil thoughts. Then the evil thought becomes the evil wish; the evil wish the evil purpose; the evil purpose the evil act; the evil act the evil repetition—for, as Saint Augustine asks, "Whom sawest thou ever content with a single sin?" Then the evil act and the evil repetition disorder all the delicate moral adjustments of the soul, until the evil repetition has become the evil habit; the evil habit the evil character; and the evil character the evil destiny. "Sin," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "first startles a man; then it becomes pleasing; then it becomes easy; then delightful; then frequent; then habitual; then confirmed; then the man is impenitent, then obstinate, then resolves never to repent, and then is damned."

THE FALL (VERSES 4 TO 6).

VERSES 4 AND 5. But now the doubt or dislike of the prohibition, having been suffered secretly to enter the mind, is most fiercely emphasized into absolute disbelief and repudiation. The serpent voice, which is the voice of concupiscence within her, gives the lie to God, and says, "Ye shall not surely die; nay, more, the prohibition is unjust, is tyrannous. It rises from God's envy at the possible attainment by man of an immense elevation. He knew that when they ate of the fruit their eyes should be opened; they would be no more like unintelligent driven animals; they would become as God, knowing good and evil."

VERSE 6. The results of the admitted doubt, of the secret rebellion, follow with immense and frightful rapidity. Now the woman gazes at the forbidden tree; persuades herself that its fruit is good for food, and that it is pleasant to the eyes and a tree desirable for gaining insight. She tampers, she dallies with, she revels in the evil thought. Unwise curiosity becomes guilty curiosity, and guilty curiosity soon leaps full-grown into guilty assentation. Self-will is the high road to doubt of God's goodness; and that to rebellion; and that to ruin.

She took of the fruit—even then at that eleventh hour it might not have been too late to draw back, to leap away as it were from the edge of the precipice. But when the soul has gone so far in the path of guilt—when the senses and self-will have conspired together for the betrayal—how rarely does it stop before the final consummation! There was no guilt in the *existence* of temptation; no guilt in the temperament which rendered it possible: the guilt began when the will began to side with the impulse and the instigation against the reason and the conscience. "It is the devil's part to suggest," says Saint Bernard. "It is ours not to consent: As often as we

overcome him so we bring glory to God . . .
 . . . who opposeth us that we may contend,
 and assisteth us that we may conquer."

"She ate." The evil curiosity developed with terrible precipitance into the daringly open transgression; and since no lightning flashed, no overwhelming ruin burst instantly upon the head of crime—since, on the contrary, the tasting of the forbidden fruit brought at once its own voluptuous gratification,

"Greedily she engorged without restraint,
 And knew not eating death."

And so the mother of mankind, by her fatal inabstinence,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

And, alas, it does not stop there! The tempted instantly becomes in her turn the tempter. Those who have yielded to the devil become not only his personal bondslaves, but too often his active agents and emissaries. Sin is a frightfully pervasive and diffusive element in the heart itself; it multiplies itself with infinite reverberations in the world without. By committing a conscious act of sin—by first willingly taking sin by the hand—the soul joins the great host of rebels against God, and recommitments the crime of our first parents. But a lonely participation in the abysmal mystery of rebellion terrifies the soul. It cannot bear isolation in evil. The first intoxicating result of tasting the fruit of sin is the desire to share with others the maddening empoisonment; so "the woman gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat."

Of what kind the tree was is a question which it never troubled the sacred writer to inquire. Tradition has generally been content, as were the Latin Fathers and Milton, with the notion of

"That crude apple which perverted Eve";

but the Rabbis thought that the tree was a vine or an olive; and the Greeks imagined that it was a fig. It was none of these; it was a pure symbol on the page of a writer who did not expect that his readers would wander from his high and solemn purpose into the inquiries of a literalism which would be perfectly without significance.

The consequences. (Genesis iii, 7-20.)

i. Shame (verse 7). Now that they had sinned "their eyes were opened," and fatally opened. The first result of sin in the soul not wholly lost is the penal agony of shame—the rankling tooth of remorse. They were ashamed of one another and of themselves: "they knew that they were naked."

Their previous happy condition of unconscious simplicity is succeeded by one of anxiety (ii, 25). The beautiful veil of innocence was rudely torn away. The native hue of

innocence is exchanged for the burning and painful blush of self-reproach and self-disgust.

That shame was too intolerable to bear. To shield themselves from it, in part at least, by some poor resource, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves girdles to hide the nakedness which now only shocked and pained them. And from this it is evident that, though it may be an error to press the signification into details, the thought of some form of sensual sin is prominent, if not exclusive, in the sacred narrative. And since no undying worm and quenchless flame can cause fiercer pangs than those which the shame of the self-conscious sinner burns into himself, sin becomes, sooner or later—and far more often soon than late—its own inevitable punishment. Every sinner, however wildly he may try to escape his doom, becomes his own most certain self-tormentor and self-avenger. He sees virtue and goodness in their own native loveliness and pines away at their loss. He is his own hell, and himself arms all that is best within him with the snaky torch and serpent tresses of the fury avenger. These results also are clearly indicated in the ensuing verses.

ii. *Alienation from God.* (Genesis iii, 8 to II.)

This second consequence of disobedience, so certain and so full of anguish, is indicated in a most simple yet vivid manner, such as could not be surpassed. Hitherto the Adam had lived in familiar intercourse with God.

"Upon the breast of new-created earth
 Man walked; and when and whereso'er he moved,
 Alone or mated, solitude was not.
 He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate voice
 Of God; and angels to his sight appeared,
 Crowning the glorious hills of paradise;
 Or through the groves, gliding like morning mist
 Enkindled by the sun. He sat and talked
 With winged messengers; who daily brought
 To his small island in the ethereal deep
 Tidings of joy and love."¹

At first a loving son exulted in his father's presence; now a stained, self-conscious, guilty wretch shrank from it. The presence of the pure does but pain the unclean, as light gives anguish to aching eyes.

The Lord God walked in the Garden in the cool wind of the day, and man heard his sounding footstep.² Man came forth no more to meet him. Adam and his wife hid themselves—oh, how vainly—amid the trees of the Garden.

But the soul, however much it tries, can never hide itself from God. It finds God a besetting God. It cannot find a spot unvisited, unhaunted by his omnipresence. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I

¹ Wordsworth, "The Excursion," Book IV.

² *ʾAḥi*, "sound," as in II. Samuel v. 24; I. Kings xix, 12; Spurrell.

flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Adam instantly trembled to hear the terrible, penetrating, still, small summons of God; his sounding footstep in the Garden; his heart-shaking question, "Adam, where art thou?"

With that imperfect girdle of fig leaves about him—never before needed—which betrayed his sin and shame, he came forth and confessed his concealment, his fear, his consciousness of nakedness. And God's voice, which was the voice of his own conscience within him, asked, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the forbidden tree?"

Guilt is always weakness, and meanness, and uneasy cowardice, and the fertility of poor excuse. Adam is not content humbly to confess, and to throw himself on the mercy of God. He would fain screen himself and throw the blame on others—even, in part, on God himself.¹ "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

Then God turns to the shrinking woman with the awful question—the more awful from its very simplicity—"What is this that thou hast done?" How tremendous beyond all power of imagination would have been the true and full answer to that question, if Eve could but have foreseen all that her sin involved!

And the woman can but throw the blame on the source of the temptation: "*The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*"

But human beings cannot find any valid excuse for their misdeeds by attempting to shift the responsibility of them upon the external sources of evil. Any outward temptation does not become sin at all, until it has been treacherously admitted and voluntarily welcomed into the heart. "The soul," as an old divine has said, "may not make a pack-saddle of the devil for its own sins." As far as man is concerned the serpent is harmless enough, until man has unbarred the temple gate, and suffered it to glide into the sanctuary. It is there only that its subtle venom begins to permeate every vein and fiber of the moral life. And thus, as God had said to Adam and Eve, the wages of sin was death—that spiritual death which was a far more real death than what sweet Saint Francis of Assisi called "our sister, the death of the body." Sin is death; for it is "an attempt to control

¹James i, 13 (Revised Version). "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man."

the immutable and unalterable laws of everlasting righteousness, goodness, and truth on which the universe depends." "The wages that sin bargains with the sinner for," says South, "are life, pleasure, and profit: but the wages it pays him with are death, torment, and destruction: he that would understand the falsehood and deceit of sin thoroughly, must compare its promises and its payment together." The experience of our first parents did but anticipate the experience of the universal world in all subsequent generations—that "unlawful pleasure is envenomed pleasure; its fruition is disappointing at the time, its consequences cruelly torture afterward, its effects deprave forever."

The Curse of the Serpent. (Verses 14 and 15.)

In these verses, in which the allegory and fact are somewhat perplexingly commingled, there seems to be an interfusion of the symbol and the thing signified—the serpent and the power of evil which stood behind it, and of which it was the emblem and the instrument. That the serpent is here a symbol of the Evil One none have doubted. We find this clearly stated in the New Testament. Thus in John, viii, 44, our Lord says that the devil was "a liar" and "a murderer from the beginning," and we read of "that old serpent called the devil," in Revelation, xii, 9, xx, 2. But the identification was made long before the era of the New Covenant. Even the ancient Samaritan text of the Pentateuch here renders "*serpent*" by "*liar*." And in the Book of Wisdom we read "For God has created man for perishable existence, and made him after the image of his own being. But by *the envy of Satan* death came into the world; and it befalls all those who belong to him."¹

On the serpent, then is pronounced a four-fold curse, which is perhaps based on the imaginative aspect of the creature's actual lot. It is to be (1) cursed among all cattle, and every beast of the field—a thing set apart, as it were, to be shunned and hated; (2) it is to crawl on its belly as a perpetual degradation; (3) it is to eat dust, because, from its method of salivation, and deglutition, dust must be largely mingled with its food. "Dust," says Isaiah, "shall be the serpent's meat." (4) There was to be perpetual enmity between it and man. It might "crush" or wound man's heel, but man—always regarding it with fear and horror, even when these feelings are disguised, as among the Egyptians, and Hindoos, and North American Indians, under forms of superstitious reverence—should, on every possible occasion, bruise its head.

These curses may be, as regards the mere

¹Wisdom ii, 23-24; Micah vii, 17; Isaiah lxxv, 25.

reptile, a play of imagination, since, like all the rest of God's creatures, serpents do but fulfill the inevitable law of their being. To this day, for instance in Hindostan, man crushes the heads of countless serpents, and more Hindoos die every year from snake bite, especially in the heel, than from any other accident. Probably, too, some very ancient tradition on this subject survived among different races, for to this day the pictures of Vishnu as Krishna, the young Hindoo god of deliverance, trampling victoriously on the serpent which he has destroyed, might serve as a pictorial illustration of the same idea which is in the mind of the Yahvist.¹ It would, of course, be absurd to suppose that every serpent, of every species and variety—numbered by hundreds—lives in a state of conscious degradation and anguish because the Power of Evil used the agency of their distant progenitor for the first temptation. We must, therefore, look through the symbolism to deeper truths. The curse on the serpent represents the inherent shamefulness which attaches itself like a law to all corrupt and evil natures. Of every drunkard, and sensualist, and murderer, and thief, and liar, and mammon worshiper, it remains true that "on thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

In the words, "Thou shalt bruise his heel," and he "shall bruise thy head," many Fathers and Christian commentators, and some later Jewish writers have seen a Messianic interpretation apart from the more general one. And this view is distinctly sanctioned by Saint Paul, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who allude to the curse of the serpent in speaking of Christ as "The seed of the woman," sent forth by God "to destroy, by his death, him that hath power of death, that is, the devil" (Galatians iii, 16; Hebrews ii, 14). Saint Paul says, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet" (Romans xvi, 20). It is perfectly legitimate to read this interpretation into the old deep symbol and prophecy, without assuming that it was consciously in the mind of the writer. For the completion of Christ's work involved the potency of the final annihilation of all evil; the destruction of every venomous force of sin was declared in his last great cry upon the cross, "It is finished." The curse-alleviating promise of Eden did not receive its full illustration until the "Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil."

The Doom of the Woman. (Verse 16.)

"Unto the woman he said." On this expres-

¹It should, however, be noticed that the history of Krishna in the "*Bhagavad-gītā*," may have been influenced by Jewish or Christian elements, as the Koran was afterward.

sion Tertullian makes the striking comment, "God shows that, for the present, he extended Adam's life. Therefore, *he did not curse* Adam himself and Eve, as having been unveiled by confession, as candidates for restitution."¹

Woman, as the author of the calamity, is to taste of its bitter fruit in herself, and in all her daughters, who sin after the similitude of her transgression. God pronounced upon her the doom of pain, perilous childbirth,² of desire for and subjection to her husband, so that in the very fulfillment of the highest and sweetest ideals of her life—in love and motherhood—was attached the condition of physical and often also of mental anguish. This doom was, however, greatly alleviated by the coming of Christ. Yet throughout the East and in many ages and climes, the lot of woman, under this inherent curse involved in the primeval Fall, has been one of drudgery and degradation, and even in many nominally Christian countries it is so still.

The Doom of Man. (Verses 17 to 19.)

"And unto Adam he said." It is noticeable that Adam here first occurs as a proper noun—Adam, not *the* Adam. The man also must bear his retribution. His excuse which he shifted upon his wife was not valid. Man may be tempted to sin, but

"'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall."

Every man is solely responsible for his own transgression and "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Therefore, to punish man's offense: i. The ground is cursed, and shall bring forth thorns and thistles. ii. He should eat the produce of it, but only as the result of toil, and labor, and the sweat of his brow. iii. And thus his life would be a life of pain, for he was not a god, and had not become as Elohim by his sin; dust he was, and unto dust should he return. The reality of the curse has been acknowledged by all mankind.

"Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust," says Job, "neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward";³ and he asks, "Are not his days like the days of a hireling?"⁴ "God distributeth sorrows in his anger."⁵ "All his [man's] days are sorrows," says the preacher, "and his travail grief."⁶

"All the life of man is painful," says Euripides, "and there is no cessation from his toils."⁷ The sage promised the unhappy Persian king that he would recall his dead queen

¹Tertullian, "*Adversus Marcionem*," ii, 25.

²"Multiplying, I will multiply thy pain and thy conception."

³Job v, 7.

⁴Job vii, 1.

⁵Job xxi, 17.

⁶Ecclesiastes ii, 23.

⁷Hippolytus, 189.

to life, if he could find the names of but three happy men to inscribe upon her tomb: and he searched through all his realm, but they were not to be found.

The Psalmist sums up the peevish April day of our little life thus: "The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labor and sorrow; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone."

Man and Woman. (Verse 20.)

Hitherto the Adam has called the name of woman *ishshāh*; but now God had spoken of her conception and motherhood and he calls her name *chavvah*, "Life" or "Living," because she is to be the mother of all living. The curse of participated guilt is in part ameliorated, through God's tenderness, by the blessing of closer union; and the beautiful sanctity of married love, with all the sweetness of family life, renders all sorrows more endurable, all joys more intense.

Against the deadly evil of polygamy, so universal in Eastern lands, Christ appealed to the primeval monogamy of Eden, to prove that "in the beginning it was not so," though plurality of wives had been permitted in the Mosaic dispensation because of the hardness of men's hearts. He restored the beauty of the ideal of paradise to its pristine brightness, and whenever religion has remained unsophisticated by the priestly and Manichean elements of voluntary will-worship and natural asceticism, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats," then men have revered that holy estate which was instituted in the time of man's innocency, and which Christ adorned and beautified with his Presence and first miracle which he wrought in Cana of Galilee.

The end of the Sin.

God, who always tempers judgment with mercy, and whose compassion ever prevails over his justice, alleviates in many ways the punishment which the sinful parents of our race had brought upon themselves. Vainly had they attempted to hide the shame of their nakedness; but God made them coats of skins.¹ "The Law begins and ends with an act of loving kindness," says an old Rabbi; "at its commencement God clothes the naked; at its close he buries the dead." (Soteh, 14a.) To ask where the skins came from, is to go behind the writer's purpose. It might be sufficient to say that, as geology has overwhelmingly proved, death has existed in the animal world since the earliest dawn of time, and the first pair might have been clad in the skins of dead animals. It is equally easy to interpolate

¹ Genesis iii, 21. "Coats"; the Hebrew word is of the same root as "cotton."

a supposed institution of animal sacrifice and to say that these were the skins of animals slain in propitiation of God's wrath. But such conjectures are either futile or unwarrantable. Scripture nowhere tells us of any divine institution of sacrifice as an ordinance of worship before the Mosaic legislation. Equally easy is it, and even more futile, to follow some of the Rabbis and Fathers in interpreting the "tunics of skin" as Adam's own skin, his fleshly garment and tabernacle; and to assume that, up to this time, his body had been a body of light like that of the angels. These are the inexcusable aberrations of a fantastic exegesis, which has done much to render turbid with alien influences of human folly the pure and simple Word of God.

In the next verse (verse 22) it is admitted that, infinite as had been the loss involved for man in the forfeiture of his innocence, yet on the other hand, in some respects, his intellectual horizon had been broadened: he had attained a fuller self-consciousness, and made a disastrous progress. "*The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.*" Now, therefore, he must be suffered no longer to eat of the Tree of Life. The possibility of earthly immortality is forfeited. He is sent forth from Eden to till the common earth; and "Eastward" of the Garden, that all access to it might be barred to him thenceforth forever, are placed Cherubim and a fiery sword that turned every way to guard the way of the Tree of Life.

It is a curious circumstance that the Cherubim are here abruptly introduced without the slightest explanation or indication as to what they were. We may form some opinion about them from (i) the etymology of the word, and (ii) from various ethnic analogies; but (iii) mainly from the references to them in Scripture.

i. The etymology is wholly uncertain. The word may be connected (1) with *kerabh*, "he plowed," since the ox was especially prominent in the symbol; or (2) a transposition of *rekoobh*, "chariot" (I. Chronicles xxviii, 18); or (3) *q'roubh*, "he who is near God"; or (4) from Arab roots meaning "strong" or "noble"; or (5) the Assyrian *karabu*, "to be powerful."¹

ii. The ethnic analogies are numerous. There is the winged *saraph* of the Egyptians, seen on their sacred arks; and winged figures of lions, and bulls with human faces, or of men with eagle heads in Assyrian and Babylonian remains.

iii. The Cherubim are here alone mentioned in Genesis, and are introduced as angelic beings who defend the Tree of Life. We next

¹ See my article on Cherubim in Kitto's "Encyclopædia"; Cheyne in "Encyclopædia Britannica"; Spurrell, *ad locum*.

meet with them in Exodus, xxv, 18, xxxvii, 7, where they form the throne of the Shekinah over the Ark which enshrines the broken tablets of the moral law. There they are assessors of God's presence for the expiation of sin, and guardians of the divine oracles. "In the vision of Ezekiel" known as the "chariot" (Ezekiel i, 4-28), and in the Apocalypse (iv, 6-11) we have variations between one single tetramorphic being and the "fourfold visaged four." Though in symbolic completeness they are composed of four separate or united forms of life, yet they might be represented by any one of the four constituent elements, especially by winged oxen or winged men.

They clearly symbolize divine existence in immediate contact with the Eternal: "As standing on the highest step of created life, and uniting in themselves the most perfect created life they are the most perfect emblem of God and the divine life."¹ Their office was twofold: (1) They exercised a protective-vengeful function in guarding from man's too-close intrusion the physical and moral splendors of a lost paradise, and a sacred revelation; and (2) they form the chariot throne of God, and defend the outskirts of his unapproachable glory.

But, in their connection with the mercy seat, they are types, not only of vengeance, but of expiation and forgiveness. And in the vision of Saint John these immortalities appear in the same choir. The redeemed innumerable multitude of the Universal Church, mingling with the choir and joining in the new song. Thus we see that the apparent wrath which excluded man from the forfeited paradise was but the mercy in disguise which secured for him its final fruition in nobler forms of life. The four in their union were also fancifully regarded as a type of Christ.

No more suggestive commentary on the whole narrative of the Fall can be offered than that of the Apostle of the Gentiles: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."¹

CHAPTER IV.

(GENESIS IV.)

THE SPREAD OF SIN AND THE FIRST MURDER.

(VERSES 1 TO 15.)

THE narrative of man's fall continues to acquire a more and more tragic intensity, and, while the story of humanity tells us of splendid progress in all the arts of life, it tells us also of the brutal passions which have flung their sanguinary stains over the annals of advancing civilization.

There has been an attempt, in the legends of all nations, to evoke the shadows out of an unknown past. In all attempts to imagine and reproduce the story of prehistoric æons the conjectures of thinkers as to the first beginnings of civilization and of crime have been thrown into allegoric forms. But the sacred writer does not lose himself in the accumulated details of other ancient cosmogonies. He leaves unsolved many of the stubborn questionings of curiosity. He suffers his narrative to be beset with countless difficulties as to all the points which do not bear on his main design. He is too much absorbed in his ethical and spiritual purpose to pay the smallest heed to matters which did not bear upon it. He unswervingly pursues the end which he has

solely in view — namely, the revelation to men of truths of infinite concernment to their spiritual instruction.

From the expression: "And Adam knew his wife Eve," which is here first introduced after the Fall, many have conjectured that but for the Fall there would never have been this union of the sexes, but that mankind would have been reproduced in other ways. There is not the least justification for such an opinion. It is a point on which the sacred writers do not touch; and, so far as the mere phrase is concerned, it does not involve the inference that this was the beginning of marital intercourse.² To the Jews the mysteries of marriage and of birth were regarded as having been primevally sanctified, in accordance with the earliest decree of God. They lend no countenance to the false notion of a presumptuous asceticism that wedded union involves any dishonor or any stain.

So Eve brought forth her firstborn son, and in the rapturous joy of motherhood called him

¹ Baehr, "Symbolik," i, 340.

¹ I. Corinthians xv, 45-49.

² In proof of this see I. Samuel 1, 19.

Cain (*Qain*) for, she said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord."¹ It is indeed certain that *Qain* cannot be derived from *qānah*, "to acquire"; but the connection of the two words is not that of direct affinity, but of mysterious assonance. We have already seen that the Jews attributed mysterious meanings to the sound—so to speak, the physiological quality—of words. To them they were something more than mere breaths of articulated air. The writer must have been well aware that *Qain* has no direct affinity with *qānah*, but is connected with *qyn* "to forge"; and that the most obvious meaning of the name Cain is not "acquisition," but "a spear."² The Jews were, indeed, fond of connecting the names of men with some prominent event in their lives, as in the cases of Saul and Samuel; and names were often given at birth, or altered in subsequent life, with significant allusion to an important circumstance in the career or character. In some of these instances, however, the name was only a suggestive resemblance. Thus Moses cannot be derived from *māshāh*, "to draw out."³ But in these early chapters of Genesis we are obviously dealing rather with general and allegorical appellatives than with specific designations. We see this, for instance, in the name of Eve's second son, Abel, which is not connected, as Josephus thought, with the Hebrew word for "grief," but with *hebel*, "frailty" or "nothingness," with obvious reference to the shortness of his life.

The two men first born into the world, naturally betook themselves to the two most necessary and elementary modes of supporting life—the agricultural and the pastoral. Abel was a keeper of sheep; Cain was a tiller of the ground. These were the almost exclusive pursuits of the ancient Israelites.

The next immense step in human development was the dawn of that religious feeling which, in almost every primitive nation, has expressed itself by the offering of sacrifice. It is a fact deeply significant of the sobriety and wholesomeness of this vivid narrative that there is no reference to any divine injunction of the ordinances of sacrifice. Nor, again, is there the least hint that the sacrifices of Cain and Abel had any propitiatory significance. In savage nations, self-torture and the immolation not only of animal but even of human victims, to appease the jealous fury of demon-deities, have been common. The natural mind of fallen man, stained with guilt and terrified by conscience, felt instinctively driven to the question which the Prophet Micah puts into the mouth

of the Mesopotamian sorcerer: "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" This was the error which Samuel had to correct in the crude and impulsive mind of Saul—"Hath the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." It was the lesson of the Prophet Hosea which was the favorite quotation of our Lord, "Behold, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." It required a special revelation to teach man the solemn and beautiful truth, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." The writer gives no indication that he shared the manifold aberration of the old religions. The sacrifices of which he speaks are simple expressions of thanks and of praise. He does not even hint that they were placed on any altar. No altar is so much as mentioned till the days of Noah, after the flood.

In course of time Cain brought to God an offering. The word used is *minchah*. It was the sign of instinctive gratitude to the Giver of all good gifts, and it was not a *zebach* or *olah*, *i. e.*, a bloody sacrifice, but consisted of the fruits of the ground which had been yielded as increase in reward for his toil. Abel, since he was a shepherd, no less naturally brought "fat pieces" of the first fruits of his flock.

It might have seemed to human eyes that there was no difference between the brothers; that, in the absence of any divine injunction, each had acted rightfully and dutifully in bringing the offering which was most natural to him, and which expressed his thanksgiving for God's blessing upon his labors. But the Lord readeth the very thoughts of the heart, and "Yahveh had regard for Abel and for his offering, but for Cain and for his offering he had no regard."

Two questions arise which have been freely answered by exegetes from the earliest days, but to which the sacred narrative furnishes no answer at all.

i. "How did God show that he approved and accepted the offering of Abel, but did not approve that of Cain?"

The writer did not trouble himself with such questions. He was content to express the essential fact. Any conjecture must, from the nature of the case, be idle. Theodotion renders the word "had respect for" by the Greek word that means "kindled by fire," and that God's approval of Abel was shown by the descent of fire from heaven upon his offering,¹

¹ The Hebrew is *eth Yahveh*.

² II. Samuel xxi, 16. Also the name of the Kenites, Numbers xxiv, 22; Judges iv, 11. A similar word in Arabic means "a smith."

³ Exodus ii, 10. See Josephus, "Antiquities," II, 9, 6.

¹ As in Leviticus ix, 24; Judges vi, 21; I. Kings xviii, 38; I. Chronicles xxi, 26.

has been the view of many commentators, both Jewish and Christian, from the days of Saint Jerome down to those of Delitzsch. Yet there is no hint of any such miracle, and God's approval might have been known by the same subjective intimation in which he subsequently made known to Cain his warning, and the doom which must ever dog the heels of crime.

ii. Much more important is the question, "Why did Jehovah respect Abel's gift, while he rejected Cain's?" Again the brief, solemn record is silent, because the special reason had no significance apart from the general one, that God looks not at the gift, but at the heart of the giver.

a. The reasons suggested by the Fathers and some later writers are untenable. There is, for instance, no hint that God accepted animal sacrifices, and despised the offering of fruits. The wiser heathen themselves would have rejected any such notion. The difference lay in the giver, not in the gift. Even the gay lyric poet assures the rustic maiden that the gift of the innocent is always acceptable to heaven. Euripides says that "a wicked hand could not even touch the gods."¹ The Rabbis were no less emphatic in asserting this truth, and referred to Psalm li, 17. Rabbi Eleazar said: "Greater is he that doeth righteousness than all the sacrifices."

b. Nor, again, is any emphasis to be laid on the fact that Abel brought of the *firstlings* of his flock and of their fat, as though it were meant—so the Talmudists suggest—that Cain's gift was careless and perfunctory, and he himself like a faithless steward who only offers to his master what is second-best. Had such been the intention of the story, it is clear that it would have been more definitely expressed, and I cannot think that it is proved by the Greek word in Hebrews xi, 4, which, literally rendered, would be a "more abundant" sacrifice; or the writer of the epistle may have borrowed the notion from Philo, as he also does the expression that Abel, though dead, still lives.

c. Still more arbitrary and less warrantable is the view of Hofmann, that Cain deliberately overlooked the connection of sacrifice with sin, as though he were already acquainted with the truth that, in the Levitic law, "Without shedding of blood there is no remission"²—an inference accompanied with the very idle suggestion that because the ground had been "cursed," therefore the fruits of the earth were an accursed offering.

d. The *essential* difference between Cain's gift and that of Abel had been already indicated by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "By faith," he says, "Abel offered

unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which [sacrifice] he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect to his gift; and through it [faith] he being dead yet speaketh." (Revised Version.)

e. And this lesson is distinctly indicated in the subsequent narrative, which, without further specification, intimates that what was lacking in Cain was perfect love and purity of heart. The absence of this love and purity of heart instantly betrayed itself in the consequences. Seeing that Abel was more approved than himself, "it was hot to Cain"—*i. e.*, his anger and jealousy burned like fire, and his countenance fell. The existence of this bad and fierce passion gave occasion to a merciful warning from God. Speaking to his heart, and conveying to him the lesson that the worst way of receiving a mark of God's disapproval is to vent spite on our brother-man because of it, the Lord said to Cain, "Why art thou angry, and why is thy countenance fallen?" The appeal was very gentle and merciful, because Cain had followed a right impulse in his thank offering and his Creator would fain wean him back from the path that leads to death. So Jehovah makes known to the offender the secret plague of his own heart by the question, "If thou doest well, is there not uplifting of thy [fallen] countenance? And if thou doest not well, sin croucheth at the door; and toward thee is its desire, but thou oughtest to rule over it."

This is a very memorable passage. It shows that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."¹ It also conveys a striking admonition, and has been needlessly misunderstood from very early days. To give to the word *chattath* here the meaning of "a sin offering"—a propitiatory victim which thou mayest sacrifice—is a willful distortion, and an essential degradation of the passage, and it also thrusts into the sacred story a gross anachronism. For sin-offerings were not appointed till centuries afterward; and all such offerings are worse than vain, unless the sin of the heart be removed by true repentance. The feminine word *chattath* is, indeed, in apposition with a masculine verb, and masculine pronouns; and evidently there was, even in ancient times, much uncertainty about the rendering, and, perhaps, as to the reading also. But the grammatical anomaly is accounted for, since *chattath* is only a feminine symbol of a masculine object.² So that, "Sin being personified is viewed as masculine."

¹ Proverbs xv, 8, xxi, 27. Compare Isaiah xxix, 13-14; Matthew xv, 8-9.

² This view is admitted by the best Hebrew grammarians, Ewald, Gesenius, Kalisch, etc.

¹ Euripides, Ion, 1315. ² Hebrews ix, 22.

The probable meaning is that sin, like a wild beast — like a lion, of which one of the Arabic names is "the liar in wait" — lurks crouching at the door of life; that its desire is to spring upon and rend and devour the soul; but that it can and ought to be subdued by "a firm will, the servant of a tender conscience." What words could be more pregnant with wise significance? They indicate the most essential truths which must ever be borne in mind by the sons of a race which God made able to stand yet free to fall — the facts had already been shadowed forth in the story of the fall of our first parents — namely, (1) that temptation is ever on the watch to destroy them; (2) that their "adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour"; (3) that to succumb to the allurements of evil is to be ruined by its inherent and necessary consequences; (4) that there are two factors in temptation, the inward and the outward, the opportunity and the concupiscence; (5) that even in the combination of both, while there is great peril, there is as yet no sin; (6) that the treacherous self within us is ever ready to betray us to the combined solicitation of desire and the possibility of gratifying it; (7) that reason and conscience, like two great Archangels of God, are ever by our side to stimulate us to resistance, and to strengthen us to resist effectually; (8) that all our passions and the whole domain of our lower and animal nature should be placed under the moral sway of a strong and uncontaminated will. These truths are here illustrated under another form. "Unto thee is the desire of Sin," the innate impulse, the concupiscence, the sensuality, the affection, the desire of the flesh. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life," are ever tempting us and drawing us aside from the path of life to the paths of death — "but thou shalt rule over this evil desire; thou oughtest, and thou canst."

But the warning — so gentle and so merciful — was in vain. Cain brooded over the gloomy seductions of wrath, envy, hatred, jealousy, malice, in all their murderous instigations which sprang from offended pride and wounded self-love. "And Cain spoke to his brother Abel" — it is very possible that by a clerical error a clause has here dropped out, and that the reading should be, "And Cain said to Abel, Let us go into the field." "And when they were in the field Cain rose against Abel his brother, and slew him." No detail, no description, no hint as to the weapon or manner of death, is given. The fact is left in all its ghastly simplicity — the firstborn man was the first murderer, and the first human death which defaced the image of God on "the human face

divine" was the death of his brother, the murdered victim. Thus the first death in the world was a murder, and sin became its own willful executioner.

The *cause* of the foul murder is sufficiently intimated even in the intense concentration of the narrative. It is needless to add to it the Rabbinic conjectures, that it was due to envy of Abel's wife, or to difference of religious views. Both of these causes have, indeed, deluged the world with blood. A woman, as Horace said, has many a time become a deadly cause of war; and because of the opinionated arrogance which, persuaded of its own necessary infallibility, has not sufficient charity to forgive a difference of opinion, tens of thousands of men and women, and innocent boys and girls have been burnt and murdered by priestly butchers and inquisitors in Italy, and in Spain, and in Mexico, and the voice of their agony, and of their blood, shed in rivers, still incarnadines the multitudinous seas, and cries to God for vengeance from the streets of Paris, and the fields and cities of the Netherlands. But there is no hint here as to religious divergencies. It is, however, interesting to note that one Talmudic story attributes the murder to "lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain." It says that while Cain was plowing Abel crossed the field with his flocks, and Cain angrily asked, "Why do you let your flocks feed on land which belongs to me?" Abel answered, "You eat of their flesh, and clothe yourself with their wool." Cain answered, "You are in my power; who would avenge your death if I slew you?" "God," answered Abel, "who will surely punish you even for those evil words." Then Cain in wrath struck Abel with his spade and killed him, and then in remorse dug a hole and buried him. And immediately afterward the Eternal appeared to Cain, and asked, "Where is Abel, thy brother?"¹

There is a dreadful affinity between all classes of sin, but it suffices us to say with Saint John, "This is the message which ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another: not as Cain, who was of the Evil One, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him! Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous."²

Saint John, then, thinks with the Yahvist that jealousy, envy, pique, and a deep-seated hatred of goodness, were a sufficient motive; and an English statesman has said, "Pique is one of the strongest motives in the human mind. Fear is strong but transient. Interest is more lasting but weaker: I will ever back pique against them both. It is the spur the devil rides the noblest temper with."³

¹ Targum of Jonathan, *ad loc.* ² I. John iii. 11, 12. Compare Hebrews xi. 4; Jude 11. ³ Dodds, "Genesis," p. 33.

No sooner was the deed done than conscience awoke in all its gorgon terrors. It is ever so. There is a power of ghastly inward illumination in the commission of a great crime. In the Koran we read that after the murder God sent a crow to scratch in the earth, and show Cain how he might hide his brother's shame. And in the morning "he was of those who repent."

Sin lights up the theater of the guilty conscience with a fierce unnatural glare, which makes the sinner see the heinousness of sin as it really is, and as it appeared to his own innocence, before he subjected reason and conscience to the glamour of temptation and suffered them to be enchained by the siren's song. The gratification afforded by the crime instantly seems to have been but infinitesimal when it is seen in its reality, and when the deadly glamour of temptation no longer conceals its native ugliness. But then it is too late: the die is cast, the deed is done, and is as irrevocable as the shot arrow, as the spoken word.

The sin finds out the murderer at once. He hears the dread voice within him, which he knows to be the voice of God, asking, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" But he will not at once come before the accusing witness which is dragging down his life. He says, with the vain subterfuge of lies, "I know not"; and adds with that brazen insolence of selfishness which his parents had *not* shown in their transgression, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

But conscience—"God's primitive vicegerent within us, a monarch in its prepotence, and a prophet in its information, a priest in its sanctions and anathemas"—vouchsafes no answer to lies which do not even deceive the liar. God does not deign to heed the effrontery which, in the assertion of absolute self-concentrated selfishness, denies all duty toward, and all concern for, its brother-man. The only answer he gives is again the throbbing thunder of the question, "What hast thou done? Hark! thy brother's blood-drops cry to me from the ground."¹ Judgment is often belated; the sentence is often passed, yet the doom delayed. But this lingering of punishment is far rarer in the case of murder than of any other crime, and in this instance the doom trod close on the heels of the dementation. The punishment, which had not in this instance walked with leaden or with wool-shod feet, struck at once with iron hand. "And now thou art cursed from the ground² which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand."

¹ Literally, "bloods"—i. e., "blood violently shed."

² The meaning is "the curse shall come on thee from the stubborn and barren earth." So Abn Ezra, Kimchi, etc.

Thou shalt till it with vainer and less rewarded toil; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be upon the earth. Truly the blood of Jesus "speaketh better things than that of Abel!"¹

Punishment is never arbitrary or accidental. It is the natural result and consequence of the sin itself. It *is* the sin itself in other forms; so that sin, as it is the surest, is also the deadliest punishment of sin. It is the characteristic of murder to exhaust itself in vain efforts: to be cursed with innate restlessness; to be haunted; to hear footsteps behind it; to find the earth made of glass; to be terrified at the sound of a shaken leaf; to be a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth.

But Cain was as yet not penitent, whatever, by God's infinite compassion, he may have become thereafter. He complains of his punishment as excessive. His penalty is, he says, "greater than bearing." This might mean "my sin is too great for forgiveness"; but in accordance with the context it seems to mean "greater than I can bear." It is as though Cain pleaded, "What! one instant's passion, and a *lifelong* curse?" At the moment there was no one to shed the blood of him by whose hand man's blood had been shed. But immediate death would have been for Cain the least and lightest of punishments.

Extended days were for Cain only a lengthening out and increase of punishment. How could he live any longer in God's presence? He must hide himself and be a miserable fugitive and vagabond; and when men increased in number his hand would be against every man, and every man's hand against him, and everyone who found him would slay him. The writer does not explain the "everyone," though no other human being is mentioned till the birth of Seth, who is regarded as a substitute for Abel. Legend gives to Adam and Eve thirty-three sons and twenty-seven daughters.

From physical vengeance it was necessary that Cain should be saved. Sevenfold retribution would fall on the man who murdered the murderer.² His punishment was in the hand of God. "And Yahveh gave [or appointed] Cain a sign lest anyone finding him should kill him."³

What was this "sign" which was half a protection and half a branding curse? The narrative preserves its stern and awful reticence so that all conjecture must be in vain. Yet we cannot be wrong in following the merest inference that, as in the case of other murderers, there was thereafter an agony and a

¹ Hebrews xii, 24.

² "In seven generations Lamech will slay Cain."—"Rabbinic Commentary on Genesis," p. 36.

³ Literally, "a sign for Cain." The sign was given in mercy and in answer to his request.

horror on the countenance of Cain which marked him out from other men. Men might read strange matters on his face. The passions leave on human countenances their furrows and their scathe; and Milton wrote with his usual deep moral insight when he makes the cherub, severe in youthful beauty, say to him who was a murderer from the beginning:

"Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in heaven upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee, and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul."¹

THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION.

(VERSES 16 TO 24.)

The fragmentary nature and purely moral significance of the narrative are nowhere more distinctly marked than in the fact that no special mention is made of the rapid multiplication of mankind. The very next verse (16) tells us that Cain—like Satan in the Book of Job—"went from the presence of Yahveh," and dwelt in the land of Nod, in the East (?) of Eden. The word Nod does not mean, as the Vulgate renders it, "a fugitive." It means "banishment" (iii, 24) and misery (Job ii, 11; Isaiah li, 19; Jeremiah xvi, 5). To ask where it was, or what place the sacred writer meant by it—if he meant any particular place at all—is quite futile. It is not even certain that the word *qid'math* means "to the East of," for (as in ii, 14) it may be (as the LXX. renders it) "in front of," or "opposite to."

"And Cain knew his wife." Again there is a sort of hiatus in the story, which, heedless of all minor and irrelevant curiosities, and intent only on its one sacred end, proceeds direct to its point. Not a word is told us as to who Cain's wife was.

Two suppositions only seem possible, and neither is without difficulty.

a. One is that Cain's wife was his sister. On many grounds it is not easy to accept this view, although such marriages of close relations were not unknown in Egypt, in Greece, and even among the ancestors of the chosen race, as in the case of Abraham, of Lot, and of the parents of Moses himself.²

b. The only other possible theory seems to be that which was first argued out with great ability on Scriptural grounds by Peyrerius in his "Præadamites": that the Book of Genesis, in its moral and spiritual sketch of prehistoric days, was concerned only with one race of man, especially with the ancestors of the holy race of Seth; and that there existed in the world, from the first, other races which were not

Adamite.¹ Some modern theologians of great eminence have believed that no other meaning can be given to the language of Saint Paul: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."² It may be added that, manifold as are the difficulties and uncertainties of ethnology, the tendency of modern science seems to be toward a belief that man originated, in accordance with the divine laws, in several centers of the world's surface from which his various families spread to populate the world. Some of the arguments on this subject may be seen in "The Genesis of the Earth and Man," by the late R. S. Poole, and there are good reasons to believe that, if Scripture nowhere *recognizes* a plurality of origin for different families of the universal human race, it does not, at any rate, exclude the possibility of such a view.

But the Yahvist does not pause to tell us who was Cain's wife; such information lay outside the deeper objects which he had in view, and is not of any moral or spiritual importance. Cain called his son Enoch. No derivation is offered; the word *chanak* means "to train," or "to dedicate"; more than this we cannot say.

Again, with a great hiatus in the story, we are told that "*Cain built* (or 'was building') a city"—though nothing is said as to who could have been its inhabitants; and that he called it Enoch, after his son. The aggregation of men into towns from the isolation of nomadic life marks a decided and, in many respects, a perilous advance of civilization. "Great cities," a physician tells us, "are the graves of the physique of our race"; they are certainly in many instances the graves also of its best morality.

The next verse gives only four names for the history of four generations, and the names suggest nothing but perplexities which cannot be solved. Enoch's son was Irad, "One who flees"; Irad's son was Mehujael, which might mean "stricken of God." His son was Methusael, which seems to mean "the man that is of God." His son was Lamech, which, from its Arabic congener, seems to mean "stalwart." No further questions as to these names, or as to their perplexing similarity to names in the line of Seth, can be answered otherwise than idly.

But over the story of Lamech the Yahvist pauses. As "he took two wives," it seems to be indicated that he was the first introducer of the unprimitive, disastrous, and degrading practice of polygamy; and the names of his

¹ Peyrerius published his "Præadamitæ" in 1655, and though the book was "condemned and suppressed" it is still procurable with ease and is full of shrewdness and ability.

² Romans v, 14.

¹ "Paradise Lost," iv, 835-839.

² Genesis xi, 29, xii, 13, xx, 5, 13; Exodus vi, 20.

two wives—Adah, “adornment,” and Zillah, “shade,”—with that of his daughter, Naamah, “pleasant,” are perhaps recorded to intimate a growing sense of the influence produced over the heart of man by the beauty of womanhood. With the sons of Lamech began an immense progress in the arts which add to the pleasure and power of life. Jabal—(“increase”?) the son of Adah—is the father of tent dwellers and cattle possession, the introducer of the pastoral life of tribes.¹ Jubal, the other son of Adah, was the inventor of music, “the father of all those who handle harp² and pipe.” Tubal-Cain, son of Zillah, marks a more dangerous progress, which increased war and bloodshed. He was “a sharpener (or forger³) of every kind of instrument of brass and iron.”⁴ In other words, he was the earliest of braziers and iron-smiths.

At this point is inserted the first specimen of Hebrew poetry, a song of three verses, each consisting of two lines of synonymous antithetic parallelism:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, listen to my speech:
For I have slain a man for wounding me,
And a youth for bruising me:
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seven and seventyfold.”

Endless explanations have been offered of this enigmatic little poem, but it is now generally held to indicate the first instance of apology for that justifiable homicide in self-defense, which necessarily played a large part in the rude civilization and imperfect justice of ancient times. Apparently someone—perhaps a youth—had attacked and wounded Lamech; and he—strong in the weapons which his son Tubal-Cain had invented—had defended his own imperilled life, and in doing so had slain the aggressor. His wives might well be horrified at this shedding of blood. They might naturally dread lest Lamech, like Cain his ancestor, should be driven forth as a vagabond with the murderer’s brand upon his brow. But Lamech dissipated their fears. He has committed homicide, but it was not a crime. He has but repelled a murderous assailant for wounding him. If the avenger of the murderer Cain was to undergo a sevenfold vengeance, then if any blood-avenger attempted to wreak vengeance upon Lamech for his mischance he would incur a seventy-seven fold

¹ We can only guess at the meaning of the name: Jabal may mean “wanderer” or “leader,” and Jubal “musician.” (Compare *yobel*, jubilee.)

² Job xxi, 12, xxx, 31; Psalm cl, 4.

³ Authorized Version, margin, “whetter.”

⁴ Vulgate, *Malleator et faber*. Revised Version, “the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron.” By “brass” must be meant “bronze” or copper.

retribution. Whether more than this is intended—whether the verses imply a defiant self-reliance, and a determination on Lamech’s part to protect himself and to repel all attempt to punish him, without any reference to God and his laws—cannot be affirmed with any certainty.

At this point the Yahvist leaves forever the race of Cain; but legend and the Haggadah have been busy with the name and destiny of the first murderer.

The Rabbis drew from his story the lesson of the value of repentance. They say that Adam, meeting Cain, wondered at his escape from instant vengeance: “Father!” answered Cain, “I recognized my sin and repented, and God pitied me.” “So great is the power of repentance,” cried Adam; “and I knew it not!”¹

Reverting to our first parents, the narrator tells us that, after Abel’s murder, another son was born to them when Adam was 130² years old, and that Eve called his name Seth, “substitute”;³ for she regarded him as a gift from God “in the place of Abel whom Cain slew.” In due time Seth had a son, whom he called Enos.⁴ All that we are told of Enos is that “he began to invoke the name of Yahveh,” or according to another rendering “then began [men] to call with Yahveh’s name,” *i. e.*, to name and to worship him, and to call upon him by the name of Yahveh.⁵

The clause is full of difficulties, and the versions vary considerably both in the translation and the interpretation. The old explanation was that men then began “to call themselves by the name of Yahveh”; while Jewish writers (Josephus, and the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan) render it, “they began to desecrate the name of Yahveh by idolatries.” There can, however, be little doubt that the rendering given in our Authorized and Revised Versions is correct, and that by this verse is meant the development of prayer and intelligent worship in the pious line of Seth. The Yahvist, unlike the Priestly writer, uses the covenant-name of God repeatedly in his earliest narratives, and does not seem to accept the view that Elohim had been unknown by the name of Yahveh before the call of Moses.⁶

¹ “Midrash Rabbah,” I, §22.

² Genesis v, 3: “Begot a son in his own likeness.”

³ Hebrew, *Sheth*. Others render it “foundation” or “appointed.”

⁴ *Enòsh*, “man,” with reference to his weakness, unless it be from an Arabic root connoting sociability.

⁵ Genesis iv, 26.

⁶ Exodus iii, 14, vi, 3: The words “I am that I am” (*i. e.*, “I am unchangeable”), also rendered “I become that I become” (Hofmann: *i. e.*, “I am ever revealing and manifesting myself anew”), or “I will be what I will be” (Robertson Smith).

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND IN THE LINE OF SETH FROM ADAM TO NOAH.

P.

IN the fifth chapter we revert to the records of P, the Priestly writer of Genesis i. The name Elohim is again substituted for the name Yahveh. The vivid narrative of the Yahvist is followed by a list of names with formal chronological and statistical details. We also meet once more with the familiar phrases of P, *tol'doth*, "generations"; *d'môth* and *tselem*, "image and likeness"; and others; while there is scarcely an allusion to any question which affects spiritual or other directly human interests, apart from the actual genealogy.

We will first summarize the chapter, and will touch on some of the questions which it suggests as a *Sepher Tol'doth*, or "book of generations."

It says that after God had created the human race, male and female, and blessed them and called them man, Adam lived 130 years and begat Seth; lived 800 years longer, begat other sons and daughters, and died aged 930.

Seth lived 105 years, begat Enos; lived 807 years longer, and died aged 912. Cainan lived 70 years, begat Mahalaleel; lived 840 years longer, and died aged 910. Mahalaleel lived 65 years, begat Jared; lived 830 years longer, and died aged 895. Jared lived 162 years, begat Enoch; lived 800 years longer, and died aged 962. Enoch lived 65 years, begat Methuselah; lived 300 years longer, and died aged 365.

Here at Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," the list is broken to account for the comparatively early death of Enoch by the clause that "he walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."

The shortest-lived of the antediluvian patriarchs is followed by the longest-lived; for Methuselah lived 187 years, begat Lamech; lived 782 years more, and died aged 969. Lamech lived 182 years, begat Noah; lived 595 years more, and died aged 777. At this point verse 29 is perhaps taken from the Yahvist, and has been inserted by the Redactor into the Priestly narrative. It explains the name Noah by the remark of Lamech, "This one will comfort us from our work, and the toil of our hands from the ground which Yahveh hath cursed."

That the verse is an insertion into the narrative of P is now recognized by all the chief critics, (1) because it reverts to the name Yahveh; (2) because it uses the word *îltsâbôn*, "sorrow," which is one of the words peculiar

to J (iii, 16, 17); (3) because it directly alludes to the curse on the ground,¹ which has only been narrated by J; and (4) because it gives the explanation, or assonance, of the name of Noah after the usual manner of the Yahvist. The name Noah may mentally recall the verb *nacham*, "to comfort," but it is universally admitted that the name cannot be etymologically derived from the verb. Noah means "rest," and the following verb seems to involve a pregnant construction—"will comfort and give us rest." The source of the comfort is not in this place further indicated; the Rabbis made it refer prophetically to an invention of agricultural implements, or to the discovery of the vine.

We are not told the age of Noah at the birth of his firstborn, but only that by the time he was 500 years old he had three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Let us now touch on various questions and difficulties which this chapter suggests.

i. Are the numbers traditional or purely artificial, and, in that case, what is their significance, if they have any?

As regards this, we must first observe that these numbers were so little regarded as fixed or sacred, that they differ widely in the Hebrew text, in the Samaritan Pentateuch, and in the LXX.

Nothing has ever been made either of the figures of the Hebrew text or of their variations. Any attempt to examine the chronology closely would only lead us into perfectly fruitless and dubious intricacies. There are, indeed, ten generations, and ten, as the number of completeness, is frequently found both in the Pentateuch and in ancient mythologies; but no certain conclusion of any kind can be arrived at.

ii. As to the great ages attained by the patriarchs, it was clearly the object of the Hebrew writers to indicate the increasing contraction of human life since the antediluvian epoch. Thus, Noah lived 950 years; Abraham, 175; Jacob, 147; Moses, 120; Joshua, 110; whilst David was decrepit in the seventieth year. The psalmist represents three-score and ten as the natural duration of human life, and speaks of its extension even to eighty as rare and almost calamitous. Physiology has declared it to be an impossibility for man to live more than

¹ *Adamah*, not *eretz*, "the earth."

two hundred years, and the apologetic considerations urged in favor of the possibility—apart from miracle—are believed to be untenable. Attempts, have, therefore, been made to tamper with the plain, unvarying meaning of the word “year,” and to argue that only months or years of three months are intended; or that by each name is meant a tribe of descendants also. These attempts, besides being in other respects baseless, are shown to be absurd by a mere glance at the narrative itself. If they be admitted, Mahalaleel and Enoch must have been parents at an age startlingly too early.

iii. From the etymology of the names nothing is deducible but nugatory results. For theoretic purposes they are as uncertain as the dim analogies suggested for them from various ancient mythologies. We can only note with surprise the close resemblance of three of these names—Jared, Mahalaleel, and Methuselah to those of Irad, Mahujael, and Methusael in the line of Cain; and the actual identity of the names of two Sethites and two Cainites—Enoch and Lamech.

iv. The expression that “Enoch walked with God” (v, 22, 24) indicates a close and holy union of his will with the will of his Creator and is stronger than “walking before God” (xvii, 1), or “walking after God” (Deuteronomy xiii, 4). But the simple expression was too anthropomorphic for translators and Targumists. The LXX. and the Peshitto render it, “Enoch was well-pleasing to God.” And Onkelos has “Enoch walked in the fear of Jehovah.” The Book of Enoch says (xii, 2), “All his action was with the holy ones and with the watchers during his life.” The notice respecting him seems to be introduced to show that his comparatively early death was neither a punishment nor a calamity, since in an age which abounded with evil the holiest of the patriarchs was also the shortest lived. His end is simply and vaguely indicated by the words, “he was not; for Elohim took him.” In other words, he passed away. In the Septuagint we read, “he was not found, because God translated him.” The son of Sirach (xliv, 16) uses the same phrase. He says (xlix, 14) “upon the

earth was no man created like Enoch; for he was taken from the earth.” Philo takes Enoch’s “translation” as a symbol of his change to a better life and ignores his ascension. This seems to have been the view of the early Jews. In the “*Beresith Rabbah*” (xxv), it is said that his translation consisted in abandoning wickedness and becoming pious, and God said that if he continued pious he would take him out of the world. The Targum of Onkelos accordingly renders it, “He was not, because God made him to die.”

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: “By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for before his translation he hath had witness borne to him that he had been well-pleasing unto God; and without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him.”¹ In the text of Genesis it is not said that he did not die, but this is perhaps implied. In the Epistle of Jude (verses 14, 15) we read that “Enoch, the seventh from Adam,” prophesied the second advent of Christ to judge sinners.

Enoch’s son Methuselah was the longest lived of all the patriarchs. He attained the age of 969 years. He son Lamech was 182 years old when he begat a son, whom he named Noah, or “rest,” saying that “he shall comfort us from our work and labor from the ground.”² I have already mentioned that, according to Jewish tradition, Noah comforted men and made labor amid the thorns and the thistles of the cursed ground more easy by inventing plows and other instruments of husbandry.

Lamech died at the age of 777; and by the time that Noah was 500 years old he had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; Shem may mean “renown,” Ham “heat,” Japheth “the widener.” It is clear that materials no longer exist for a full understanding of what was intended by these early traditions and details.

¹ Hebrews xi, 5 (Revised Version).

² Not “because of the ground,” but “from our labor (arising) from the ground.” The words in Hebrew have a triple rhyme, and an assonance. The Book of Enoch (cv) has marvelous tales of Noah’s supernatural beauty, etc.

CHAPTER VI.
THE CORRUPTION OF MAN.

(GENESIS VI, 1 TO 8.)

J.

IF the critics be right, it is the Yahvist who here introduces, probably from external sources of ancient and universal tradition, a brief and somewhat enigmatic episode to account for the corruption of mankind. The passage is meant to show the moral necessity for the flood, which destroyed the world of the ungodly.

The patriarchal age was by no means an age of universal innocence. On the contrary, as mankind began to multiply, and sons and daughters were born to them, the pride of womanhood led to luxury and vanity, then the beauty of womanhood tempted depraved hearts to the substitution of carnal desire for holy married love. The desecration of the primeval sanctities in ordinary life led to strange, unhallowed unions, "and it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and took for themselves wives of all that they chose."

i. Who were these "Sons of Elohim?"² In the Bible the word always means superior beings of heavenly origin. They are so called in Job, Daniel, and the Psalms.³ Hence, all the most ancient interpreters so understood the phrase in this place. It is the view taken in the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, and Philo. It is also the view unmistakably expressed in II. Peter ii, 4: "God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others a herald of righteousness, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly . . ." We have a reference to the same apostasy in the Epistle of Saint Jude (verse 6), "And the angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day . . . having in like manner with these [Sodom and Gomorrah] given themselves over to fornication, and gone after strange flesh." In the Book of Enoch this view is set forth at great length (verses 6-10). We are

there told how these fallen and self-corrupted denizens of heaven, to the number of 200, descended on Mount Hermon, chose the most beautiful women for their unnatural wooing, taught them luxury and witchcraft, and became by them the fathers of giants 3,000 cubits high, who devastated the world into famine and misery. At last four great angels, Michael, Gabriel, Surjan, Urgan, appealed to God to interpose and punish. Therefore, God flung down Azazel, the wickedest of these fallen spirits, on a bed of sharp rocks, and bound him in fetters, till he shall be flung at last into the fiery pool. After this the giant demons, who were the offspring of these corrupted angels, fought against and destroyed each other and they, too, were reserved in darkness for their final doom.¹

But the apparently mythical character of these loves of the fallen angels with the daughters of men led to early efforts to eliminate such a meaning from the sacred text.² This can only be done by methods of subterfuge, and unconsciously dishonest exegesis, which, springing not from fearless inquiry but from *a priori* dogmatic bias, have reduced whole volumes, nay whole libraries, of Scriptural interpretation to self-refuting futility.

These attempts took two directions.

i. The Targums of Pseudo-Jonathan and Onkelos and the "*Bereshith Rabba*"³—followed by Saadia, Rashi, Abn Ezra, and in modern times by Spinoza, Herder, and Buttmann—understood the "Sons of Elohim" to mean "the sons of princes." But this way of escape from a view which they disliked is impossible. There would have been no monstrous criminality in the intermarriage of the mighty and the poor; and further, "The daughters of the Adam," *i. e.*, of the human race, cannot possibly mean merely women of humble rank, nor would "daughters of men" be, in that case, a true antithesis to "sons of God."

ii. Some of the later Fathers adopted another interpretation no less imaginary, and were followed by the Reformers, and by masses of modern pre-critical or biased exegetes like Hævernick, Hengstenberg and others. They explained "the sons of God" to be the pious

¹ Verse 7, chapter vi, seems to belong to the Redactor.

² Never "sons of Yahveh," because that is the covenant-name of God with man.

³ Job i, 6, ii, 1, xxxviii, 7; Psalms xxix, 1, lxxxix, 7; Daniel iii, 25.

¹ See Jellinek in "Midrash Abchir." Azazel (Leviticus xvi, 8) the inventor of rouge, etc., is stigmatized as the worst.

² See Perowne in "Smith's Dictionary," s. v. Noah.

³ Chapter xxvi.

race of Seth, "which unwisely mixed itself in marriage with the wicked Cainites." But, even if "sons of God" could be thus baldly and abruptly used to describe "pious men," it is inconceivable that daughters of men should have a perfectly general meaning in verse 1 and a very special one in the next clause.

iii. Other glosses are isolated and need no notice. There can be no question that we are here meant to understand the unlawful intercourse of women and fallen spirits.

As in the Book of Enoch and in the Epistles of Saint Peter and Saint Jude, Yahveh is rendered indignant by this depravity, and he said, "my spirit shall not abide (or rule) in man forever."¹ Whatever be the exact significance of the verb, the general sense seems to be that God will take away from man the breath of divine life which he had depraved.

The next words usually rendered "for that he also is flesh" are no less uncertain. The word *b'shaggam* is of highly dubious meaning. Dillmann, with a slight change of reading, follows Gesenius, Vater, and Tuch, and renders "on account of their error he is flesh"; and this rendering is given in the margin of our Revised Version in the form, "in their going astray they are flesh." The text of the word is probably corrupt. Nor can we be sure as to the meaning of "but his days shall be 120 years." This is usually understood to mean that human life would hereafter be shortened to the limit of 120 years. But there are two difficulties in this view. On the one hand, though we are no longer told of men living 900 years and upward, yet Noah, Abram, and the postdiluvian Fathers, from Shem to Terah,² all greatly exceeded the limit of 120 years, and, on the other hand, in historical times 80 years, not 120, became the normal limit of human life.³

There is, therefore, much to be said for the opinion that in these words a respite of 120 years as a time for repentance is granted to men before the deluge. In the East 120 years is "an age" and an astronomical cycle (12 x 10).

The fourth verse seems to be partly retrospective. It tells us that the "giants (*n'philim*) were on the earth in those days," and that afterward there were heroes of old (*gibborim*), "the men of renown." The word *n'philim* seems to be derived from *naphal*, "to fall." It has been variously rendered, "giants," "robbers," "men of violence," "bastards," and "fallen spirits." All that we can say is that in this slight allusion we are in the same sphere of ancient traditions as that of the Arabians,

who tell of their giant predecessors the Adites, the Themudites. The children of Israel looked on the colossal sons of Anak as akin to these prehistoric races.¹ Perhaps the widely diffused belief in gigantic ancient tribes may have been fostered or created by the discovery of fossil bones, which belong to extinct animals but were mistaken for human remains.

Amid the universal corruption "Yahveh repented that he had made man, since every form of the thought of his heart was only evil, and he was pained in his heart."

Of course, there is another and higher sense in which "God is not a man, that he should repent."² But the expression is perfectly intelligible, if taken as frankly anthropopathic. Yet even as far back as the days of the LXX. there was an attempt to smooth it down. Onkelos renders it, "And spake by his word to break their strength according to his will," and Pseudo-Jonathan, "And disputed with his word concerning him."

Yahveh, therefore, determined to blot out from the face of the earth alike the human race, and animals, and reptiles, and birds, which were regarded as sharing with man the common curse. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

THE FLOOD, AS NARRATED BY THE
PRIESTLY WRITER.

(GENESIS VI, 9 TO 22.)

P.

That we here pass from J to P is indicated at once by the new heading used exclusively by the Priestly writer, "These are the generations of Noah." The general pragmatism of the narrative, the formal introduction of dates and numbers, the recurrent phrases, the use of the name Elohim, and many other identities of style with his previous and subsequent narratives sufficiently indicate the author. Noah is introduced as though he had not been previously mentioned, as "a righteous man and perfect" among his contemporaries "in his generation." Like Enoch he walked with God. Saint Peter calls him "a preacher of righteousness," and the Koran, *Nabi Allah*, "prophet of God." He had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth was utterly full of corruption and violence, and by a divine "measure for measure" man's corruption necessitated, nay involved, his destruction. Consequently God reveals to Noah his determination to obliterate all living things, and bade

¹ Numbers xiii. 33, where they are expressly called Nephilim.

² Numbers xxiii. 19; I. Samuel xv. 29. "The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent"; after verse 11, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king."

¹ So margin Revised Version; Vulgate, *non permanebit*.

² Genesis xi, 10-33.

³ Psalm xc, 10; compare I. Samuel iv, 15-18.

him build an ark¹ of gopher wood (some resinous tree, perhaps juniper), and to smear it within and without with pitch,² to prevent leakage. It was to be made in cells,³ in the shape of a huge chest of three stories, 300 cubits long, 50 broad, and 30 high (*i. e.*, 450,000 cubits in contents). It was to have a door at one side; and perhaps—for the meaning is uncertain—a window,⁴ a cubit high, running round its four sides to give light. In this ark he should be saved amid the universal

destruction of the coming flood.¹ With him should be saved his wife, his three sons, and their three wives. He was to take with him pairs of animals, birds, and reptiles, which should "come to him," to preserve them alive. He was also to gather stores of food for himself and for them—and all these commands he obeyed. Such is the narrative of the Priestly writer. We will consider its significance and some of the problems it suggests, when we have given the parallel narrative of the Yahvist.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLOOD AND THE NARRATIVE OF THE YAHVIST.

(GENESIS VII, 1-19—J, EXCEPT PERHAPS, 6-9, 11, 13-16a.)

J.

THE Lord bids Noah and his house enter the ark, and take to him all clean creatures and birds by sevens, and all unclean by pairs, for after seven days it should rain for forty days and nights, and every living thing should be destroyed. The sixth verse, which says that Noah was 600 years old when he entered the ark, perhaps belongs to P.

The writer does not tell us how Noah was to know which beasts were clean and which were unclean, so many centuries before the institution of Levitism; but the necessity for taking seven pairs of the clean creatures arose from the fact that a thank offering "of every clean beast and every clean fowl" is mentioned in viii, 20. The expression "seven by seven" (vii, 2), taken in connection with the remark that all creatures went into the ark two by two, seems clearly to show that seven pairs of every clean beast and fowl are meant. The numbers "seven" and "forty" have a symbolic significance. The first mystically indicates "the striving of man up to God"; the second is constantly used in Scripture with connotations of penalty.⁵

The mention of the fact that Yahveh "shut the door after Noah," and the brief description of the result of the deluge in verses 12, 17, 22, 23 may also belong to J.

The rest of the chapter, in the opinion of most modern critics, belongs to P or to the Redactor. It tells us that the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows⁶

of heaven opened on the seventeenth day of the second month (April or May²); and that on that day, Noah, his family, and all animals, two and two, male and female, and "every bird of every wing," all entered the ark. The ark was uplifted by the increasing waters, which covered "all the high mountains under the whole heaven," rising above them to a depth of fifteen cubits. It is probably to the Yahvist that we owe the statement that everything perished except Noah and his family, while perhaps it was the Priestly writer who recorded that the waters prevailed upon the earth 150 days.

DETAILS ABOUT THE FLOOD.

(GENESIS VIII, 2b to 20.³)

The narrative mainly of J is continued in Genesis viii. The rain ceased, the waters ebbed away and the earth was dried by a wind sent from God. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.⁴ After forty days Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out the raven which the old Accadians regarded as "the bird of destiny," but it flew to and fro and did not return. Then he sent forth a dove, which, finding no rest for the sole of her foot, flew back to the ark and Noah pulled her in. After seven days he again let her fly and she returned at eventide with a fresh olive leaf in her beak.⁵

¹ *Mabbul*, "flood"; only of the deluge (Psalm xxix, 10), "the Lord sat as king at the flood" (Revised Version). ² Or according to others, *Marchesvan*, the rain month, October.

³ Probably verses 1 and 2a do not belong to J, and other verses seem to be added, *e. g.* 3b-5, 14-19.

⁴ Ararat, a country. II. Kings xix, 37; Isaiah xxxvii, 38; (LXX., Armenia, which is, in Assyrian, *U-ra-ar-ti*). Saint Jerome says that Ararat is the plain at the foot of Taurus through which flows the Araxes. There is no proof that Mount Masis, the highest peak, is intended.

⁵ The olive flourishes in Armenia, and it is said to survive under water.

¹ *Tèbbàh*, "an oblong chest." Perhaps an Egyptian word. ² *Kopher*, bitumen or asphalt.

³ *Kinnim*, literally "nests."

⁴ Not "a lattice," as vii, 11, viii, 2; nor "an aperture," as in viii, 6; but *sohar*, "light," not used elsewhere but in the dual, "double-light," equivalent to midday.

⁵ See Numbers xiv, 34; Deuteronomy xxv, 3, etc.

⁶ Hebrew *arubbòth*, "The latticed windows." Compare Isaiah xxiv, 18; Job xxxviii, 16; Proverbs viii, 28; Spurrell.

After waiting another seven days he sent her forth again. She returned no more and Noah removed the covering of the ark, looked, and the face of the ground was dry. The word used for "covering" is used also for the skin-covering of the tabernacle.

Let us now consider various questions which naturally arise from the mosaic work of these combined narratives. What is the moral and spiritual significance of the deluge? That question is sufficiently answered in the New Testament.

i. It was the punishment for sin; it was a flood "brought upon the world of the ungodly." Nor was it an irremediable, sudden destruction, sent without warning. On the contrary, for 120 years Noah had been a preacher of righteousness to his guilty contemporaries, and the long suffering of God had waited in the days of Noah.¹ Thus regarded, the story of the deluge is a stern but most salutary lesson for man. It represents the eternal truth that God hates sin, and that when sin has become incurably ingrained in a nation, in a church, in a race, in a world, in the heart of an individual, then, at all costs, and because of that eternal love of which sin is the defiance, God will obliterate and sweep it away.

ii. It was a new beginning. When evil has become fixed, finished, and incurable, the pit swallows it up; the earth as it were opens her mouth to vomit out her inhabitants (Leviticus xviii, 25).

iii. It was a lustral wave which swept over the polluted earth. Thus, Saint Peter expressly says that Christ, "being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also, after a true likeness [or "in the anti-type"], doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."² In the point of view of the great apostle the deluge was the baptism and regeneration of the world.

iv. In the contemplation of these moral and spiritual conceptions, minor questions of history, archæology, and criticism shrink into comparative insignificance. They were, in-

deed, of little or no importance in the mind of the writers. All such questions we will glance at a little later. Meanwhile it is surely an unmistakable fact that here we have two separate narratives side by side. Apart from obvious repetitions, and differences of style and expression, there appear to be distinct variations between the details of P and J. Omitting any minor points we may mention three of these. (1) In P (vi, 19-20) Noah is commanded to take with him into the ark one pair of all living animals, birds, and reptiles: but in J he is bidden to take with him all clean animals and fowls by sevens, *i. e.*, fourteen of each; and unclean species by single pairs (vii, 2-3). The reason for this discrepancy can only be a matter of conjecture. Reuss thinks that the Yahvist supposed that some of the clean creatures would be for food, while the Priestly writer regarded the Sethites as vegetarians. Others suppose that the extra number of clean creatures was to provide for the needs of sacrifice. (2) In P (vii, 11, viii, 2) the deluge is attributed to the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, and the opening of the windows of heaven. In J (vii, 4-12) it is ascribed to the agency of rain only. (3) There seems to be an irreconcilable chronology in the reports of the deluge. In P (vii, 11) the deluge begins on the seventeenth day of the second month of the 600th year of Noah. In 150 days the waters have attained their maximum depth (viii, 3). This brings us to the seventeenth day of the seventh month, so that the rise of the waters lasted for five months of thirty days. The mountain tops appear on the first day of the tenth month (viii, 5). By the first day of Noah's 601st year (viii, 13) the face of the ground is dry; and the earth is perfectly dry by the twenty-seventh day of the second month. This gives us a lunar year, from the seventeenth of the second month of the 600th year of Noah's life to the seventeenth of the second month of the 601st year, and ten days, *i. e.*, 370 days. Now, this is neither a lunar nor a solar year.¹ But in J the duration of the flood seems to be much shorter. Noah is bidden to enter the ark (vii, 1), because, in seven days (vii, 4) the rain will begin. It rains for forty days and nights (vii, 12, 17), and after forty days (viii, 6) Noah opens the ark, and lets loose, at periods of seven days, "the raven," and then three successive times a dove. It is not easy to see how to manipulate forty and twenty-eight, equivalent to sixty-eight, days so as to reconcile the calculation with the 370 days of P, though, doubtless, the task may not be beyond the skill of harmonists, who attack it with determined prepossessions, and

¹ Twelve lunar months only make about 354 days, but the day of the new moon was often counted twice.

¹ I. Peter iii, 20.

² I. Peter iii, 18, 21. Compare Job xxii, 15-19; Isaiah xxiv, 5, 6, 18. "The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth." Matthew xxiv, 38, ff.; Luke xvii, 26, ff.; II. Peter ii, 5, iii, 6.

by all sorts of strange methods force the two stories to say exactly the same thing.

v. Was the flood universal, as regards the whole surface of the globe? The difficulties of accepting such a view in the face of the facts revealed to us by scientific examinations of the earth's surface, its existing animals and its fossils, are immense and, indeed, insuperable, but (1) the flood is represented as universal, as regards that race of man with which the sacred writers are dealing—the degenerate Sethites—and they might have been destroyed by a partial deluge; and (2) it is wholly needless to press literally the oriental hyperbole that, "all the high mountains which are under the whole heavens were covered," and that "the waters prevailed fifteen cubits above them." Is there a single commentator who has ever dreamed of literally interpreting the phrase of Obadiah in I. Kings xviii, 10, that "There is no nation or kingdom, whither my Lord hath not sent to seek thee?" Or the statement (Genesis xli, 57) that "all countries came to Egypt to buy corn?" It is equally superfluous to insist on the literal meaning here. If, because of this single phrase and a few other general expressions, anyone thinks it a matter of very ignorant faith to believe that there were fifteen cubits—more than twenty-two feet—of water above the summits of Chimborazo and Dhawalaghiri, science and criticism are not for him. Intellectual childishness and a *priori* dogmatism, even though in these matters they shut their eyes to the clearest indication of that light of advancing knowledge, which, like all other truth, is a revelation from God, need not, however, hinder the reception of moral and spiritual truth. The teaching of vital truth was the one end of these sacred writings, which, alike for the wise and for the foolish, for the learned and for the ignorant, "contain all things necessary for salvation." If we seek and find that divine revelation, we need not be troubled by minor difficulties.

vi. Immense pains have been bestowed on the attempt to explain the construction of the ark. A Dutch Mennonite, named Jansen, in the year 1609, attempted to construct a vessel on the same model at Hoorn. The attempt failed, because the structure broke to pieces. The word *tébâh* is apparently Egyptian and is only used again for the ark of bulrushes in which the child Moses was laid.¹ The description (vi, 15) is that of a colossal, oblong chest—a parallelepiped of wood, smeared with bitumen, of vast cubic contents, three stories high, but apparently with only a single door in its side. Apart from a special series of miracles, such a structure would have been equally im-

possible and useless. If it could be so built at all, it must have sunk deep into the water, and then the mass of numberless large animals, wild and tame, of birds and reptiles, amounting to many thousand, in the lowest story, could have had neither light nor air. All that we are told about any window is couched in the obscure words (vi, 16) "A light [or 'roof'] shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward" (or "from above"). On the supposition that the writer attached importance to the details, and was not exclusively occupied in impressing moral truth by powerful symbols, it is clear that, in all which affects the ark, we are plunged into a complicated series of stupendous, continuous, and meaningless miracles, on which we can throw no further light, and from which no further lessons are any longer discoverable.

vii. Legends of a deluge and of the preservation of one righteous man with his family to repeople the earth, though they are not, as has sometimes been asserted, universal, are yet widely diffused. They exist among very different classes of nations. They are not found, apparently, among nations which inhabit countries which from their physiography are exempt from such cataclysms, as, for instance, the Egyptians and Arabians; and in some cases supposed "traditions" among savages were not indigenous, but were only the dim, incongruous echoes of what they had heard from Christian travelers and missionaries. Among the Chinese, liable to overwhelming disaster by the flooding of such rivers as the Hoang Ho, it was natural to expect stories of deluges. But the features of closest resemblance to the sacred narrative are found in the traditions of the Greeks, the Hindoos, and above all the ancient Chaldeans.

1. The Greeks had two such myths: that of Ogyges and that of Deucalion. That of Ogyges is very vague and is exclusively connected with Bœotia, and the lake Copais; but that of Deucalion in many incidents resembles the Noachian deluge. The world had sunk into infamy. The ocean and the clouds combined to drown all living creatures; but the pious Deucalion, guided by his father Prometheus, had built a chest in which he floated safely with his wife Pyrrha, and by which he was safely borne to the peaks of Parnassus. There he sacrificed a thankoffering. As given by Lucian, this legend is connected with Hierapolis. Deucalion, like Noah, endeavors to discover the condition of the earth by sending forth a dove from his ark which returns the first time, but not the second.

2. In the Indian tradition a demon, Haya-griva, steals the Vedas and the world is plunged into wickedness, from which only the seven

¹ Egyptian *tba*, "chest"; and *tpt*, "boat."

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saints and Satyavrata or Vaivaswata, the seventh Manu, are exempt. Vishnu appearing to Satyavrata, as a fish, prophesies that in seven days there will be a universal deluge, and warns the pious king to take with him into an ark the seven saints, their wives, and one pair of all animals. In seven days the world is overwhelmed in the waters of the ocean, swollen by torrents of rain. Satyavrata sees a boat, enters it with the saints, is drawn by Vishnu himself in the form of a horned fish till after many years he is left safe on Mount Himaran, and becomes the seventh Manu. After this follows an incident which somewhat resembles the curse of Ham.

3. Still nearer to the Jewish tradition is that of Chaldea. Thirty years ago it was only known from the meager account of Berosus (died about 260 B. C.), but in 1872 Mr. George Smith translated a much fuller form of this myth from Assyrian bricks in the British Museum which had been copied for the famous library of King Assur-bani-pal (668-626 B. C.). Xisuthros, called also Hassis-Hadra ("pious and wise"),¹ represents the ten generations from the first man. The god Belus prophesies to him a vast rain flood, which shall begin on the fifteenth of the month Daisios. He builds a ship 3,000 feet long and 1,200 feet broad.² A voice says to him, "enter the ship and shut the door." He has taken with him specimens of all animals, birds, and reptiles, for which he has stored provisions. The flood lasts seven days and is drained off in seven days. When the rain ceases, he sends out first a dove and then a swallow, which return. The third time he sends out a raven which wades in the shallows and does not return. Meanwhile the ship of Xisuthros had grounded on an Armenian mountain named Nizir. He leaves it with his wife, his daughter and a pilot, erects an altar and offers sacrifices. His ark was said to be preserved in the mountains of Armenia, and

¹ This name, which Professor Sayce writes Adrakhasis, occurs in another fragment of the Chaldean poem. See also George Smith, "Chaldean Genesis," pp. 262-294.

² It has six stories and nine interior compartments. The old Chaldean poem is quoted by Professor Sayce, in "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," pp. 107-113.

pieces of it smeared with bitumen were used as amulets.

4. But amid many curious resemblances it will be seen that in every instance the sacred narrative is quite incomparably superior in sobriety and spiritual meaning. It alone is purely monotheistic, and it avoids the monstrous polytheism and unworthy, incongruous elements in which the ancient mythologies are involved. The sacred writers do not pause for emotion or poetic description. They are intent on the moral lesson that God hates sin and saves the righteous.

That there must be some connection between the Babylonian epic and the narrative of P and J is certain; but, though the Babylonian poem is of very great antiquity, it cannot be shown that the sacred writers have directly availed themselves of it.

THE SACRIFICE AND THE PROMISE.
(GENESIS VIII, 20 TO 22.)

After leaving the ark with his family, and all the living things which had been saved, Noah built an altar—the first mentioned in Scripture—and offered burnt offerings of "every clean beast and of every clean fowl." Yahveh smelled "the odor of satisfaction," and said "to himself" that he would never again curse the ground because of man nor smite every living thing. The cogitation of man's heart is indeed evil from his youth. But God would deal in other ways of retribution and deliverance with this original corruption and its developments, and till the end of time, days and seasons in their cycles of benevolence would still continue—seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night. The Lord does not promise that sin shall ever escape punishment, but only that the earth shall not be again overwhelmed by an universal flood. Here again we find a resemblance in the old Chaldean epoch, in which Ea says to Bel:

"Let the sinner bear his own sin;
May he not be cut off! be merciful that he be not
destroyed!
Instead of causing a deluge, let lions come and minish
mankind.
Let hyenas come . . . let there be a famine . . .
Instead of causing a deluge, let the plague-god come
and minish mankind."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NOACHIAN COVENANT AND ITS SYMBOL.

(GENESIS IX, 1 TO 17.)

P.

NOW that the deluge was over, God—Elohim—blessed the sole human survivors of the drowned world, bade them be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,¹ and gave them the dominion of awe-inspiring superiority over every living thing. Now, too, for the first time, man is granted “every living creature” as well as the “green herb” for food; only he must not eat flesh with its soul, which is its blood.² We find the same prohibition strongly insisted on in the Levitic ordinances (Leviticus xvii, 10-14). Whatever sheds human blood, whether man or beast, must be put to death for violating the image of God in man.³ Before the reign of law and justice was securely established it was most necessary to impress on man the inherent sanctity of human life, which many nations, both savage and civilized, have held so cheap. This simple covenant was required of man; and God on his part promised that there should never more be a flood to destroy the earth, and appointed his bow in the cloud as a sign of the eternal covenant between him and the earth. To this promise Isaiah alludes in the passage (liv, 8-9), “In overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of [‘the days of’] Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee” (Revised Version).

Those who impugn the story of the rainbow on the ground that whenever there was rain and sun there must also have been rainbows raise a needless difficulty. The passage does not say that the rainbow was first created after the deluge, but only that it was then first made the sign of the new and blessed covenant. The word rendered “I have set my bow in the clouds” means literally “I have given.”

¹This command has been already recorded (viii, 16-17).

²The blood is the *nephesh*, physical principle of life, not the *ruach* or spirit. Compare Virgil “Æneid,” ix, 349, “*purpuream vomit ille animam*.” This command specially forbade the brutal custom, prevalent till recent years in Abyssinia, of cutting steaks out of the living animal. Compare I. Samuel xiv, 32. It has had an immense and permanent influence on the Jewish race and was imposed even on the Gentiles at the dawn of Christianity (Acts xv, 20, 29).

³So in Exodus xxi, 28, the ox which has gored a man must be killed, and as late as 1486 a boar which had killed a child was executed on the scaffold at Ypres.

No more suitable sign that God has vouchsafed the promise of mercy could have been appointed than that lovely and radiant phantom of “painted tears.” Even in the final book of the New Testament we find this emblem of eternal compassion in the “rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald”;¹ and it is described as forming his aureole of angels which are sent on the messages of the Almighty.² Many nations have turned to the rainbow with instinctive joy and hope, and have connected it with the behests of heaven. To the Greeks it was the shining path, down which “golden winged Iris, the daughter of Thaumas by Electra, daughter of Oceanus, descended with the compassionate mandates of Zeus”; and Homer also speaks of it as “a portent,” though not always of peace. In the Scandinavian Sagas it is the bridge between heaven and earth. The course of so many centuries and millenniums has not in the least robbed it of its sacred significance.

THE SIN OF NOAH—OF HAM AND CANAAN.

(GENESIS IX, 18 TO 26.)

J.

The three sons of Noah in the order of their birth were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.³ These re-peopled the earth; and the son of Ham was Canaan. It soon, alas! became too clear that “The device of man’s heart was evil from his youth,” and that sin born of the evil propensity would still hold sway in the freshly lustrated world. There was to be yet another tree of the knowledge of evil. For “Noah, the husbandman, began and planted a vineyard.”⁴ The vine was in itself a precious and beautiful gift of God, and the fruit of the grape made, in its unfermented form, a delicious and wholesome beverage. Even in its fermented form, it would have been harmless, if it had not been perverted by the powers of evil for the frightful misery and age-long destruction of the human race. But under existing circumstances, as our greatest living statesman

¹ Revelation iv, 3. ² Revelation x, 1.

³The order of birth is, however, uncertain. In Genesis x, 21, “Shem . . . the brother of Japheth the elder” (Authorized Version and LXX.), should, perhaps, be “the elder brother of Japheth” (Revised Version; Authorized Version, margin). Josephus puts them in the order, Shem, Japheth, Ham. Shem is placed first in v, 32, vii, 13, ix, 18, x, 1; I. Chronicles i, 4.

⁴Such, though the epithet, “the husbandman,” is surprising, seems to be the true translation. Literally, it is the “man of the earth” (*ish ha-adâmâh*).

has said, "strong drink produces and has produced evils more deadly than war, famine, and pestilence combined." The tempting opportunity fatally meets the susceptible disposition. The pleasurable instigation from without, united with the dangerous impulse from within, seduces and masters the human will, and thus the fruit of the vine is turned into a lethal agent which makes the god-like soul of man the blighted and abject slave of a dead chemical product. Under the influence of drink, man—created in the divine image, man with the sign of his redemption marked visibly upon his forehead—is smitten with the serpentine curse of degradation and becomes "earthly, sensual, devilish," until at last he sinks to the worst depths of infamy. The moderate use of wine is nowhere decisively forbidden in Scripture. The temptation to excess in the East is far less intense and the examples of excess are far fewer than in Western and Northern regions. So far as wine was used in perfect moderation to promote the harmless mirth of feasts and make glad the heart of man, there was no necessity for its prohibition.¹ The sin begins with the abuse, not with the temperate use; with the excess, not with the participation, except so far as the latter—under certain fatal conditions of heredity and of national unwisdom—conduces inevitably to the former. But even the moderate and unforbidden use of intoxicants may become perilous when considerations of greed, and appetite, and custom are given undisturbed predominance for the utter and wholesale destruction of souls for which Christ died. Asceticism, self-torture, fasting, abstinence are not of themselves among the necessary requirements of pure religion and undefiled. The fruits of the spirit under the old covenant, as under the new, are love, joy, peace. But there are circumstances in which abstinence from every form of wine becomes an imperative duty for the tempted individual, as the only means by which he can retain the self-control which distinguishes between manhood and animalism. It may also become a counsel of mercy and perfection for thousands of the untempted who feel it a duty, by precept and example, to help and to save their miserable, perishing, and tempted brethren.

The wide dissemination of the invention of fermented drink is shown by the fact that the root for the word "wine" is found in so many languages. Many nations have, under one form and another, worshiped

"Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine."

¹ It may, however, be said that in not a few places it is discouraged and made a topic of most earnest warning: e. g., Proverbs xxiii, 29-35, xx, 1; Isaiah xxviii, 7; Hosea iv, 11; Joel i, 5; Ephesians v, 18; I. Corinthians vi, 10, etc.

Yet, whether worshiped as Bacchus or as Osiris, the discoverer of intoxicants gave to the world the most potent of all the implements which "the evil genii whose blessings are curses in disguise" have ever been able to employ for the damnation of human souls. And here, thus early in the world's history, the peril which lay in this discovery is foreshadowed. In one line we read that Noah planted a vineyard; in the next that he drank of the wine and became drunken; in the next that the righteous patriarch, who had been saved from the overwhelming flood, lay uncovered in his tent, a spectacle of shame and infamy; in the next that his degradation called forth all that was loathly in the vile and impure dispositions of his grandson and his second son, and then that, as a consequence of this foul and hideous scene, a curse is laid on the whole family of man. The spectacle of a father's shame would have awakened a blush of pity—a throb of anguish too deep for tears—in any mind of ordinary decency. In the base, corrupted mind of Ham—the type of all minds which exult in the unashamed self-revelation of human weakness, and make it a subject not of modest self-humiliation, but of jibes and sneers—the pitiable scene only evoked his own radical worthlessness. Instead of covering the sin with holy compassion, which we ought all to do always, when no higher duty requires its exposure and its punishment, Ham went out and told his two brothers, evidently with mockery and malignant comment. Shem and Japheth were of nobler moral temperament and knew what holiness, and filial piety, and delicate dignity required. They took "the upper garment" of their father, laid it on both their shoulders, and "going backward with averted faces so that they did not see the nakedness of their father," laid the robe over him, and over his sin and shame.

Drunkenness was never a common vice in Palestine. We are not told that our Lord, during his mortal life, once saw that spectacle of human beings in the shame of drunkenness which is so miserably and infamously common among us. Yet even the Jewish Rabbis, in their comments on these few verses, show us how entirely they realize the deep moral warning which lies in the terse and solemn narrative.

"When Noah awoke from his wine."¹ Under these simple words lies all the agony of a conscience, startled out of its drunken slumber—he becomes conscious of the shaken torch and snaky tresses of that Erinnys of the dawn which avenges the crimes of the darkness. He knew

¹ *Yayin* means both "wine" and "intoxication." I. Samuel i, 14, xxv, 37.

what his younger son had done unto him.¹ How he knew this we are not told, nor is it essential to the narrative. On becoming aware of the shameful fact, Noah uttered in prophetic verse his deep malediction on Canaan :

"Cursed be Canaan;
A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren."

No answer can be given to the question why the curse fell on Canaan especially, unless it be that Ham was punished in part by the curse upon his son, and that God visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate him." It must not, however, be supposed that, as in the proverb quoted and repudiated by Ezekiel, "The fathers did eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge." Each soul, we may be sure, bore its own iniquity, and the soul that sinneth "it shall die." The people of Canaan were looked upon by the Israelites as prodigies of revolting wickedness. It seemed natural that on them the curse should have fallen, and it did fall with exceptional ruin on this contaminated race. They were in great measure extirpated; but the remnant of them were enslaved, partly by the descendants of Shem in the person of the Israelites, and partly by the descendants of Japheth in the islands and coasts of Asia Minor. As a matter of fact, the Canaanites were accursed both in their character—which was a shameful mixture of lust and cruelty—and in their religion, which reeked with degrading profligacy and atrocious rites in the worship of obscene Baalim.

There follows a blessing on the eldest son, Shem, and the youngest, Japheth. Shem is blessed through his covenant God.¹

"Blessed be Yahveh, the God of Shem;
And let Canaan be his servant."

Here the blessing of Shem lies mainly in the fact that his descendants are the people and the worshipers of Yahveh. The blessing on Japheth is connected with a play upon his name:²

"God enlarge Japheth,
And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;
And let Canaan be his [or their] servant."

As it is not perfectly clear how Japheth "dwelt in the tents of Shem," some critics—as, for instance, Gesenius and Schrader—here gave to the word Shem the sense of "name" or "fame"—"Let him dwell in renowned tents." Probably, however, the allusion is to the friendly commerce and intercourse between the descendants of the two races. A deeper meaning may be read into it in the light of such prophecies as that of Isaiah:³ "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising . . . the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."⁴

The chapter ends with one of the chronological notices furnished by the Priestly writer that Noah lived 350 years after the flood, and died at the age of 950. Burckhardt says that, "The grave of the prophet Noah is still shown at the little village of Kerak, in the region of the Lebanon."⁵

CHAPTER IX.

THE TABLE OF THE NATIONS.⁶

BEFORE drawing out the table of national affinity recorded in this chapter, a few remarks will give a clearer notion of its meaning and contents.

i. It is often called an ethnological table. This, however, is hardly correct. Many of the names are not those of persons but those of towns, like Sidon; or districts and countries, like Canaan and Mizraim; or peoples and tribes, like Ludim, Jebusites, etc.

ii. Nor is it, strictly speaking, an attempt at complete ethnography. It in no sense contains an exhaustive table even of the nations known to the Israelites. For instance, neither

Arabians nor Persians are definitely named, nor Moabites, Edomites, Ishmaelites, nor does it mention people like the old Rephaim, Zuzim, Anakim, Emim, nor even the Amalekites—all of which tribes may have practically disappeared by the date when it was drawn up. That it should mention nations like the Hindoos, the Nigritian races, the Chinese, the North American Indians, and other nations more or less unknown to the Hebrews, was not to have been expected. But, although it mainly deals with peoples which inhabited the countries lying round the Mediterranean basin

¹ Compare Deuteronomy xxxiii, 20; Exodus xix, 5.

² May Elohim enlarge (*yaphet*) Japheth (*yepheth*). *Yepheth* is the nihil form of *pathah*, "to open or extend."

³ Isaiah lx, 3, 5.

⁴ Compare Genesis xxii, 18; Ephesians iii, 6.

⁵ "Travels," I, 42; Kalisch, p. 231.

¹As the curse was pronounced on Canaan, the son of Ham, and no curse is pronounced on Ham himself, there is an unsolved difficulty here. In verse 22, some versions read "Ham and Canaan saw." Others substitute Ham for Canaan in the curse (verses 25-27), or read "Ham, the father of Canaan," or in this verse (24) render "his younger son" by "grandson." None of these expedients are tenable, but the difficulty remains.

⁶ In this chapter, verses 1-7, 20, 22, 24, 31, 32 are supposed to belong to P and the rest to J.

and northward to the Euxine, and eastward to the Caspian, and southward to the Persian Gulf, it was doubtless meant to counteract the Jewish tendency to bigoted particularism. It served to show that God is the God of all mankind—not only of the chosen people. It proved that, in the words of Saint Peter, "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him," and that, in the words of Saint Paul, "He hath made of one all nations of men. . . . If haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from each one of us," since, as the Greek poets had said, whom the Apostle of the Gentiles quotes with approval, "in him we live, and move, and have our being," and "we are also his offspring."

iii. The threefold division of the races of man has been very prominent. In a Babylonian legend Xisuthros had three sons whom the Sibyline oracles called Kronos, Titan, Japetos; and in the Persian legend Feridun has three sons Airya, Tûra, Cairima. Some modern philologists have also believed in three main divisions of the human race—the Aryan family, the Semitic, and the Turanian. The latter name is, however, an incorrect generalization for multitudes of scattered tribes and nations who can only be called Allophylian.

iv. The division of mankind here is certainly not by colors, as was that of the Egyptians, who separated the races of man into yellow (*Amu*), white (*Temchu*), and black (*Nahasi*).

v. Nor can much be inferred from the meaning of the designations. Shem means "name," *i. e.*, renown. It points to the noblest race, just as the Aryans, too, called themselves for the word *arya*, "noble." Ham seems rather to mean "hot," than to be related to the Egyptian word for "black," a name given to Egypt from the predominant color of its soil. What Japheth means is uncertain, since the play on words in ix, 27, is not an etymology. Shem, the ancestor of the Hebrews, is represented as the eldest, and Ham as the second. The Israelites came into contact with the Hamitic races and their culture before they had any close intercourse with the descendants of Japheth.

vi. It seems clear that the table is founded mainly on geographical, rather than on purely ethnic, facts. Japheth represents the Northern and Western belt of nations, which lie for the most part north of the highlands of Asia Minor, Armenia, and Media—except Lud and Arphaxad. The descendants of Ham occupy the southern belt, including parts of Africa, Arabia, and Egypt. The descendants of Shem occupy the Central zone of civilization, including Assyria, Aram, Northern Mesopotamia, and Syria. There are, however, some cross divisions, de-

pending on political or historic circumstances of migrations and conquests, so that some names—*e. g.*, Havilah and Sheba—occur twice over.

"This chapter," says Professor Sayce, "is not an ethnological table; it is not concerned with races, but with geography, arranged genealogically in accordance with Semitic idiom. Thus, when we are told that Sidon was 'the firstborn of Canaan,' we are to understand that it was the first of Phœnician cities. 'In this chapter' we are not to look for a scientific division of mankind into their several races. . . . All the tribes and nations mentioned belonged to the white race, which is, however, distinguished into several varieties. . . . In Biblical times, these various sub-races were mingled together in that square of the earth's surface which constituted the known world to the civilized peoples of the East. . . . It was the square which has witnessed the rise and growth of the civilization which mainly has an interest for us. . . . This square is divided into three zones—a Northern, a Central, and a Southern. The Northern zone is represented by Japheth, the central by Shem, and the Southern by Ham. In one direction, however, along the coast of Palestine, Egyptian conquest caused the Southern zone to be extended into the zone of the center."¹

vii. Since seventy of the descendants of Noah are mentioned, the Jews held that there were seventy nations of the world.

viii. The only passages which break the continuity of the table are the episode of Nimrod (verses 8-12), on which I will speak later; and the remark (verse 25) that Eber, the son of Salah, the son of Arphaxad, had two sons, Peleg and Joktan, and that Peleg, "division," was so called because "in his days the earth was divided." Since Salah means "propagation," and Peleg "division," some suppose the names to be mythical. What is meant by the "division" of the earth in the days of Peleg is uncertain; it may allude to the diffusion of population or the settlement of natural boundaries.² Eber means "he who crosses over," and the Hebrews (Genesis xiv, 13) were called "crossers over" because they had been originally a transeuphratic tribe. It is clear that this genealogical incident in the table of nations has not been influenced by any considerations of vanity, or the Jews would not have represented themselves as a mere sub-tribe in the family of the third son of Shem.

¹ "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," pp. 119-148; "Races of the Old Testament," pp. 41, ff.

² Peleg may also mean "water course," and some explain the allusion by "the first cuttings of the canals which are found in such numbers between the Tigris and the Euphrates."

THE EPISODE OF NIMROD.¹

(GENESIS X, 8 TO 12.)

J.

These verses are probably introduced from some other source into the table of nations. Nimrod, the son of Cush, is described as "a mighty man [or *gibbor* or 'hero'] on the earth," and as so eminent for prowess as a huntsman that the proverb said, "like Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord."²

From his being described as a son of Cush, and yet as a founder of Nineveh, some have supposed that, although the Assyrians and Babylonians spoke a Semitic language, their kingdom had been founded by a hero of the race of Ham, who pushed his conquests far into the region of Shem; but several modern critics and Assyriologists of high repute—among whom may be reckoned Schrader—think that the name Cush has led to a confusion between the father of Nimrod, and a Babylonian tribe with a similar name. This is, however, highly uncertain, and there seemed to have been both Assyrian and South Asiatic Cushites of kindred families. The government and culture of Babylonia appear to have been founded by a non-Semitic race, called Accadians and Sumerians, and the text preserves a true tradition of the fact that Assyria was originally a de-

pendency of Babylon. Thus Nimrod founded Babylon, Erech (perhaps Ptolemy's Orchoe, now Warka, near the mound El-Assagah), Accad (Tel Nimroud), and Calneh (Ctesiphon) in the land of Shinar, before he founded a still vaster world-empire by carrying his victorious arms northward, and founding the four Assyrian states of Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah (now Kalah Shergat), and Resen (Nimroud, between Kalah Shergat and Kuyunjik). There is no certain derivation of the name Nimrod, nor has any trace of him been discovered in Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions, unless, with the late Mr. George Smith, we identify him with the legendary Izdubar; but Mr. Pinches seems to have proved that this view is no longer tenable.¹ The wild guesses of commentators connect him with Ninus, Orion, and other mythic heroes. The Hebrews connected his name with the verb "to revolt," and the Haggadah was very busy with his supposed evil deeds. He is identified by Josephus with the builder of Babel. Rabbinic legends bring him down to the time of Abram, and, since Ur means "fire," they say that he flung Abram into the fire for not worshiping his idols, but that the patriarch was miraculously preserved. These stories have been transferred to the "Koran."

CHAPTER X.

THE TOWER OF BABEL AND THE DISPERSION.

(GENESIS XI, 1 TO 9.)

J.

UP to this time the whole earth was of one language—"lip"—and one speech—"of words one"—and as the wandering tribes of men journeyed³ eastward⁴ they found a valley-plain in the land of Shinar—the Babylonian-Assyrian Sumer, *i. e.*, Southern Babylonia—which, from its advantageous position, tempted them to settle there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us bake bricks,⁵ and burn them thoroughly." They smeared the bricks with bitumen, which is abundant in the neighborhood, and proposed to build a very lofty tower.⁶ "Let us make us

a name,"² they said, "for we may perhaps be scattered over the earth." But Yahveh came down to see the city and tower, which the children of men built, and said, "Behold, they are one people and have one language, and, if left unrestrained, they will be debarred from nothing. Come, let us go down and confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." So Yahveh scattered them, and they ceased to build the city which was therefore called Babel—"confusion"—since Yahveh had there confounded the language of all the earth and scattered them abroad.

In verse 7, besides the bold phrase, we have again the plural "Go to, let *us* go down," on which I have already commented on Genesis i, 26. I still regard the expression as a "plural of excellence"; but it should be noted that

¹Wellhausen attributes this episode to the Yahvist; Sayce to the Elohist. There is much uncertainty about its origin.

²Literally, before the face of Yahveh.

³The word implies "struck their tents." for they were as yet Nomads.

⁴Not "from the East" (as in Authorized Version), but "East" (Revised Version).

⁵The "bricks," in Hebrew, are so-called from their whiteness.

⁶"With its top in the heavens"—an eastern hyperbole. Compare Deuteronomy i, 28, ix, 1; Daniel iv, 17.

¹George Smith, "Chaldean Account of the Genesis," pp. 167-262; "Records of the Past," vii, 133-149, *id.* v (new series), p. xiii.

²Some take it to mean a monument. Compare II. Samuel viii, 13.

neither the Rabbis nor the great Jewish commentators knew or accepted this explanation. In an interesting discussion between Rabbis and Christians,¹ the Christians urge these plurals in proof of the Trinity. The answer of the Rabbis was that God usually does nothing without consulting the supernal family, as in Daniel iv, 17: to which, however, we may oppose Isaiah xl, 12-14. Rav Jehuda said that God called ministering angels into existence to consult them.

Such is the short and naïvely anthropomorphic narrative in which the Yahvist touches incidentally on many great truths. The story of Babel is mentioned here alone in Scripture. It is meant to indicate that God did not intend men to remain as one undivided people using one form of speech. The divisions of mankind, alike by natural barriers of seas, rivers, and mountains, and by the growth of dialects and estranging customs, is part of the divine ordinance for the race. Although God has made all men of one, the separation of races tends to produce a rich variety and to give ample scope for the development of various endowments. It also saves man from the crushing burden of ambitious and overweening tyrannies. It tends to stir up the sluggish waves of human life, which otherwise might stagnate into universal putrescence. It breaks up the indolent immobility of custom. It stimulates every form of inquiry and of progress. It prevents men from exhausting the capabilities of limited areas by enabling them to avail themselves of the unlimited treasures and resources of the earth on which they dwell. It was, therefore, out of the highest beneficence that Yahveh defeated the little plans of men.

Another of the divine purposes is here intimated. It was to restrain the towering arrogance of mankind, lest, if they formed but a single race under some impious tyrant, they might altogether forget God, and rush into every extreme of impiety, relying on their own strength and worshiping their own inventions. A Babylonian conqueror might be tempted to say in his heart, "I will ascend up to heaven; above the stars of God will I erect my throne,"² but God's answer to him would be the ignominious obliteration of his short-lived plans by death—"but thou descendest into the grave, and into the deepest pit." We find an echo of the same thought in Jeremiah: "I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up, and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall."³

To inculcate these lessons, the sacred writer

¹ Sanhedrim, 38b.

² Isaiah xiv, 13.

³ Jeremiah li, 44.

adopts and modifies an ancient tradition. Although he does not here mention Nimrod, yet earliest Jewish legends attribute the attempt to found a world-empire to the mighty hunter whom they regarded as a rebel and a despot. Their imagination had been struck and haunted by the huge extent of Babylon, and the colossal towers of the temples of Bel-Merodach, both in that city and at Birs Nimroud. The latter, even in its fire-scathed ruins, excites the astonishment of travelers by its strength and vast extent. Even among the Babylonians there seems to have been a sense that there was something impious in the construction of buildings so gigantic.

The legend of its destruction by divine interposition—by storms of lightning—would take all the deeper root from the fact that even in ancient days the temple had been liable to severe vicissitudes.¹ In later times "travelers saw in the vitrified bricks of the ruined tower, traces of the lightning which had punished the pride of its builders.

Though no Babylonian inscription tells the story of the tower of Babel, Mr. George Smith has discovered, on the fragments of a tablet, allusions to a "holy mount mingled in Babylon by small and great," and how "the God in anger destroyed the secret designs of the builders," and "made strange their counsels" and scattered them.² The site of the great temple of Bel-Merodach in Babylon long retained the old Sumerian name of El Saggil, "the house of the lofty head," which towered over the great city, visible from afar. With the splendor of the tower was connected the immense size of the city which naturally tempted the victorious despots of Assyria to dreams of a world-affrighting empire, so that even Sargon, after the conquest of Syria "appointed that all places should form a single kingdom." The wise diffusion of Semitic dialects made the dream seem feasible, and the promotion of the use of one language has always been the aim of tyrants. But it is not often entirely successful, and the "various races" which, as Berosus says, were gathered in Babylon told against it. The many languages spoken by representatives of conquered and immigrating races in Babylon made it natural to believe that it was the unfinished city which had been the scene of that confusion of tongues, when the original unity of speech among the descendants of Noah, after the deluge, was first confounded into mutually unintelligible languages.

¹ It was restored by Nebuchadnezzar. For a modern description see Layard, "Nineveh and Babylon," pp. 484-505.

² See Sayce, "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," pp. 153-157; George Smith, "Chaldean Genesis," ed. Sayce, pp. 120, ff.; but nothing is said of the confusion of tongues.

For this reason the writer sees significance in the assonance of the name "Babel" with *balbél*, to confound, while at the same time the form of the story (verses 4, 5) seems to recognize the other derivation of the name from *Bab-ilu*, "The gate of the god."

In this passage, as throughout the Bible, our one concern is to seize the moral and spiritual lessons, whether conveyed in the forms of tradition, of myth, or of parable. To take this story literally would be—as was said by Saint Gregory of Nyssa, "The theologian," fifteen

Canaan by the Septuagint, and the variations tabulated below, which are clearly due to intentional manipulation. In addition to this the readings of the Septuagint are often variant and uncertain.

The object of the changes introduced by the Septuagint is easily discernible. (1) The Greek translators desired to make ten generations from Shem to Terah by inserting the name Canaan, which is also inserted in Luke iii, 36, and (2) to extend the number of years required for the ten generations. How entirely artificial

	HEBREW.			SAMARITAN.			SEPTUAGINT.		
	Before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Total.	Before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Total.	Before birth of son.	Rest of life.	Total.
Shem	100	500	600	100	500	600	100	500	600
Arphaxad	35	403	438	135	303	438	135	400	535
Canaan							130	330	460
Salah	30	403	433	130	303	433	130	330	460
Eber	34	430	464	134	270	404	134	270	404
Peleg	30	209	239	130	109	239	130	209	339
Reu	32	207	239	132	107	239	132	207	339
Serug	30	200	230	130	100	230	130	200	330
Nahor	29	119	148	79	69	148	179	125	303
Terah	70	135	205	70	75	145	70	135	205
Total	390	1040	1270

centuries ago—"Jewish babblement and folly." To use the legend as decisive authority on questions concerning the origin of languages is to take the things of science and give them to Scripture. If the question of the origin of languages can ever be solved at all, it will only be by scientific inquiry. The notion—idly deduced from this passage—that Hebrew was the primitive language is now absolutely exploded, and cannot be held by anyone capable of understanding even the elements of philology. Still more certain it is that the divergence of languages and dialects, as far back as we can trace it on the oldest monuments of the human race, was not the result of a momentary interposition—which, indeed, is not asserted by the writer—but arose from the slow working of age-long laws.

GENERATIONS FROM NOAH TO ABRAM.

MAINLY P.

(GENESIS XI, 10 TO 32.)

The following genealogy records all that we know of the history of 390 years according to the Hebrew, 1040 years according to the Samaritan, and 1270 according to the Septuagint. The genealogy is constructed on exactly the same principles as that given by the Priestly writer in chapter v.

How little we can be sure of the numbers may be seen from the interpolation of the name

is the number of years thus stated appears at once from the fact that the three numbers which belong to Salah are transferred without any change to Canaan. The insertion is clearly wrong, for Abram, like Noah, is evidently meant to be in the tenth generation. The Samaritan variations are also systematic. This version increases the number of years before the birth of the first son, except in the case of Terah, and decreases the number of years lived by each patriarch after the birth of the first son except in the case of Shem. In the third column it agrees with the Hebrew, except in the cases of Eber and Terah. All three texts are in accord as regards Shem, but the Septuagint alone gives the years of Canaan. The lists mark a gradual diminution in the length of human life.

It was the custom of the Hebrew genealogists to throw their lists into equal numbers. Thus the genealogy of Joseph in Saint Matthew is arranged in groups of fourteen, and there are ten generations from Adam to Noah in Genesis v, 3-32.

In this genealogy, as in the former, the name seems sometimes to represent districts or towns, with the tribes which inhabited them, rather than individuals. Arphaxad, Reu and Serug seem to be names which represent places, although their identification is far from certain. Arphaxad (x, 22) is identified by some critics with the district of the Karduchi,



G. STAAL.

SARAH, WIFE OF ABRAHAM.

no connection with the word. Its origin is unknown, though it may be from the Assyrian *Kasidu* "conqueror," or from Kassî, an old name by which the Babylonians were known.¹

From the fact that "Ur" means "fire" in Hebrew arose the legend (already alluded to) that Abram had been saved from the burning fiery furnace into which he was thrown by Nimrod for refusing to worship his idols. But the word is the Babylonian Ur, *Uru*, or "city" of the cuneiform text. And the site is now represented by the mound of Mugheir and Warka, on the western bank of the Euphrates, which had a famous temple of the Moon-god.² The Jews believed Ur to be Edessa which they, therefore, called Orcastrum, a corruption of Ur Kasdim.

Terah, accompanied by his eldest son Abram,³ his grandson Lot, and Sarai, who was at once his daughter and daughter-in-law, left Ur Kasdim to go into the land of Canaan. It is clear that his second son Nahor, with his family, must also have accompanied them for they are found settled in Haran in the next generation.⁴ They are not here mentioned because their relations with the family of Abram were not always friendly, and because they did not share in the final migration to Canaan.

What was the cause of Terah's migration? We are not told. Some find it in the death of his son Haran; others in religious disputes; others again in the necessity which arose from the growth of population, and the failure of sufficient nourishment for ever-increasing flocks and herds. No hint is given that Terah had received any divine intimation on the subject, such as was subsequently given to Abram, whose faith in obeying it, and "going forth, not knowing whither he went"⁵ made him "the father of missionaries." At first, however, the emigrants—on whose fortunes were to depend, in God's providence, the future religious destinies of the world—did not get as far as their ultimate destination, the Land of Canaan. "They came to Haran, and dwelt there."

We are not told what caused them to stop on their way. It is probable that Abram's impressions as to the will of God were still dim. The providence of God is everlasting, as well as unresting. All things were being prepared for the time prescribed by him to whom alone the times and seasons are manifest.

Haran is unquestionably the Carrhæ of the ancients.¹ It is on the river Balissus—Belik—twenty miles southeast of Edessa. The name means "the dry" or "parched," in Accadian, "a road"—and the treeless unwatered plain might seem to offer few attractions. Its condition may, however, have been very different in past ages, and it was an important commercial center to which converged the great caravan routes to Nisibis, to Babylon, and to Syria, for which reason Alexander the Great occupied it with a Macedonian colony.² It was celebrated for the worship of the Moon-god, and its ruins are still visited by pilgrims from its connection with the history of the great patriarch. It was at Haran that Abram received a distinct and final intimation that he was to leave his country, and the place of his birth, and his father's house, and go into the unknown land of which God should tell him.³ He had, however, received a previous intimation while he lived at Ur. Such at least is the view of Saint Stephen, who, in his speech, says "the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said, 'Get thee out of thy land.' . . . Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans [Ur Kasdim] and dwelt in Haran; and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land where ye now dwell."⁴ In these details Saint Stephen was no doubt adopting the ordinary Jewish tradition. The statement, however, that Abram did not leave Haran till Terah was dead does not agree with the data here given.⁵ For the writer tells us that Terah, before he died in Haran, attained the age of 205 years. His death is only here mentioned, because at this point he disappears from the sacred page. But since Terah was only seventy years old when Abram was born, and Abram was seventy-five when he left Haran,⁶ it is clear that Terah must have lived sixty years after Abram's departure. He must have survived not only till the birth and circumcision of Ishmael,⁷ but must even have lived until Isaac, the son of the promise, was thirty-five years old.⁸ It must be remembered that he was not left in loneliness. If the families of Abram and of his dead son Haran

¹ Professor Sayce calls it "the key of the highway from the East to the West."

² See references to Haran in II. Kings xix, 12; Isaiah xxxvii, 12; Ezekiel xxvii, 23.

³ Genesis xii, 1; Acts vii, 2-4. ⁴ Acts vii, 2-4.

⁵ But Saint Stephen may very possibly have followed the text of the LXX., which alters 205 in Genesis xi, 32, into 145, as does Philo, "De Migr. Abr.," p. 414. Josephus, "Antiquities," I, vii, 2, quotes from Nicholas of Damascus the legend that Abraham conquered Damascus and reigned there. He says there was still a village near Damascus called "The Habitation of Abraham."

⁶ Genesis xii, 4. ⁷ Genesis xvi, 16. xvii, 25.

⁸ Genesis xxi, 5.

¹ Sayce, "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," p. 158.

² Sayce, "The Higher Criticism and the Monuments," p. 158. The identification is, however, disputed. See Kalisch, pp. 292-293. *Mugheir* means "mother of bitumen."

³ Abram "the father is lofty": compare Abiram and the Assyrian Abaramu.

⁴ Genesis xxiv, 10; xxvii, 43. ⁵ Hebrews xi, 8.

left him, the numerous descendants of Nahor were still around him and were prospering in their new home.

"But Sarai was barren; she had no child."¹ That was for many years to come the tragedy of Abram's life. In the East it is regarded as a very real tragedy, and to Abram it must have been intensified by the necessary temptation to regard as delusions the immense hopes for the future of his race, which he had received from divine intimations. Well might he cry to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" when he had already attained the age of 100 years, and still found himself without a legitimate heir. But in God's due time "the child of the promise" was marvelously born, to become the ancestor, in direct line, of him who was the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

¹This positive and negative statement of the same fact for purposes of emphasis is characteristic of archaic and Eastern languages. Compare Genesis xlii, 2, "That we may live, and not die." So, too, in Isaiah xxxviii, 1; Judges xiii, 2.

And meanwhile Abram listened to that divine voice which in the depths of his being said to him, "Follow me," and his faith became to him, for many a long year, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." He was "the father of missionaries," and the hero of faith, because, having been thereto called by God, he "obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went," and "by faith sojourned in tents as in a strange country," looking for "the city which hath the foundations, of which the builder and maker is God."¹ "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God."²

At this point, then, we close the meager record of prehistoric ages. From this epoch through the varying phases of divine revelation we are called to watch more closely and consecutively that "path of the just," which is "as the shining light," shining "more and more unto the perfect day."

¹Hebrews xi, 8-10. ²James ii, 23.

Frederic W. Farrar.



BOOK III.

FROM THE CALL OF ABRAHAM TO THE BONDAGE OF ISRAEL.

BY REV. ELMER H. CAPEN, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

ABRAHAM—HIS BIRTH AND TRAINING.

WE come now to some account of Abraham, who is the grandest historical representative of the patriarchal world. He was the son of Terah, of whom there is scarcely more than a bare mention in the Scriptures. He was born in Ur or Hur. This was a city of Chaldea, situated on the right bank of the Euphrates at the point where the river at that time emptied into the sea. In other words, it was a seaport town, and there is abundant evidence that its shipping was of considerable importance, and that by means of it Chaldea had important intercourse with Ethiopia and other distant parts of the ancient world. It is probable, however, that the name was applied, not only to the town, but to a considerable portion of the territory surrounding it. Nor is it probable from the Scripture narrative that Terah dwelt within the limits of the city proper, unless he sought the protection of the city walls at night. It is altogether probable that the business of Terah, like that of Abraham after him, was pastoral. Nor is it unlikely that the growth of population, in and around Ur, the pressure of people on the lands of that region adapted to grazing and tillage, constituted the first motive to migration. Seemingly he had heard of a country far to the westward that was fertile and better suited to his occupation.

The men who had visited distant parts, by sea or land, the caravans that had come up through Palestine from the Mediterranean coast, would be likely to bring such reports. These accounts appealed to the imagination of one who saw his occupation dwindling in the home field, and, like many another since his time acting from a like impulse, he gathered his family and his goods and chattels together, and, turning his face to the west, set forth to seek his fortune in a new land. It is impossible now to tell by what road he traveled. Judging from the general configuration of the country, if he ascended the Euphrates by its right bank he would have encountered a series of morasses that would have rendered progress almost im-

possible. If, on the other hand, he crossed over to the left bank he must have found a better road that would take him past many large and populous towns. But, by whatever road he went, he came at length to the plain of Haran, a broad and level tract of country bounded by the mountains at the north of Babylon, and begirt by streams that flow into the Tigris and Euphrates. It was a fertile country, described to-day as a boundless plain, "strewed at times with patches of the brightest flowers, at other times with rich and green pastures, covered with flocks of sheep and goats feeding together, here and there a few camels, and the son or daughter of their owner tending them. One can quite understand how the sons of this open country, the Bedouins, love it, and cannot leave it—no other soil would suit them. The air is so fresh, the horizon is so far, and man feels so free, that it seems made for those whose life it is to roam at pleasure, and who own allegiance to none but themselves." It is not strange that Terah should have found his migratory spirit satisfied in such a country, and that he should have abandoned the purpose with which he set out of going into Canaan. At all events this became the terminus of his wandering. Here he pitched his tent, hither he drew the other members of his family, and the place became for many decades after his death the ancestral abode of those to whom the Hebrew name belonged. They went to work evidently to make this a permanent home. To this day the well is in constant use down whose steps Rebekah tripped, in her maiden freshness and beauty, to draw water for the camels of Abraham's servant. One can figure to himself now the happy pastoral life that absorbed the energies of Terah and his sons. The years came and went, and flocks and herds, children and servants, were multiplied to them until they became both rich and powerful. But in due course the sands of Terah's life ran out, and he was gathered to his fathers. Then came a change. The ties that hitherto had bound Abraham to Haran were sundered. He had

discharged his duty as a son, and he was now at liberty to enter upon the work to which he was moved by a divine impulse.

But before proceeding with this part of our narrative let us consider the influences—religious and otherwise—under which the patriarch had been reared. The people of Chaldea were for the most part Cushites. There was, however, a pretty large admixture of other elements. The fertility of the soil, the peaceable character of the inhabitants, and their maritime connections with other parts of the world, made possible important accessions from without. The population had probably come in originally from the north, following the courses of the great rivers and attracted by the fertility of the soil. No such fertility is known elsewhere in the wide world. The descriptions given of it by Herodotus and other ancient writers almost surpass belief. "The blade of the wheat plant and the barley plant is often four fingers in breadth." We are told that it was customary to mow the wheat fields twice and then keep down the growth of the stalk and promote the growing of the grain by pasturing cattle upon them. Even to this day, notwithstanding the encroachments of the desert sand and the consequent changes of the climate, the fertility is enormous. Under such conditions wealth increased, population multiplied, and the arts flourished. Existing ruins of great cities attest the opulence and refinement of the people. The traces are still found of vast temples, magnificent palaces, and even of libraries, the books of the latter composed not of perishable paper or parchment but of imperishable tiles. Artistic taste reached a high order of development. Much attention was given to science, especially astronomy, which the remarkable clearness of the skies and the brilliancy of the heavenly bodies greatly stimulated and promoted. The civilization was an attractive one. It excites our interest even at this late stage of the world's development. No wonder that men were drawn to it from different quarters, or that they were led to adopt its customs and even its religion. At least one great Semitic family was there, and it is most unlikely that they were the only representatives of the race. It is impossible to tell how far Terah and his descendants had taken on the color of the life of the people among whom they dwelt, and how far the process of assimilation had gone with them. But there are certain hints scattered here and there in the Sacred Scriptures from the Book of Genesis to the Epistles, as well as certain traditions, that seem to indicate that not only Terah, but even Abraham, had adopted the Chaldean religion.

That religion was elaborately polytheistic.

The number of gods in the pantheon was almost beyond computation. The leading divinities were divided into triads. The most important triad, though not, perhaps, the oldest, was that in which the gods corresponded to the heavenly bodies, the Sun-god, the Moon-god, and the gods of the planetary system. But these deities were supplemented by a multitude of local divinities. Whether this religion had a spiritual principle behind it or not it is impossible to say. Most likely it had. Possibly there were sages and priests among the people who understood this principle and could expound it, and who saw in the elaborate machinery of the popular cult a shadow of the one omnipresent and infinite Deity. But whatever the religion originally was, or whatever it then was in the thought of a few favored individuals, it had certainly greatly deteriorated. It was materialistic, gross, and abominably corrupt. Even in its best phases it was little more than an elaborate system of fetishism and magic, while the corrupt practices it sanctioned and promoted were revolting to every principle of decency and could but excite loathing in every soul that was naturally refined. This was unquestionably the effect produced in the mind of Abraham. His powerful genius, moreover, penetrated the disguises that religion had taken on. He went, by a divine instinct, to the very root of the matter. Behind all the gross and material manifestations of deity he saw the infinite and abiding reality. How far he went in affirming his conviction we cannot say. Whether he succeeded in impressing his views upon the members of his family we do not know. It is likely that to some extent he did. It is as likely as not that this may have been one of the principal considerations that induced Terah to leave the land of Ur and that drew after him his other children. Certainly we can readily perceive that the rôle of a religious reformer could not have been an easy one in that age and time. It is scarcely too much to affirm that to reform a religion so gross and sensual as the religion of the Chaldeans was an impossibility. To make the attempt would involve the destruction of the reformer, without making any permanent impression on the minds of his contemporaries. There was but one way open, and that was by separation, and building up from the bottom the religion that was pure and undefiled. This was the way chosen by the great man who has long been regarded by many nations and peoples as the "father of the faithful" and the real founder of monotheism.

I have already intimated that Abraham probably came by the monotheistic notion by the clearness of his own reasoning. His own

rational thought carried him irresistibly to the idea of Infinite Personality. Still, there were other elements in this remarkable conversion, if we may so term it, that should not be overlooked. Abraham and his family were descended from Shem, through Eber. Hence the name Hebrew. Their habits of life were nomadic and pastoral. Such a people would be likely to preserve their traditions. While, therefore, they did take on some of the superstitions of the period and adopt some evil practices from the nations with whom they came in contact, it is not likely that they wholly abandoned their earlier conceptions and modes of worship. The thought, that God was accessible to human approach, may have been—we may not go astray if we affirm that it was—still preserved in some vague way, at least, in the minds of the people. So that when Abraham was carried by his own clear and exalted vision to the conviction of the one God, it was but natural that he should seek to talk with him face to face. Here it was that he was lifted high above all the grosser forms of thought and practice. Then it was

that God became to him a veritable and living presence, and that he could hold distinct and real communion with him. Then it was that God's voice became audible and his commandment sure. It is this, too, that separates Abraham so widely from his own time, and makes him seem to be in sympathy with every time. We cannot conceive of him as having anything in common with those old superstitious and idol-worshipping Chaldeans. He is to us as much a man of the nineteenth century as a man of the age more than two thousand years before the advent of Jesus. Nor can we think of a time so far advanced in civilization, that men will either cease to be interested in the story of Abraham, or fail to be inspired by the lofty lessons of his character. Such as he was, however, he owed in part to his training, in part to his wonderful native endowment, making him one of the most extraordinary souls that the history of the world has developed, and, in part, to the fact that God had chosen him as the instrument for the most momentous revelation that the human race has received from heaven.

CHAPTER II.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

SOME writers speak of Abraham as receiving two calls, one while he dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, and the other in Haran after the death of his father. If we confine ourselves to the account that is given in Genesis there appears to be but one. Indeed, the migration from Ur is attributed wholly to Terah, and Abraham is included in it as a dutiful son. But Stephen in his speech before the Council said: "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran." The call appears to have been to Abraham and not to Terah. How, then, do we account for the statement that Terah conducted the migration? The explanation is very simple if we keep in mind the patriarchal institution. Theoretically Terah, the oldest male member, was the head of the group. As long as he lived everything must be done in his name. Abraham, by reason of his superior intelligence, his greater bodily vigor, and by reason of certain priestly functions which he had begun to exercise, may have come to have a dominating influence in the family. It may have been that Terah had already passed completely under the domination of his will. It may have been that he had come to share the religious convictions of his son. All these things are not only possible,

but probable. So that we must regard Abraham as the immediate cause of the impulse that was to take that great body of Semitic people away from Chaldean influences. It seems, too, that Canaan was the point of destination at the outset. If that were so, why should they have dwelt so long a time in Haran? Evidently that was a part of the divine plan. From the merely human side, we are at liberty to adopt a variety of considerations. The advanced age and consequent infirmity of Terah would have been a sufficient reason. It was only a filial duty incumbent upon Abraham to tarry in the fertile plains of Haran until his aged father had completed his earthly pilgrimage. Nahor, the elder brother of Abraham, and who, as the elder brother, had broken off from the patriarchal establishment of Terah and become the head of a new family, did not form a part of the original caravan that passed up to the north. But later on, moved perhaps by favorable reports that came to him from his kinsmen, as well as by the restless desire for change that so often takes possession of nomadic peoples, he followed them to their new pasture ground. Abraham, moreover, may have felt it necessary for his great enterprise that he should increase his possessions, that his flocks and herds should have time to multiply, and that he should have

opportunity to increase his retinue, surrounding himself with menservants and maidservants, who would be obedient to his will. But it seems to me that the most conspicuous reason of all, as well as the most providential, was to establish a permanent abode for his kinspeople and their descendants in Haran. The most important, the most imperative injunction that was laid upon the Hebrew race, after the injunctions of their religion, was that they should preserve the purity of their descent. Under no circumstances were they to take to themselves wives from the people of the land, but they were to go back to their ancestral seats and take their wives from the same unpolluted stock. Ethnologically this undoubtedly is the reason that has made the Hebrew race one of the most distinct types of the entire human family; that, through all vicissitudes of migration and suffering, has preserved their characteristics unchanged and enabled them to resist all attempts at assimilation.

All this is related to a most important part of the call. "I will make of thee a great nation." The departure from Ur, and again from Haran, had national significance. He was going forth to possess the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it. He was going forth not only to lay the foundations of a great family, but to multiply his descendants until they should be like the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore for multitude. Now, as we look forward from this period and take in at a glance the whole of Hebrew history, and especially as we observe how this history fits into and is related to the subsequent movements of civilized races, we shall have little difficulty in recognizing how much this call implied, first, with reference to the constitution of the family, and, secondly, with reference to the more complicated organization of national life. Of course, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the patriarchal system of the Hebrews was developed in a time when polygamy was the almost universal custom, and that immediately preceding this there was a period of great laxity and even of promiscuity in the relations of the sexes. We are obliged to confess, not without sorrow, that both Abraham and Jacob shared to some extent in the polygamous practices of their time. Still, one cannot read the Bible story with care without perceiving that the divine intention, in all the dealings with these great founders of a race and a religion, was to exalt the importance in the family of one woman, chosen in holy love, to be the lawful mother of children and to control the destinies of the household. Nothing can be clearer than the providential design that the true succession, both social and spiritual, was

to be through Sarah and, to an important extent, through Rachel. This is the more mysterious if we remember that in that age, and under institutions as they then existed, motherhood counted for little in determining the relationship of children; that adoption was almost as common and sacred a mode of filiation as birth. Thus it appears that it was the mission of the patriarchs to be the indorsers of monogamy as well as the founders of monotheism.

But the family was not to be in itself a finality. The family was to be purified and exalted because it was to become the primal unit in a larger and more important organism. The grandest results of civilization were to be attained through civil institutions. Accordingly the Hebrews themselves were to become a great and powerful commonwealth. If we had nothing but Jewish history before us, and were to confine our thoughts to the part which the Jewish nation played under David and Solomon, and even in later epochs, we should say that the call of Abraham and all the patriarchs was worth while. But the highest functions of the Israelites were not discharged in the realization and fulfillment of their own national existence. Indeed, the special divine functions for which God raised them up only began then. We need only to recall the teaching of Jesus that relationship to Abraham is not a fleshly relationship, and that God is able of the stones to raise up seed unto Abraham, to understand that Aryan as well as Semitic peoples may come into vital contact with the father of the faithful. We are wont to attribute our civic descent to the Roman empire. Rome in some respects reached the perfection of organization. Her institutions are the marvel of the world, and nearly all our institutions to-day are modeled on hers. This is so apparent that it is not strange that some of the wisest observers have concluded that the Bible story has no lesson for the student of constitutional law or the social philosopher in our time. No greater mistake than this, however, is possible. Notwithstanding its magnificent formal perfection, Roman civilization was fatally at fault in the laxity of the family bond. This is conceded to be one of the causes of the corruption that rendered the downfall of the nation inevitable. Nor can we obscure the fact that when the reconstruction of Roman society took place through the instrumentality of the Christian Church, the work was rendered indestructible by the exaltation and purification of the family, following the pattern furnished in the patriarchal age, and laying down the commandment given to Moses and reiterated by Jesus and the apostles, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land

that the Lord thy God giveth thee." Whatever hope the great nations of Europe and America may cherish of permanence is largely based upon the sacredness of the family. The family is the source of all our civic virtues. The protection of the family, moreover, is in

no small degree the motive of all civic arrangements. Thus the call of Abraham reaches forward, and includes not only the Hebrew commonwealth but the greater nations and peoples whose multitudes are so vast that no man can number them.

CHAPTER III.

FROM HARAN TO CANAAN—ABRAHAM AND LOT—SODOM.

THE time having arrived through the death of Terah and through the strengthening of the family by long residence in the rich pasture grounds of Haran, and the call having been repeated with the blessing, Abraham took his departure for the land that was to be the scene of his future movements and with which his name was henceforth forever to be associated. What would the world give if it could but know the route over which he traveled! But that is impossible. There is room only for conjecture. If the desert then bore any resemblance to the desert of to-day, to have taken that vast company of human beings and live stock—the sheep, goats, cattle, asses, and camels—such as a rich and powerful chieftain of the plains would naturally take with him, would have been an impossible feat. Of course, it is possible that the wilderness was not so desolate then as now. We know that mighty armies from Chaldea, Babylonia, and Assyria were wont to cross it by the shortest way, and we can scarcely understand how it was accomplished unless both water and forage were more abundant in that region then than now. But the difficulties presented by the desert to even a great army were not as formidable as those that were offered to a caravan like that of the patriarch, made up not only of men, women, and children, but of immense herds of live stock that must be sustained by the way. An army would make its journey with as light an equipment as possible, and it would carry a considerable stock of provisions with it. It could go by forced marches from one oasis to another, or from one well of water to another. It would be composed of men and horses, hardened by military service to the endurance of fatigue and famine. If any perished by the way, according to the barbarous standards of the time, their carcasses could be left without compunction for the vultures to feed upon. All the conditions were different with a patriarchal group and its belongings. Here hasty movement was impossible, and the utmost care must be exercised, both to preserve the flocks and herds and to protect the lives of women and

children. It, therefore, appears to be wholly out of the question that Abraham, in his departure from Haran, could have taken his way directly across the desert, even though the drifting sands had not wrought such complete havoc with vegetation as is the case at present. From Haran to Damascus in a direct line it is nearly 300 miles. From the ford of Thapsacus on the Upper Euphrates to the oasis of Tadmor, afterward the site of the city of Palmyra, it was forty miles over a blistering desert, without a spear of grass or a drop of water to mitigate the terror of the journey. It is likely, therefore, that the patriarch would keep along the edge of the foothills of northern Syria until he reached the mountainous regions lying east of Phœnicia and Palestine, and then approach Damascus by a more directly southern route. This, if the proper season of the year were chosen, would afford pasturage by the way and involve little hazard to the lives of either people or cattle.

There is some reason for supposing that Damascus was the first prolonged halting place of the caravan. According to Josephus, tradition assigns to Abraham a protracted residence in Damascus. But there is almost no evidence to support the tradition. Indeed, the evidence of the Scripture account is the other way. We have, to be sure, mention of Eliezer of Damascus as the steward of Abraham's house. This would almost imply that Abraham had remained long enough in Damascus to acquire the services of Eliezer. That, however, does not count for much. From the Scripture narrative it appears to be indisputable that, within about a year from the time he left Haran, Abraham was in Egypt. For it was during his visit to Egypt that Sarah acquired possession of Hagar. After having had her as a handmaid for ten years she gave her to Abraham to wife. Eleven years after Abraham left Haran, or when he was eighty-six years old, Ishmael was born. In view of these facts the stay in Damascus could not have been much more than a long halt. From Damascus it is altogether probable he passed to the south, keeping the Sea of Galilee on the west, and,

crossing the Jordan some seven or eight miles farther south, went, by what is still the common route of travel, into Samaria and came to Sichem or Shechem. "And Abraham passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, unto thy seed will I give this land: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." The place of Shechem is a contracted but beautiful and fertile valley, 1,800 feet above the level of the sea, between the mountains of Ebal on the north and Gerizim on the south. Moreh, however the name is derived, was a clump or grove of oak trees which flourished, as we know by later references, for many years in that spot. Here the patriarch builded an altar and performed his worship. Notwithstanding that he recognized Jehovah as the one and only God, he had not outgrown the disposition which so often appears in primitive worshippers to perform their service in sacred groves; and to Jacob no less than to Abraham the oaks of Moreh were sacred.

What must have been the feeling of the patriarch as he looked about and saw all the land that had been given by divine promise to his seed. "The Canaanite was then in the land." A race of people akin to those from whom he had departed in Chaldea had possession of the territory. Yet, notwithstanding the promise, Abraham did not seek to dispossess them. Neither did the Canaanites endeavor to drive him out. We wonder somewhat at this, but it is to be accounted for in part at least by the fact that ownership in lands did not signify in the ancient time anything like what it signifies with us. Indeed, except in cities and places that were densely populated, there probably was no such thing as land ownership. Pastoral peoples only required space to feed their flocks, and they moved about in doing this from one pasture ground to another as the season changed, or as one ground after another became exhausted. So long, therefore, as Abraham did not interfere with any other man's pasturage, he could come and go without molestation. In addition to this, Dean Stanley assigns a profound spiritual reason for the fact that Abraham and the succeeding patriarchs possessed the land only by promise. He thinks this was the training by which they were made to perceive, partially and dimly, to be sure, something of the spiritual attributes of man and the spiritual nature of God. Dr. A. P. Peabody thinks this promise of a national existence, which was iterated and reiterated from the time of Abraham until the final establishment of the commonwealth of Israel, was made to fill the same place in the

Hebrew mind that the prospect and promise of a life beyond the grave fills in the mind of the Christian believer. Thus, the promise of the land as far as the eye could see, from the rising of the sun until the going down thereof, yet never really owning a foot of it, except such as was purchased for a sepulcher, became for Abraham and his successors the enduring pledge of divine oversight. It was the serene trust displayed in this promise, that made Jesus declare: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad."

But let us turn again to the more secular aspects of the history. The record says that "Abram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." We notice the intimate relation between Lot and Abraham. At first it would almost seem that Lot was included in the call and promise. But his relationship to the migration must be accounted for on other grounds. Lot was the son of an older brother of Abraham who had died in Ur of the Chaldees. Like his father he had remained a member of the household of Terah, and likewise of Abraham's after he came into the patriarchal succession. Thus, Abraham speaks of him sometimes as his brother, sometimes as his brother's son, or nephew, and sometimes as his son. In the patriarchal times these various relations were often confused and blended. It is evident, however, that Lot held a place of considerable independence and dignity. He is spoken of as sharing in the wealth of Abraham. Probably anticipating the time when he should go out and become the head of a house for himself, he had been permitted to acquire in his own right many different forms of oriental wealth. Still, he and his uncle worked harmoniously together. In every secular enterprise they seem to have made common cause. They were one in the purpose to go into the land of Canaan. It almost seems as if Abraham regarded Lot as a partner in the great religious movement to which he had been called. But whatever may have been the earlier feelings of the younger man, as time wore on his devotion to his own private and selfish ends waxed stronger and stronger. At length, after the return of the two from Egypt, the point of open rupture was reached. The flocks and herds of both Abraham and Lot had increased so that the land was not able to bear them. It had become impossible, in other words, to find pasture grounds that would give forage for them all at once. The herdsmen of Lot quarreled with the herdsmen of Abraham. Probably Abraham had foreseen the rupture,



BIDA.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.

for he appears to have been perfectly prepared to meet it. We cannot help marveling at the serenity and magnanimity of the patriarch at the same time that we are disgusted by the cupidity and selfishness of Lot. Calling his nephew to him Abraham says: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Perfect liberty of choice is accorded to Lot. The patriarch does not fear his ability to get on under any conditions, and he is ready to give to one who had occupied the place of a son in his tents the better choice. But Lot, on the other hand, is full of greediness and lust of pleasure. The rich pasture lands of the Jordan plain, with their fertility and abundance of water, awaken his cupidity. He wishes to feed his flocks in that favored territory. But this is not all. The increase of wealth, as is so often the case in every age, had developed in him luxurious tastes. The mere tending of cattle could not satisfy his desires. He was anxious to come into contact with men. His birth and early training in Ur, and again his recent visit to Egypt, had familiarized him with the seductive phases of civilized life; and now that increase of riches rendered such a result possible, he desired to share the privileges afforded by city life. Accordingly, he not only chose for his portion the plain of Jordan, but he went to dwell among the cities of the plain and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

What a downfall was that! Here was one who had enjoyed the friendship and care of the greatest, wisest, and holiest man the world, up to that time, had seen, deliberately surrendering himself to a companionship that was most degrading, and adopting practices that are nameless. Sodom has become the synonym

for everything that is vile and abominable in human life. We do not have a detailed account of what went on in Sodom. But we have enough to assure us that its wickedness was beyond all power of conception. We know something of the vile practices of many ancient pagan cities; and we often wonder how society could have held together under the existence of such iniquity. But, though the narrative in the Book of Genesis is not minute, there is enough to show that Sodom exceeded all other ancient cities in the vileness of its moral life; and, what is more, the evil was universal and all-inclusive. If Lot himself did not descend to the full depths of the prevailing infamy, his family, evidently, was completely submerged. At all events, from the moment of his separation from Abraham, Lot, whose life up to that time appears to have been honorable, entered upon a career the end of which was ignominy, oblivion, and death. The cities of the plain, of which Sodom was the chief, were built on volcanic soil. Underneath was what the Scripture calls "slime pits," asphaltic caverns, filled with combustible matter. The fulfillment of the wickedness of Sodom was coincident with a great volcanic eruption. The destruction was widespread and complete. Lot's wife was so reluctant to quit the scene of dissipation and pleasure that she was overtaken by the catastrophe and destroyed. Only Lot and his two daughters escaped. The human race has had no more impressive lesson of the power of evil associations to degrade and corrupt those who yield to them than is furnished by the episode in the history of Lot and his wife. It stands here in the Book of Genesis in black and awful contrast to the holiness of the life of Abraham, to warn men of the danger that lies in toying with sinful indulgence. The Savior of the world did not fail to use it to give emphasis to the self-denial required of those who are to take up and carry forward the great work of proclaiming the Gospel.

CHAPTER IV.

ABRAHAM'S CONTACT WITH OUTSIDE HISTORY.

IT has been the fashion in times past to look with contempt upon the historical aspects of the Book of Genesis. Some of the greatest men of the last century were led completely astray by their failure to recognize the historical significance of the great narrative of the lives and fortunes of the patriarchs. Even to-day there are many—it may be said there are schools of critics—who affect to regard the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as wholly mythical. It is a story set in the midst

of contemporaneous history, but does not touch it anywhere. It is a mere figment of the imagination, a beautiful pastoral idyl, having, it may be, a few fragments of fact underneath it, but facts that have been filtered through so many centuries of dreams and phantasies before being reduced to writing that no man can tell the true from the false. If we had nothing but the story itself, notwithstanding its apparent genuineness and the inherent probability by which it is marked, we might almost be

baffled by the criticism of it. But it does not stand alone. The traditions of Abraham are not confined to the Holy Scriptures, nor to the peoples that accept the Scripture as the Word of God. Many peoples regard him as a genuine historic personage, and the salient events of his life are carefully preserved. Nor is this all. The researches of the last forty years, covering almost the whole territory of Western Asia as well as the countries watered by the Nile, have thrown a flood of light on the land that was traversed by the great patriarch and the peoples amongst whom he lived and wrought. Egypt, though still shrouded in mystery, is no longer the mysterious country it once was. The mighty Pharaohs, long since dead, even when the historic nations of antiquity were in the beginning of their civic development, have been brought forth from their hidden sepulchers. Their mummy cases have been opened, their wrappings have been removed, and the story of the strange figures upon their wrappings and upon the cases has been deciphered. All this gives new interest to the movements of Abraham. Like many another, before and since his time, he went into Egypt. The characteristic of the grazing grounds of Western Asia is that, while they have ordinarily great fertility and are capable of sustaining in immense numbers the lives of men and animals, they are subject periodically to great and prolonged droughts. The custom is, and always has been under such circumstances, for the nomadic peoples to move away from the land, driving their flocks and herds before them, and to seek a pasturage that has not been parched and withered by the sun's rays. The great resort in the ancient time was Egypt. There, no matter how hot the sun, the ever-flowing Nile, bearing in its waters the rich alluvium from its mountain sources, rendered certain an abundant harvest. One of these periodic droughts occurred very soon after Abraham came into Canaan. By a natural impulse, therefore, he crossed the wilderness country which his descendants, centuries later, were to cross under such widely different circumstances. He went into Egypt.

How many questions does this statement give rise to? When, in what year of the world's history, did Abraham make that journey? What did he find for civilization in Egypt? And who was the reigning Pharaoh? These questions are more easily asked than answered. We can only tell conjecturally the time. One thing is certain. Egypt was an old country at the time of Abraham's sojourn. Civilization had flourished for hundreds of years in the Nile valley. Monuments which to this day excite the wonder of travelers, were already venerable. Many dynasties of Pharaohs

had risen, flourished, and passed away. The time of his contact with Egypt is variously put at from the sixth to the seventeenth dynasty. But the data have not yet been unearthed by which to settle definitely the periods of the dynasties previous to and including the Hyksos, or shepherd kings. With what particular monarch Abraham came in contact is, as I have said, uncertain. There is a pretty large consensus of opinion by men whose views in such matters are worthy of serious consideration, that the Pharaoh here mentioned was Set, or Salatis, the first of the Hyksos kings. Who were the Hyksos kings? It is asserted by Manetho that Egypt was conquered by an alien race, who set up what he called the "Middle Empire." Says Rawlinson: "Two native documents, one on stone and the other on papyrus, have proved beyond a question the fact of the foreign rule; two names of the alien rulers have been recovered from the inscriptions of the country; and though a deep obscurity still rests upon the period, upon the persons of the conquerors, and the circumstances of the conquest—an obscurity which we can scarcely hope to see dispelled—yet the Middle Empire has at any rate now taken its place in history as a definite reality requiring consideration, inquiry, and, so far as is possible, description." The prevailing opinion is that the conquering race was Semitic. If that is so, then their appearance, and even their language, could not have been strange to Abraham.

There is a tradition that a friendly alliance was formed between Abraham and Pharaoh, and that Abraham rendered him assistance in his warlike operations in Upper Egypt. Rawlinson believes that the conquerors came originally from Syria—that they were Hittites, who, having come into Canaan and increased in numbers until they were straitened for room, swept down in a great conquering wave upon Egypt. Probably at that time Egypt was ruled by a weak monarch and the people themselves had been weakened by luxury so that the empire was an easy prey to foreign invasion. The history of these Hyksos, or shepherd rulers, is interesting not only because they were a power in Abraham's day, but because it is supposed to be the last king of this race that showed kindness to Joseph and made room for Jacob and his sons in the land of Goshen. It is hardly to be supposed that upon their advent into Egypt they possessed as high a degree of civilization as those whom they conquered. But they rapidly made up for their deficiencies, and before their career had closed they had made important contributions to Egyptian culture. Not only were they bold and warlike, and possessed of unusual powers

of organization and administration, but they enriched the language of the country and introduced valuable modifications into the methods of artistic representation.

One thing is certain from the account in the Book of Genesis: Polygamy was practiced by the Pharaoh whom Abraham found in power, as well as by every other Pharaoh of whose history we know anything. The enrichment of the harem was one of the most important objects of the State. Officers were sent out to the confines of the empire to report the advent of every beautiful woman to the prince. Knowing this, Abraham made an arrangement with Sarah that she should represent herself as his sister. It does not seem that the reasons are adequately given in the text; but at all events this was the subterfuge adopted. It was repeated later on in life when he came into the domain of Abimelech. Isaac and Rebekah also employed the same device. There was a sense in which Sarah might say that she was the sister of Abraham, and for this reason some have tried to defend the patriarchal pair from the charge of deceit. It does not avail. The claim that Sarah was the sister was made to obscure the fact that she was the wife. The lie is not to be reconciled with our standards of morals. The only apology for it must be found in the fact that Abraham, who was for the most part transcendently just, did not live under Christian standards, and that in his time lying was more common than truth-telling.

It seems that Sarah was a very beautiful and attractive woman and that she retained her beauty even in old age. The consequence was that she was immediately taken and transferred to the harem of Pharaoh. Large presents were given to Abraham in recompense; "sheep and oxen, and he asses and menservants, and maid-servants, and she asses, and camels." But somehow things did not prosper. The record says: "The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarah." The monarch was superstitious. He imagined that the evils he was suffering were due to the despite he had done to the great and noble sheik who had come to sojourn in his territory. Sending for him to come into his presence, he learned the true story of Sarah's relationship. On learning that, he was only too glad to return her to her husband without exacting any return of the presents by which he had enriched him. There is no definite statement of the time that Abraham spent in Egypt. There are some vague traditions, but they are without any substantial warrant of fact. It appears, however, that both he and Lot came out of the country far richer than they went in, though it is beyond question that they were already rich and powerful.

There is one other important episode in the life of Abraham, in which he touches the history of the outside world. The cities of the great Jordan valley, of which Sodom was the chief, had been for twelve years paying tribute to Chedorlaomer, king of Elam. This was a powerful nation lying to the eastward of Babylonia, and all these Eastern countries had intercourse, more or less regular, with Egypt. It was a common thing, when the traffic into Egypt was interrupted or threatened, to send out a military expedition to bring the people into subjection. Thus the Canaanites, and later on the Israelites themselves, were repeatedly punished by Chaldeans, Babylonians, Assyrians, Elamites, Medes, and Persians. The punishment would last for awhile, but after a time, revolt would occur. Bera, the king of Sodom, and his confederates, after a twelve-years tribute rebelled in the thirteenth year, and in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer, with his allies, appears to take vengeance upon the rebels. The war was very destructive for the Sodomites, and the Eastern armies returned with great spoil and many captives. Among the captives from Sodom was Lot, who had become to all intents and purposes, a Sodomite. Abraham took no share in the fight. But on learning that his kinsman had been captured, he hastily armed his trained servants, 300 men born in his house, and pursued the retreating hosts. He was aided by Aner, Eschol, and Mamre. Making a sudden descent upon them in the night, he created such a panic that the soldiers took to flight, leaving their spoil behind them. Thus were Lot and the other captives, both men and women, rescued, and the entire spoil was returned. The extraordinary character of Abraham for generosity and justice is shown in the settlement that was made, on his return, with Bera and the other princes. By the usages of war prevailing in those times Abraham was entitled to all the spoil; and the princes, in their gratitude for what had been done, were ready to grant it to him. But Abraham had taken an oath to God Most High that he would not take a thread nor a shoe latchet for himself. After a certain reward for his companions in arms the whole was given back to the original owners.

There is an episode in the narrative that is of exceeding interest. Melchizedek, king of Salem, salutes Abraham and performs a priestly office in his behalf. The domain over which he ruled is generally supposed to be the territory surrounding what was afterward Jerusalem. But the surprising thing is that there should have been here a monotheist, a priest of God Most High, even as Abraham himself was, and that Abraham should have recognized his superiority and paid him tithes. This fact has

given rise to a great deal of conjecture and has formed the basis of extravagant notions. Some have supposed that this mysterious personage was the veritable Son of God, himself. For this view they seem to find warrant in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, after setting forth the qualities of Melchizedek, declares that "he abideth a priest continually." It does not seem to be necessary to go to such an extreme length. It is only necessary to remember that Melchizedek was of the same race, doubtless, as Abraham. The Shemites generally may have for a long time cherished the tradition of the one God; and this man may have received that tradition and based his conduct upon it. As a king he would, according to oriental and ancient custom, be a priest. But there is no reason for supposing that he cherished either his belief or his priestly function with the same degree of purity that Abraham did. It was but natural, however, that the great patriarch should have bowed reverently before one who, like himself, worshiped the one living and true God. Moreover, it is a pleasing thought that, from the earliest time, on the spot where the Temple of Solomon was one day to rise as the highest witness of human adoration, incense should have risen from devout hands and hearts to God Most High. So much for Abraham's relations with Chedorlaomer and the Sodomite kings, as given in the record of the Book of Genesis.

But it may be affirmed that this is all mythical—a pleasing story founded, perhaps, on some slight basis of fact, fashioned and wrought out in its minor details many centuries after. This might be regarded as plausible were it not for the fact that secular history stands as the living witness of the Scripture account. The existence of the Elamite empire in the time of Abraham is now a well-established fact. It is also well proven that the great conquering prince who ruled Elam was Kudur-Lagamer. Phonetically it will be seen that Chedorlaomer and Kudur-Lagamer are almost exact equivalents, and it cannot be doubted that they are one and the same person. I quote what Rawlinson has to say of him: "Kudur-Lagamer, the Elamite prince, who, more than twenty centuries before our era, having extended his dominion over Babylonia and the adjoining regions, marched an army a distance of 1,200 miles from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the Dead Sea, and held Palestine and Syria in subjection for twelve years, thus effecting conquests which were not again made from the same quarter till the time of Nebuchadnezzar, 1,500 or 1,600 years afterward, has a good claim to be regarded as one of the most remarkable personages in the world's history—being, as he is the forerun-

ner and prototype of all those great oriental conquerors who, from time to time, have built up vast empires in Asia out of the heterogeneous materials, which have in a longer or shorter space successively crumbled to decay. At a time when the kings of Egypt had never ventured beyond their borders, unless it were for a foray in Ethiopia, and when in Asia no monarch had held dominion over more than a few petty tribes and a few hundred miles of territory, he conceived the magnificent notion of binding into one the manifold nations inhabiting the vast tract which lies between the Zagros mountain range and the Mediterranean. Lord by inheritance (as we may presume) of Elam and Chaldea, or Babylonia, he was not content with these ample tracts, but, coveting more, proceeded boldly up the Euphrates valley, and through Syria into Palestine. Successful here, he governed for twelve years dominions extending near a thousand miles from east to west, and, from north to south, probably not much short of five hundred. It is true, he was not able to hold this large extent of territory; but the attempt and the success temporarily attending it are memorable circumstances and were probably long held in remembrance through Western Asia, where they served as a stimulus and incentive to the ambition of later monarchs."

It would appear, therefore, that the princes that were confederated with Chedorlaomer were those who had been appointed by him over the provinces that he had subjugated. Their names are not much more difficult of identification than his own. Amraphel had for his province southern Babylonia. Though his name has not been positively identified, it is conjectured that it may be Amar-Aku. He undoubtedly had the most important province and was held in highest esteem. The next king mentioned is Arioch. This is supposed to be Eri-Aku, literally servant of the Moon-god. He had for his domain southern Chaldea, or that part of the territory that was not already assigned to Amraphel. Tidal is undoubtedly Tur-gal, who held sway over all the country north of Babylonia, reaching up to the mountainous regions about the headwaters of the Euphrates. Thus a veritable part of ancient history, which has already been deciphered from the monuments, and about which there can be scarcely more doubt than there can be about the history of the wars of Cæsar, or the Norman conquest of England, fits into the sacred narrative—nay, this narrative throws light upon the history from the other side and gives to it a reality and life that it could not otherwise have. From one point of view it is almost as if this account of the patriarch had been divinely preserved to call up from the

grave those dead monarchs of the Orient, and clothe them once more with flesh, and give them a living place in great historic movements of the race by which the civilization of humanity has reached its present high stage of development. If Abraham is indeed a myth,

if the story of his friendship for the Canaanish princes and his contact with Chedorlaomer is a fiction, it has been dovetailed into the living realities of historic truth with an art that no epic and no novel, in the highest masterpieces of literature, has yet achieved.

CHAPTER V.

ABRAHAM AND ISHMAEL.

AFTER his memorable contest with Chedorlaomer, Abraham returns again to Mamre, which appears to have been with him a favorite camping ground. There he had built an altar to God Most High, and there his customary worship was performed. We can imagine him superintending the work of his servants, appointing their tasks for them, visiting the pastures in which his numerous flocks and herds were grazing, holding communication now and then with his fast and faithful friends, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, and doing all that became a great and powerful sheik. There was, however, a business far more serious in which he was engaged. He never for a moment forgot that he had been called from Ur and Haran to be a witness of the one living and true God, and that the land in which he was sojourning as a stranger had been given to him and his seed for an everlasting possession. But how was the promise to be fulfilled to him and his seed? The years were gathering over his head and the head of his faithful wife; and they were childless. "Fear not," said God. "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." But the patriarch cried in agony: "What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" "Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." How was this? How could a mere stranger and alien enter into the inheritance? The explanation is afforded again by the patriarchal system. The house could never be without a head. Blood relationship counted for but little. Children came not only by birth, but by adoption as well; and, in the failure of children, the strongest, the most exalted, stepped into the place of responsibility and trust. Hence Eliezer, as the person next in authority to Abraham, would become patriarch in the event of Abraham's death. But "the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir." "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them. . . . So shall thy seed be." We can hardly help wondering why the faith of the patriarch should have been so tried. Of course,

the devout Hebrew of every time has seen in this promise only the pointing out of a great fleshly inheritance that was to come through Isaac and Jacob. But it seems to me that a wise and unprejudiced reading of the record must see the great spiritual significance of the promise—that the withholding of the fulfillment was meant to teach Abraham, and above all to teach us, that the true descent is not after the flesh, but after the spirit, for "God is able of the stones to raise up seed unto Abraham." At all events, after the assurance given, Abraham seems to have accepted the situation without murmuring, and to have trusted God to bring about the fulfillment of the promise in his own way. But Sarah did not fully share the faith of her husband. She had waited until long past the time of life when she might naturally expect the fulfillment of the promise. Now she could think of no way of accomplishing the result unless by a device not unfrequently resorted to in the oriental world, namely the substitution of a maid-servant, not exactly as a concubine, but as a kind of secondary wife for the purpose of childbearing. Accordingly Hagar, the Egyptian bondswoman, was given by Sarah, as the record says, to Abraham to be his wife. It is not necessary to mention in detail the misery and strife that followed in the train of this act. The jealousy and hatred of Sarah were terribly aroused by the exaltation that she herself had given to her handmaid. She would have cast Hagar out to die in the wilderness before the birth of her child, had not the angel of God interfered to encourage Hagar and preserve her from the fury of her mistress. But later on, after the birth of her own son, she did succeed in banishing both her and her offspring from the patriarchal household, and thus reserving the succession for the fruit of her own womb exclusively. It is impossible to read this story as it is simply and frankly told in the Book of Genesis without recognizing in it a terrible and ghastly picture of the evils of polygamy. It can scarcely be doubted, by those who accept the Scriptures as a divine message for the regulation of human conduct, that God, among other things, was teaching by this episode that domestic



VANDYKE.

HAGAR SENT AWAY.

happiness can only be secured where one man is the husband of one wife, and is persistently faithful to his marriage vows.

The result of the union of Abraham and Hagar was the birth of Ishmael. This seems to have constituted a new epoch in the life of the patriarch. The reproach was now removed. There was no longer any fear that a stranger would enter into the inheritance in the event of his death. Notwithstanding the promise had been so often repeated that Sarah should bear a son, it would seem from the reading of the record as if Abraham had come to feel that the birth of Ishmael was the fulfillment that had been promised. According to the standard of the time, Sarah had borne a son by the substitution of her handmaid. To the patriarch himself there was no difference, as sonship was then reckoned. Ishmael was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. In the light of ancient custom, the mother of his child, though his bondslave, was yet his lawful wife. Why should he not look for the fulfillment of the promise to bless all the kindreds and families of man in the generations of this child of deferred hope and promise? It is evident that God had not yet made plain all the mysteries of his providence to the great founder of our religion. This is apparent if we recall how the love of the patriarch went out toward the child, and how seriously he regarded the great future which stretched out before him and his descendants.

The institution of circumcision, the one great religious rite by which the Hebrews were ever after to be distinguished, is very significant. Up to the time that Ishmael was thirteen years old and when Abraham himself was ninety-nine, this rite had not been practiced by the patriarch. It is but fair to say that the rite was not original with him. He had doubtless become familiar with it, both during his sojourn in Egypt and by his contact with the Canaanites. On various grounds the rite held sway among many oriental peoples. For sanitary reasons, as it was supposed to promote fecundity, or, in some cases, on superstitious grounds, it was held in high favor. But none of these reasons are even hinted at by Abraham and his descendants. By them it was held to be the type of chastening and purification. Like baptism in the Christian Church, it signified the putting away of a sinful and evil life and the consecration of the powers of heart, and mind, and soul to the service of God. It was the sign of a great covenant with God by Abraham and his seed after him, in their generations. Every man-child was to be circumcised, and the uncircumcised among them was to be cut off from his people as having broken the covenant of God. Thus the rite rose into

new prominence and was invested with a new meaning. It became the distinguishing rite of the Hebrews and was to continue until the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles should be broken down and the fleshly rite disappear in the circumcision of heart and life through faith and consecration to the service of humanity. The institution of this rite appears to have brought great serenity to the mind of Abraham, and it is doubtful if it did not occur to him that the object of his call was not now complete. But the end was not yet.

The record goes on to say that "the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre." While he sat in his tent door, in the heat of the day, he saw three strangers approach. With customary hospitality he hastened forward to give them welcome and provide for their refreshment and comfort. But while he was discharging toward them the duties of an host they turned out to be the very messengers of God who had come to renew the promise, so often made before, that Sarah should have a son. This time the promise was more explicit. It was declared that she should have a son of her own body, and that in this way the succession should proceed. Through that particular chosen issue, all the nations were to find the proffered blessing. What a strange promise! No wonder that Sarah, who overheard it in her tent, should have laughed aloud with skeptical scorn. She was ninety years old and her lord was an hundred. How could such a thing be? Only by the mighty purpose and power of God. But when those things coincide there is no room for doubt. Moreover, the promise is all the more strange because it was no longer according to the ardent desire and hope of Abraham. His natural desires were already satisfied. The boy Ishmael had come to fill a large place in his heart. He had come to feel for him the strength of a great affection, and to look forward with satisfaction to the devolution of the patriarchal authority and privilege upon him. He had even gone so far as to pray to God: "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" He could hardly bear the thought that Ishmael should be supplanted in the succession even by a son of the beloved and beautiful Sarah, the wife whom he had chosen in his early manhood and who had been his faithful companion and helpmeet even to old age. But this was the will of God. Hence, the promise was repeated and in due time it was fulfilled. Isaac was born and the succession was established in the lawful wife and her lawful son. The succession of the bondwoman was excluded. The weaning of Isaac was an occasion of great rejoicing in the patriarchal household. But while the feast was proceed-

ing Ishmael was seen to mock. This roused the ire of Sarah and she demanded that the bondwoman and her son should be cast out. With a heavy heart, Abraham, after consulting God, took the only course by which domestic peace could be secured. He separated Hagar and her child from his house and sent them forth into the wilderness, but not, however, without his patriarchal benediction and the assurance from God that even Ishmael should become a nation. We recall the history of the Ishmaelites, who for more than forty centuries have played a mighty part in the dramatic fortunes of Western Asia, and who, through all these ages, have not ceased to call Abraham their father and to hold fast to their faith in the one God. Though inferior in importance to the chosen seed, they have entered into a large inheritance and have had, at least, a share in the promise that was made to their great ancestor. The prayer of Abraham has been answered and Ishmael has lived before God.

But there were grave mysteries here. Mighty questions rise again and again in our minds and demand an answer. Why was it needful to bring Hagar and her child into this record at all? Since God is almighty, why could he not have given Isaac directly, without permitting the life of the patriarch to be soiled by practices that are pagan and degrading? There are various answers to this question. In the first place, the genuineness of this story is shown by the fact that it was cast in the mold of customs and practices that belonged to the period assigned to the life of the patriarch. Evidently this is no afterthought to which Jews and Ishmaelites of a later time have consented. It is a real story of a real time. Along with it we have a picture of the world as it was 4,000 years ago. The scenes, the people, the customs, were only such as could have existed then. Abraham is put into this environment and made to live his life there. We may go farther than this, and assert that the greatness of the man is shown, not by his conformity to the customs of the age, but by his ability, while practicing them, to perceive the error that was in them, and to rise above it and, when occasion required, put it away. It is true, indeed, that Abraham fell into a great error when he took Hagar to be his wife. He saw it in due time and humbled himself under the consciousness of it. In his humiliation, moreover, he showed himself ready to do what he could under the divine dictation to make amends. Then, too, as I have already intimated, we have in this story the most powerful rebuke that could be given of those polygamous practices which have been the curse of the Orient. Again we ask, why was Isaac a necessity after

Ishmael was born? Admitting that Ishmael was the son of a bondwoman, he was the son of Abraham and not to be blamed because of the condition or relations of his mother. Why should not the Almighty lift him up and let the promise that was to find its culmination in the blessing of all nations and races be realized in him? It is not easy, perhaps, to give a full and satisfactory answer to this question. About all we can say is that in the history of the world blood is seen to count for much. There is a marked and irreconcilable difference between Englishmen, and Germans, and Frenchmen. The union of any two of these nationalities does not give a pure type. Much more wide is the difference between Hamites, and Shemites, and Aryans. Here is a difference that cannot be successfully bridged. For some inscrutable reason, God was moved, in the call of Abraham and the setting apart of the Hebrews as a distinct people that should be holy and acceptable in his sight, to preserve them from contamination and corruption by alliances with the peoples amongst whom they dwelt. The issue of Abraham and the Egyptian maid could not give the pure source out of which a nation, as wonderful as any in history, was to flow. The legitimate line of Abraham and Sarah must be adhered to. Whether there was any religious reason inherent in the character of Isaac, we do not know. The life of Isaac, in comparison with the almost peerless life of his father, is pale and colorless. It is almost devoid of interest or incident. But perhaps its very lack of positive features made it plastic so that it was easily fitted to the great mold that had been prepared for it. This, at least, seems to be according to a law of human life. One generation wins a great fortune or a great name, or does a great work, and the next generation conserves it, building upon it, not by way of positive and original construction, but by way of adjustment and accretion. This was the case with Isaac. He accepted the work of his father without question. He gave complete and unyielding obedience to his commands while he lived, and after he died he entered quietly into the inheritance remaining for him with the purpose to continue before men the life of the patriarch with all its old dignity and splendor. That Abraham and Sarah found in this gentle child of their old age a great and surpassing comfort is not to be questioned. In a sense they must have felt that they had fulfilled their destiny and that they had found a reward for all the trials and hardships they had undergone. If Abraham paused to reflect, as no doubt he did, he must have felt assured, that, in a most important sense, the call that had brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, and again out of Haran,

had already borne its proper fruit. Though the land of Canaan was not his, he could look forward to the time when his seed should enter into it and possess it. So far as his own activ-

ities were concerned, he may have felt that his work was done, and that he could now leave his son to carry forward the great purposes of the call.



HAGAR IN THE DESERT.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

FROM the birth of Isaac the current of Abraham's life appears to have flowed on without a ripple almost, only now and then being interrupted by something that showed he was still mindful of the fact that he had been called and set apart as the priest and prophet of humanity in an age that was full of wickedness and falsehood. Even he was not wholly free from misconceptions and evil practices. How could he be, unless he were a supernatural being, or a being supernaturally restrained from the exercise of his volitions? The hand of God, to be sure, was upon him and was actively exerted at proper intervals to direct his steps. But his manhood was not interfered with. In a grand way his contention was with things as they were. He was not wholly free from the superstitious of his times. One of the most powerful of these was the notion that the favor of God was to be secured by the most costly and precious sacrifice. Indeed, this is a notion that has pervaded the minds of primitive peoples in all ages of the world. It is this notion, moreover, that has led to the terrible and revolting practice of human sacrifice. So Abraham, living in an age that was most crude and cruel in its conceptions, both of

God and humanity, could believe that the great God whom he worshiped would be pleased if he should yield up, on the altar of sacrifice, that in which his highest hope was centered. All this, together with the fact that God, in revealing his will unto the patriarch, met him on the low plane of his misconceptions for the purpose of leading him up to a higher one, must be borne in mind as we come to the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. "And it came to pass," we read, "that God did tempt [in Revised Version, *prove*] Abraham, and said unto him, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." And what did Abraham do? With the same unyielding obedience that he manifested when he was called to go out from Ur of the Chaldees, he made ready for the saddest journey he could have undertaken. If he stopped to consider the meaning of this mandate it must have been a sore puzzle to him to conceive how it was possible for God to fulfill the promise so often made by the destruction of the very child on whom the fulfillment depended. Perhaps,

however, the patriarch did not reason about the mysterious mandate. God had already performed so many wonders in his behalf that he had, perhaps, ceased to doubt. The mighty power that had given to him and his spouse in their old age this precious child, might, if they were faithful, find some other way of confirming their hopes. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for a burnt offering, and rose up and went to the place of which God had told him." Dean Stanley thinks the mountain chosen for the sacrifice was Gerizim, the mountain from which the incense of sacrifice has scarcely ceased to ascend for forty centuries. There is some reason for this, as the mountain can be seen looming against the sky from a long distance and would naturally make its appeal, by reason of both its mystery and majesty, to the devout feeling of primeval worshippers. The place, however, where this act was performed is of small account. All our interest centers in the act itself.

There is hardly a passage in the sacred narrative from Genesis to Revelation that has so severely tried men's faith as this. Not only has it evoked sharp dissent, but it has in some cases awakened a feeling of strong revolt against Abraham, and above all against the idea or suggestion that God could have had any active connection with the proposed sacrifice. It appears strange that readers should need to be reminded that they are not reading a narrative of events that occurred in the last decade of the nineteenth century of Christendom, but rather of events that must be placed more than twenty centuries before the Christian era, and that the real wonder is that men could think so clearly and correctly as they did, or that they behaved in so many matters so much like ourselves. The story is unaffectedly and simply told. If it be taken as a whole, and above all, if we keep in mind the great lessons it was meant to teach, (1) of self-surrender, (2) of implicit trust in God, (3) of unquestioning obedience to the divine will, even when it deprives us of our dearest friends and crushes our highest hopes, (4) or, better than all, of the great fact that God is not pleased with the bloody sacrifice and burnt offering, but with the consecration and devotion of heart and life, there is nothing in the story to offend, but everything rather to draw forth our admiration and quicken our faith. Indeed, what pathos there is in the laying of the wood for the burnt offering on the shoulders of the lad, in the simple colloquy between the father and the son as they were nearing the place of worship, and finally in the binding of the son and placing him upon the altar for the sacrifice.

All this seems to have been requisite in order, by a dramatic incident, to abolish forever that most revolting practice of primitive worship. The readiness, the absolute self-surrender of both father and son, was enough—so complete was it in the instance before us that it was possible henceforth to lay the emphasis on that, and that alone, as the open way to the presence and favor of the highest.

We cannot do better than to quote, in this connection, the profound and truthful observations of Dean Stanley: "The sacrifice, the resignation of the will, in the father and the son was accepted; the literal sacrifice of the act was repelled. On the one hand, the great principle was proclaimed that mercy is better than sacrifice, and that the sacrifice of self is the highest and holiest offering that God can receive. On the other hand, the inhuman superstition, toward which the ancient ceremonial of sacrifice was perpetually tending, was condemned and cast out of the true worship of the Church forever. There are doubtless many difficulties which may be raised on the offering of Isaac: but there are few, if any, which will not vanish away before the simple pathos and lofty spirit of the narrative itself, provided that we take it, as in fairness it must be taken, as a whole; its close not parted from its commencement, nor its commencement from its close—the subordinate parts of the transaction not raised above its essential primary intention. And there is no difficulty which will not be amply compensated by reflecting on the near approach, and yet the complete repulse, of the danger which might have threatened the early Church. Nothing is so remarkable a proof of a divine and watchful interposition as the deliverance from the infirmity, the exaggeration, the excess, whatever it is, to which the noblest minds and the noblest forms of religion are subject. . . . Abraham reached the very verge of an act which, even if prompted by noble motives and by a divine call, has, by all subsequent revelation and experience, been pronounced accursed. At that moment his hand is stayed; and the patriarchal religion is rescued from this conflict with the justice of the Law or the mercy of the Gospel."

Nearly all writers in the Christian Church have seen, or thought they saw, in the act of Abraham and Isaac, many strong resemblances to the great sacrifice of Calvary. Of course, it is possible to press an image of this kind to almost any extent. Indeed, some theories have been carried to the very verge of absurdity. No doubt there was something in the act that was by divine intention prophetic. The spirit was the same in both cases. The inexpressible love of Abraham for his child and yet his perfect readiness to give him up for a high purpose, is

a faint human symbol of the boundless love of God which spared not his own Son for our sakes. The meek and unresisting compliance of Isaac is a partial foreshadowing of that marvelous self-surrender which found utterance in the prayer: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Beyond this it is not wise to go. Indeed, it would seem as if the main purpose was to rob sacrifice, under both the old and new dispensations, of its perplexing mysteries. The Jews certainly so understood it. Their sacrifice of animals was but symbolical. The great unceasing demand of their prophets was that the people should witness their devotion by the broken spirit and the contrite heart. This was the incense that was most acceptable to God. In the New Testament the cry of the Savior of mankind is the old cry: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," or higher still in the hour of his sharpest agony, though forced to exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he immediately adds, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." There is, therefore, one order, one spirit, one grand lesson, running through from the beginning of the revelation of God to its sublime consummation in the garden of Gethsemane and on Calvary. In this sense certainly these two events are bound together. In this sense the one is the portent, the shadow, the type, the prophecy of the other. In this sense the unresisting obedience of Isaac and the voluntary submission of Jesus are but the varying exhibitions of that matchless love by which God is drawing the nations of the earth unto himself. Herein Mount Moriah and Mount Calvary meet and blend together as the veritable mountain of God. Nay, further, we can see how the oath of the Lord which he swore by himself saying, "Because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; . . . in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." We can see how this oath finds its counterpart and culmination in the declaration of Jesus: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The seed of Abraham is without limitation of race, or sect, or creed. All to whom the appeal of the cross is made may find acceptance through faith and sacrifice.

There is not much more of large historic moment in the life of Abraham. One or two incidents, however, remain that have a tender, almost a religious interest. We cannot close

the account of the great patriarch's career without noticing them. Sarah's great work was completed in giving birth to Isaac, though she was permitted the privilege of seeing him grow to mature manhood. When she had reached the age of one hundred and twenty-seven, and when Isaac was thirty-seven, she died. On the death of Sarah it became necessary for Abraham to provide himself with a burial place. Here was this mighty sheik, with whom princes were confederated, who could from "those born in his house" equip an army, to whom the Most High God had sworn again and again that to him and his seed would he give all the land of Canaan, owning nothing of the land in which he dwelt unless it were the wells he had dug for his cattle. The death of Sarah occurred in Hebron, that part of Canaan where Abraham spent so large a portion of his time. His desire was for the double rock cave in the field of Machpelah, that belonged to Ephron the Hittite. The account that follows gives a most graphic picture of a very ancient form of conveyance. In the first place there is a formal assembly of all the people who could have any possible interest in the sale. Then there are the set questions and answers as in an ancient Roman mancipation. There were the dramatic features all intended to make a profound and lasting impression on the minds of the witnesses, as Abraham bowing himself down in the presence of the people. Finally the scales are brought out and the money is actually weighed in the sight of all, "400 shekels of silver, current money with the merchant." All this points to a very primitive time, when not only registry was unknown, but when conveyances by writing had not been thought of, and when land was not the property of a single individual but belonged to a group of persons, a family, and even a tribe. Here is one of the indubitable witnesses of the high antiquity of the story. It is absolutely incredible that at any late period of the Hebrew history the details of this purchase could have been invented. None but an eyewitness of the scene itself, or at least one who was familiar with transactions as ancient and primitive as these could have told that tale. Moreover, the field and the cave still remain. From the hour that Abraham purchased the spot as a burial place for his beloved companion it has been held sacred alike to Jews, Mohammedans, and Christians; and it is believed that to this day the remains of the patriarchs and their wives have remained undisturbed. The Cave of Machpelah holds great secrets which some time may be brought out to confirm the faith of the world.

After the death of Sarah, Abraham, feeling the weight of years pressing upon him, and

realizing that he had not much longer to stay upon the earth, called his old and faithful servant, Eliezer, to him and made him swear that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the land, but that he would go back to the ancestral seats and fetch one of his own kindred to share with him in the perpetuation of the race. When God undertakes to lay the foundations of a nation or a race he takes great pains in the selection of the material. Longfellow has given poetic expression to the truth in the familiar lines concerning the Pilgrims:

" God had sifted three kingdoms to find the wheat for this planting,
Then had sifted the wheat, as the living seed of a nation."

The nation that was to spring from Abraham and his descendants was to be the most unique and peculiar that the world has ever witnessed; and the work that was to be accomplished in and through it was to be the most difficult, the loftiest, the most delicate, sacred, and far-reaching in its consequences of any work that has ever been done for man. For this reason the race must be absolutely pure in its beginning. No cross between the Hebrews and the Egyptians could be tolerated. Hence, Ishmael was set aside, though he was the firstborn, and Esau, later on, was rejected for similar reasons. Isaac must not marry a wife from the daughters of the land. This is the oath that was exacted from the old servant, Eliezer of Damascus, the steward of Abraham's house, that he would journey back by that way over which Abraham came into Canaan to the Syrian plain in which Abraham had left his kindred when, in obedience to the mandate of God, he came out of Haran. The story of that journey is simply but graphically told. Eliezer loaded the camels with precious stuffs as a bridal present to the damsel whom he was to bring back to be the wife of his young master, and went forth to the home of Nahor, Abraham's brother. Arriving there, he waited by the well for the maidens to come forth in the evening to draw water. While waiting he prayed to God to enlighten him by certain signs. But before the prayer was fully formed in his heart, the beautiful Rebekah came forth with her pitcher upon her shoulder and tripped down the steps of the great well for her pitcher of water,

and as she came up again Eliezer hastened forward and asked her for a drink. With gracious hospitality she complied with his request, and not only gave him a drink, but immediately began to pour water into the troughs for the camels. Then when the servant of Abraham had questioned her and found out her lineage, that she was indeed kindred to Abraham and his son, he made known to her the errand on which he had come. He takes from his rich treasures a beautiful nose ring for Rebekah's face. He puts two heavy bracelets upon her wrists, and asks for entertainment. Of course, he is welcomed. The greedy and crafty Laban, of whom we shall see more later on in this history, the brother of Rebekah, seeing the rich jewels that have been bestowed upon his sister, hastens forth to bring Eliezer into his father's tent. But it is not courtesy that the great servant of Abraham is seeking, but a wife for his master's son. So he urges forward the business with all speed. The preliminaries of the betrothal are completed before retiring to rest. In the morning Eliezer demands an immediate and decisive answer to his request. Of course, the opportunity for so grand a marriage for Rebekah must not be lost. Moreover, Laban and Bethuel had seen the hand of the Lord in the meeting between Rebekah and Eliezer. Still, they would postpone the consummation of the business for a few days. Perhaps Laban thought he saw the possibility of his own enrichment by presents which Eliezer might be induced to bestow upon him while he waited. But Eliezer was a thorough business man, as we would say to-day. He had come on a great errand. He was ready to pay the stipulated price for the maiden—for women were really sold in marriage in Abraham's time—but as soon as that was done he must be gone. Under the circumstances, then, there was nothing to be done but to summon Rebekah and ask her if she was ready to accompany this man into Canaan. With characteristic eagerness and impetuosity, when the question was put to her if she would go with him whom the Lord had sent to her, she said: "I will go." So the caravan started, bearing Rebekah on as momentous a journey as ever woman took in this world, carrying with her the blessing of her family, with the petition sounding in her ears that she might become the mother of thousands of millions.

CHAPTER VII.

ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

THE fact that both Abraham and Isaac were awaiting his return with impatience contributed no doubt to the haste of Eliezer. The death of Sarah had admonished the patriarch that whatever he was to do in his own person, to make sure of the succession and fulfill the promise made at the birth of Isaac, must be done quickly. Isaac himself was in sadness and dejection of spirit on account of the loss of the mother who had lavished upon him the affection of her old age, and needed the comfort which only the love of a true heart could bring. His mother's tent standing silent and empty emphasized the desolation and loneliness of his spirit. These things were a lodestone to draw Eliezer back to Canaan with all speed. Likewise the signs that had attended the performance of his errand, the almost miraculous finding of Rebekah, the fact that she was of Abraham's near kindred, her beauty and high spirit, and her readiness to accept the proffer of his young master, above all the confusion and consequent compliance of Laban and Bethuel in the face of the portents, and their frank acknowledgment that the thing proceeded from the Lord and they could not speak either good or bad, all had the effect of making Eliezer feel that he, too, was in the hand of God Most High, and was his chosen agent to assist in carrying out the sublime purposes of the call. By what route he traveled, either in going into Syria or returning to Canaan, it is impossible to tell. He may have followed the one which Abraham took on his departure from Haran, which was most likely the longer way along the foothills of Northern Syria and Palestine as affording pasturage for his flocks and herds on the road, or he may have taken the shortest course over the desert. From the evidences of haste afforded by the narrative, and from the fact that the caravan was composed only of camels to bear the burdens and carry the people, it is likely that the latter was the route chosen in both going and returning. The distance from Beer-sheba to Haran, across the desert by the way of Damascus and the oasis of Tadmor, was about 450 miles—possibly 500 miles. The fleet variety of camels in our time, when not too heavily laden, can travel fifty miles a day for many days in succession. It is not improbable that the ancients were as careful in breeding their animals for speed as the moderns. In that case, about twenty to twenty-five days would have been occupied in the round journey. At all events, whatever the time, it could

be easily calculated. It is evident that Isaac was expecting the return of his father's servant, and as the owner of a vessel bound on an important voyage looks out in due season for its appearance in port, so Isaac went out not only to meditate but to watch for the coming of those ships of the desert "that bore such a precious freight for him." At last he discerns them, far off, probably on the edge of the horizon, and hastens forward to meet them. As he draws near, Rebekah inquires of Eliezer who is the distinguished-looking stranger approaching. On being informed that it is his young master, the very man whom he has brought her out of Syria to marry, she alights from her camel and covers herself with a veil. This action is prompted by two reasons, first, because in that country, then as now, no maiden might meet a man of high distinction and noble bearing while riding, and, secondly, because, then, as now, in that quarter of the world, no virgin might lawfully be seen unveiled by the man who was to become her husband until after the consummation of the marriage. Isaac, according to oriental custom, addressed himself not to the maiden but to the servant, who gave him an account of his enterprise and of the divine portents by which it had been attended. Then Isaac took Rebekah and led her in to his mother's tent and she became his wife, and when he beheld her beauty and recalled what she had forsaken for his sake he loved her with a love that was to last till death.

The characters of Isaac and Rebekah are in strange and strong contrast. The account of their lives, very uneventful for the most part no doubt, is much more meagerly given in the sacred narrative than we could wish. Nor does tradition help us out much. Still, we have sufficient data for a pretty reliable portrait of this wonderful pair whom God had united for the working out of his most wonderful and far-reaching designs. It is almost beyond question that Rebekah was one of the most remarkable women of whom history has made record. No one can read the brief story of the Book of Genesis without reaching the conviction that she was endowed with an extraordinary beauty. Her personal charms, however, only served to heighten an extraordinary character. Enterprising, ardent, high-spirited, proud, every vein in her body filled with the warmest oriental blood, she seemed to be endowed with some lofty sense of the call, and to recognize her responsibility under it. At

the same time, we are obliged to confess that she manifested something of the greed and craft of her brother Laban, and had some of his unscrupulousness in her method of securing the fulfillment of the promise through the line of her favored son. Perhaps we ought not to be surprised at this. It would be manifestly unfair, in view of her birth and early surroundings, to judge her as if she were a daughter of Abraham. Unquestionably her energetic spirit and unyielding determination have stamped themselves upon the thousands of millions of whom she is the mother. We cannot, therefore, read the strange and eventful histories of the Israelitish people without beholding, more or less distinctly, everywhere a reflection of the woman of glorious beauty and haughty spirit whose blood courses in all their veins. Isaac evidently was the very antipode of his wife, a man of contemplation, a man of peace, a man of meek and lowly mind, destitute of the enterprise that had made his father a mighty prince whom other princes were only too glad to be "confederate with," more ready to suffer wrong than to right it—content to enter into the patrimony of his father, and to keep it by a quiet and conservative adherence to the ancient ways. Still, I think we are amply justified in regarding him as a man of devout habit and spiritual temper. He maintained the ancient altars and performed the worship which his father had taught him. He was not destitute of the high vision and unquestioning faith that had given his father a place apart from all other men. At the same time he appears to have given himself almost exclusively to the care of his flocks and herds, so that he is very appropriately the connecting link between that life of faith which saw the blessing of God reaching out to include all nations and kindreds of mankind, and those narrower phases of religious conviction and worship, together with a peculiar absorption in secular things, that were indispensable to the development of a particular race. However, therefore, we look at Isaac, we see him standing midway between the father of the faithful on the one hand and that other strange being whose life, beginning in low cunning and deceit ends on the very heights of prophecy, crying, "gather yourselves together, ye sons of Jacob, and hearken unto Israel your father."

Twenty years elapsed without any fruit to bless the union of Isaac and Rebekah. It was a long and anxious waiting. But at length in answer to prayer and sacrifice, Rebekah's womb was opened and two sons were born. The first came forth all red and hairy, and accordingly to him was given the name of Esau. The second came forth grasping his brother's heel, and to him, therefore, was given the name of Jacob,

"the supplanter." These children as they grew were even more unlike in character than were father and mother. Esau was a wild and lawless youth, careless of the feelings and hopes of others and equally careless of his own interests. Following the polygamous practices of the times, he made various alliances with the Canaanitish women, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah." With Abraham alive to utter his warning against it, with the remembrance of the reason for sending Eliezer to Haran for Rebekah strong in their thought, they must have been fully persuaded that the succession could not proceed in that way. The conduct of Esau was undoubtedly the occasion of much earnest expostulation on the part of father and mother. Finally, by way of deference to the Hebrew stock, Esau took a wife from the descendants of Ishmael. This, however, was not in the appointed way. Ishmael had been previously rejected in his own person and he could not be brought into the inheritance through his descendants. There are many things that bear witness to the reckless and untamable spirit of Esau. He was a hunter, coming in from the chase hungry and seeing his brother with a savory mess ready for the table, he asks that his hunger may be satisfied with it. Jacob offers it to him for his birthright. Precisely what the birthright was it is impossible to say. Most commentators treat the birthright of Esau and the "blessing" of Isaac as if they were one and the same thing. But they are not. They are plainly distinguished by Esau himself. Moreover, most writers appear to think that *primogeniture* was the prevailing custom in patriarchal times, but it was not. Abraham was not the oldest, but the youngest son of Terah. Isaac, the secondborn, was preferred before Ishmael, the firstborn. Jacob, the secondborn, was accepted in the place of Esau, the firstborn. Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, was cast out and cursed for iniquity. Again, Ephraim, the secondborn of Joseph, was distinctly chosen instead of Manasseh. At the same time there was a special tenderness for the firstborn son. Undoubtedly he had certain prerogatives and privileges which belonged to him by reason of his birth—just what we cannot now say—and it was these that Esau "despised," in comparison with the soup of lentils. Notwithstanding his lawless spirit, Isaac evidently had a particular fondness for Esau. Beyond question he was not the first nor the last parent whose heart has gone out with a deep yearning for a wayward, impetuous, and ungovernable child. Perhaps the very contrast of Esau's temper with his own made him love him all the more. It can scarcely be that the finger of God had made it plain to Isaac that the succession was to be in Jacob. But Rebekah,

perhaps under the instruction partly of Abraham, who lived until Jacob was fifteen years old, saw more clearly. The quiet, gentle youth, domestic in his habits, contented with the flocks and herds of the field, the young man of meditative mind, planning for and forecasting the future, had in him the elements out of which God would be more likely to make a nation. It is not strange that she should watch between these two children with increasing vigilance.

At length the supreme moment arrived. In his old age, when his vision and strength had failed, Isaac thinks of the succession. Who is to have charge of what the ancient Romans called the *Sacra*? Who is to be intrusted with the implements of worship? Who is to perform the sacrifices of the family and hold communion with Jehovah? In other words, who was to continue the patriarchate? That, be it remembered, and not property, was the vital thing. So far as appears from the record, Jacob never received any of Isaac's property. What he had in the way of goods he had earned himself by long years of painful toil and service. The foregoing were the questions which, in his old age, lay heavily on Isaac's soul. In his weakness it was but natural that he should turn wistfully to the beloved child of the chase. Calling Esau, therefore, and bidding him go forth and capture venison for him, he promises to give him the "blessing." But Rebekah, hearing the colloquy, immediately prepares to circumvent it. By the device that is familiar to everybody, Jacob is substituted for Esau in the "blessing" of his father. The question now is—the question no doubt that has been raised by countless readers—why should a blessing obtained by fraud stand? Why should not a blessing so given have been recalled? Above all, why should not Isaac, in obedience to the bitter cry of Esau, have given a second blessing to Esau? The answer to these questions is simple. In the first place, the designation of the succession was a solemn thing. It was done with great formality, and that by ancient custom could not be recalled, no matter how it was obtained. The second blessing could not be given, because the blessing that carried with it the succession or headship of the family could only be for one. Jacob having secured it, there was no place for Esau. It was only natural that Esau should feel a deep resentment at the subtlety of his brother, so much as to make it dangerous for the latter to remain in the same tents with him. We can readily appreciate the motherly solicitude of Rebekah, in preparing for Jacob's flight. It will be noticed that Isaac himself, after recovering from the sharp disappointment occasioned by the subterfuge, entered heartily

into the plan of sending Jacob back to the ancestral seats for a suitable marriage. The old feeling of resentment at Esau's conduct in defying the conditions by which the purity and permanence of the family were to be secured remained. Isaac saw, when he came to reflect, as he was undoubtedly led to do by the expostulation of Rebekah, that the hope of the future was vested in Jacob, and so he did not hesitate to repeat to his second son the injunction which Abraham gave in his own case to Eliezer: "Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." Thus Isaac rises to a full appreciation of the significance of the call and performs his part in bringing it to a successful issue.

Perhaps we ought not to dismiss this account altogether without some reference to the colloquy between Isaac and Esau after the discovery of the deceit that had been practiced by Jacob and Rebekah. Esau inquires, "Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" And Isaac answers: "Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants." Then Esau, almost in despair, cries, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me, O my father." Then it is that Isaac rises to the height of prophecy and says: "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." Here is a wonderful epitome of the subsequent history of Edom. Esau was not a nonentity. He was brave, restless, and enterprising. These qualities he stamped upon his descendants to a remarkable degree. They were as unstable as water. But they were fearless as they were fickle. In the language of Josephus, "A tumultuous and disorderly nation, always on the watch upon every motion, delighting in mutations; and upon your flattering them, ever so little, and petitioning them, they soon take up arms, and put themselves in motion, and make haste to a battle as if it were a feast." Sometimes they were in alliance with the Israelites, sometimes they were arrayed in arms against them. Sometimes they believed the prophets and sometimes they rejected them altogether. The Herodian family were of this stock, and in

them we see depicted their variations of temper and attitude—the cruel destroyer of the innocents, the eager listener to the message of John the Baptist, and Agrippa, almost persuaded by the eloquence of Paul to be a Christian. Truly, that was a far-reaching vision of the aged patriarch which saw the qualities of his son in his descendants to their remotest generation. It is strange, indeed, that in these earlier Old Testament characters we find the types of the nations that proceeded from them and followed in their steps. But it was so in the case of Esau no more, and no less, than in the case of Jacob. Both of them were prototypes of the peoples who have borne their names; both of them left the indelible marks of their characters upon their descendants; both of them live in the pages of human history by the qualities they have transmitted to posterity. In the case of Jacob, as having greater patience, pertinacity, and persistency of spirit which nothing can break—the unflinch-

ing determination that rises dauntless and victorious even from every defeat—a race has been created, bearing his name, that has passed through every vicissitude of freedom and oppression, of exaltation and humiliation, of prosperity and poverty, of glory and reproach; sometimes grasping the scepter of power, and again deprived of it altogether; sometimes intrenched in the land which God gave by promise to Abraham, and again scattered abroad as fugitives and strangers over the face of the whole earth, but continuing, nevertheless, and bidding fair to continue, with all their peculiarities, as a distinct people, while time shall last. The history, therefore, of the founder of such a people, apart even from any religious significance arising from his connection with the call of Abraham, is of the utmost importance and the deepest interest. On secular grounds alone the past ages of the world present no name that is more worthy of careful and profound study than Jacob.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FLIGHT OF JACOB.

THE flight of Jacob marks a distinct turning point in the history. In the first place, the migration seems to return upon itself. The movement is for a time reversed. Whereas Abraham was bidden to go out from his kindred and his father's house, Jacob returned to the ancestral seats. He leaves the land which God had sworn to give him and his seed and becomes a Syrian. Looking back upon it as we do over the long vista of subsequent history, we see only the temporary aspects of the event. If we could take a contemporary view it would seem almost like a deliberate abandonment of the call. Moreover, when the call is again accepted it is on lines that are distinctly narrower than those pursued by Abraham. It no longer has the world-wide, nor even the Messianic aspects it had before. It pertains rather to the sons of Jacob, the people of Israel. In passing over, therefore, in our account from Abraham, "the friend of God," to Jacob, "the plain man dwelling in tents," we seem to be passing from one to whom the divine mind was open, and who was indeed the executor of the divine purpose, to one who, while governed by ordinary human motives and seeking the ends which common mortals strive to attain, was yet directed and controlled by an infinite providence.

The movement of Jacob has some of the aspects of a flight, as if he were trying to escape the avenging presence of his brother. Before his departure he presents himself once more to his

father, whose anger seems to have subsided, and who gives him a renewal of the blessing, repeating the very words that before had been used in designating Abraham as the founder of a new race and a new religion. Moreover, as far as Isaac is concerned, he does not appear to be conscious of sending his son merely to a place of safety, but rather is marking him out as his successor in the divine trust, and as such sending him to Padan-aram for a wife according to the limitation imposed by Jehovah in the original call. This view is confirmed by the fact that though Isaac lived sixty-three years longer, his life dropped entirely into the background, and only momentarily appeared again in the most inconsequential way. Jacob is henceforth the one prominent figure in the patriarchal story in whom the designs of providence are centered. Some commentators seem to think that Jacob must have taken with him at least a small retinue of servants. Remembering the wealth of Isaac in "servants and cattle," it would seem to be almost inherently improbable that he should not. The record, however, does not say so. Indeed, from the beginning of the account to the time of his arrival at "Laban's house" there is no hint of either servants to bear him company, or camels or asses to lighten his journey. The distinct impression is rather that he was alone. Nay, he himself says, "with my staff I passed over this Jordan."¹ If this be

¹ Genesis xxxii, 10.

true, as it seems to me it must be, the impressiveness of the story is greatly heightened.

The point of departure was Beersheba, the country abounding in wells of sweet water in the far south of Palestine, where both Abraham and Isaac delighted to sojourn. The first halting place mentioned in the narrative was in the mountains of Ephraim, about twelve miles north of the subsequent site of Jerusalem, and at least four days' journey from Beersheba. This halt, however, deserves historic preservation because it was the scene of the wonderful vision, the most striking account of angelic appearance and revelation contained in the Old Testament; and because, also, it marks the beginning of a life-long consecration to the will of Jehovah and the lofty and far-reaching purposes of the call. While Jacob rested, with one of the stones of the place for a pillow, he saw a ladder or staircase reaching from earth to heaven. At the head of the staircase was God himself, while traversing up and down over the steps of that mystic ladder were the shining forms of angels. Where, even in the New Testament, do we have a more distinct, impressive, and beautiful account of the spiritual nature of man, of the communion of saints, of the reality of heavenly intercourse, and the possibility of human access to God? No wonder that Jacob should have recognized this as a great event which denoted a turning point in his career. How it opened his mind, too, to the divine omnipresence: "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not!" A holy awe takes possession of him as he sees himself as something other than the mere patriarchal successor of Isaac and Abraham, going forth into a strange land to seek a wife and fortune, as he recognizes that God is calling him, as aforetime he had called Abraham, to be his minister and do his will. It may not be that Jacob had all the largeness of view of the spirituality of providence that is possible to those who have had the advantage in their training of the three or four thousand years that have elapsed since the event occurred. It may be that into the covenant he was about to make with God there entered something of his human selfishness and ambition. How could we reasonably expect it to be otherwise, in view of the nature and training of the man? It is enough for us to know that he rose from that slumber and the vision that came to him in his sleep, as Saint Paul did from the light that shone upon him in the Damascus road — as, indeed, everyone must from a heavenly vision and a holy call — a changed man. Life meant more to him than it had ever meant before. A wholly new relation had been established between him and his God, and he must do his work henceforth in a different spirit and purpose from any he had yet cherished. Therefore it was that

he called the place Bethel, the house of God. Therefore it was that he took the stone that had served as his pillow and transformed it into an altar. He set it up as a memorial to remind him, when he should return to the land of promise, of the glory that had shone upon him there. He poured oil upon it, that it might be rendered sacred in the sight of men, and vowed that when he should come again he would perform his worship on that spot. Not only to Jacob, but to the Hebrews ever after, that was a sacred spot.

But perhaps the most interesting and impressive part of the whole narration of the halt at Luz or Bethel was the vow which Jacob made. Feeling that God had met him there, and that he was, indeed, in his very presence; believing that thus far he had directed his steps, he felt impelled to declare that, if God would continue with him as his guide and guardian, he would enter into his service and pay to him a regular and stated worship. Here we note the beginning of that mighty and majestic ritual, which in due time was set up at Jerusalem, and which has been transmitted, with many accretions and modifications, through priests of the Levitical order, and prophets and devout men of diverse nations and tongues, to the Christian Church. Some men have been disposed to sneer at this vow of Jacob, because he made his promise of worship conditional on the divine care and guidance, and because he promised if God would give him prosperity he would return to him a tenth part of his increase. In reply to the criticism it may be said, putting ourselves in the place of Jacob, how could he know that Jehovah was his God unless he did guide and help him; and again, where, among even the more enlightened Christian communities, have there been any that were willing to devote more than a tenth of their possessions to religious uses? Ought we not rather to feel — admitting that Jacob was crafty, that greed was sometimes an overmastering passion with him — that it was a great triumph for one walking in a light so dim to rise to so lofty a height of spiritual perception, and to set apart so large a portion of his goods to holy uses? Surely it was a point of wide departure, the initial step in that movement which has had highest significance in the religious development of the human race. Here, in the misty morning of patriarchal times, we have more than a faint intimation of that doctrine which the greatest of Israel's sons taught to the Samaritan woman, namely, that "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

After this episode, "Jacob went on his journey." By what route he traveled, or how long

he was in reaching his destination, we have no means of knowing. But if he went alone and on foot, it would have been almost essential that he should keep somewhat close to the haunts of men. Unless he had fleet camels and experienced drivers, it would be almost certain death to take the short road across the desert. Moreover, there being no occasion for haste, as in the case of Eliezer going to bring home a bride for his young master, it is altogether probable that he took the longer route by the way of the foothills, going first north-erly, and then turning to the eastward as he approached Syria.

Although there is no mention of it in Scripture, it is altogether likely that some communication was kept up between Rebekah and her family. When the time came for the departure of Jacob she seemed to be aware of the condition of the family of Laban. He was enjoined to find a wife among the daughters of Laban. Jacob knew, therefore, as well as Eliezer before him, how to direct his steps in order to reach the abode of his kinsman. Familiar with the habits of the country, he did not shape his course to the well outside the city gate where Abraham's servant first met his mother. He seemed to be aware that the family of Laban was engaged in feeding their flocks in the pastures remote from the city, and hence he aimed for the well that was in the field, knowing that sooner or later someone in authority would come to the well to water the flocks. How was his heart rejoiced when he beheld the daughter of the house, the beautiful Rachel! With what eagerness he sprang forward to assist her in removing from the mouth of the well the great stone placed there for protection against the drifting sands of the desert! This surely was a momentous meeting, one of the most momentous in the history of the human race; for it was the meeting between the man whose name was to be indelibly stamped upon one of the greatest nations of mankind, and the woman who by him was to be the mother of one of the most remarkable men whom the world ever saw, the man who was to change the political constitution of the mightiest empire then in existence, and, by virtue of his authority and power in Egypt, to preserve the whole Hebrew stock from extinction. What a touch of our human nature we have here also! As soon as Jacob saw the face of Rachel he loved her with a love that never wavered nor waned to the hour of his death. That circumstance, taken in connection with the joy he felt that he had found at last, after his long and weary journey, his mother's kindred, completely overcame him, so that he burst forth into weeping. It was the natural overflow of feelings long pent up. Laban, when he learned that his

sister's son had come from Canaan, gave him a true oriental welcome. Doubtless he recognized a marked difference between this empty-handed stripling and the rich steward of Abraham's house, who came with costly gifts to purchase Rebekah for his young master. But he keeps his own counsel, and for a month makes Jacob his guest. By that time he is ready for a bargain. By that time, too, no doubt, Jacob had given proof of his capacity. Laban asks his nephew on what terms he will serve him. In Jacob's heart there is but one desire, and that is Rachel; and so he answers that he will serve seven years for her. Some commentators say that was a common price for a man who had no money to pay for a wife. At all events, it was a price that Jacob was perfectly willing to give, and which was satisfactory to her father. He entered at once upon the service, and the seven years seemed but a few days because of the love he had for her.

At length the time arrives for the discharge of the debt arising from his service, and Laban prepares the marriage feast. But, instead of rewarding Jacob with the maiden whom he has purchased, he adopts a subterfuge and gives Leah in the place of her sister. This was possible because by the oriental marriage custom the bride goes to the husband's tent heavily veiled. Of course, Leah must have been a party to the fraud. Nor is it altogether surprising; for, while Jacob's affection was for Rachel, it is evident that Leah loved Jacob. When the latter discovered the deception that had been practiced upon him, he was indignant and called Laban to account. But Laban excused himself on the ground that the custom of the country required the elder daughter's marriage before that of the younger, and he proposed to make amends by offering the second daughter also for another seven years of service. Jacob agreed to that and took Rachel also. In a polygamous country there did not seem to be anything strange in the proceeding. But as we read the record we perceive that the marriage of the two sisters and the concubinage of the two handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah were the cause of unutterable heartache and misery to all concerned. The only relief to the sadness of the situation was the fruitfulness of Leah and the concubines, so that a troop of children came to play round the patriarch's knees. As for Rachel, notwithstanding her beauty, and the love which Jacob bore her, she was haughty, high-tempered, jealous, and petulant, and, as if it were a judgment upon her for these qualities, the time of her fruitfulness was long delayed. She had been married twenty-six years before Joseph was born—a period of long and hopeless waiting, repeating the experience over again of Sarah and Rebekah

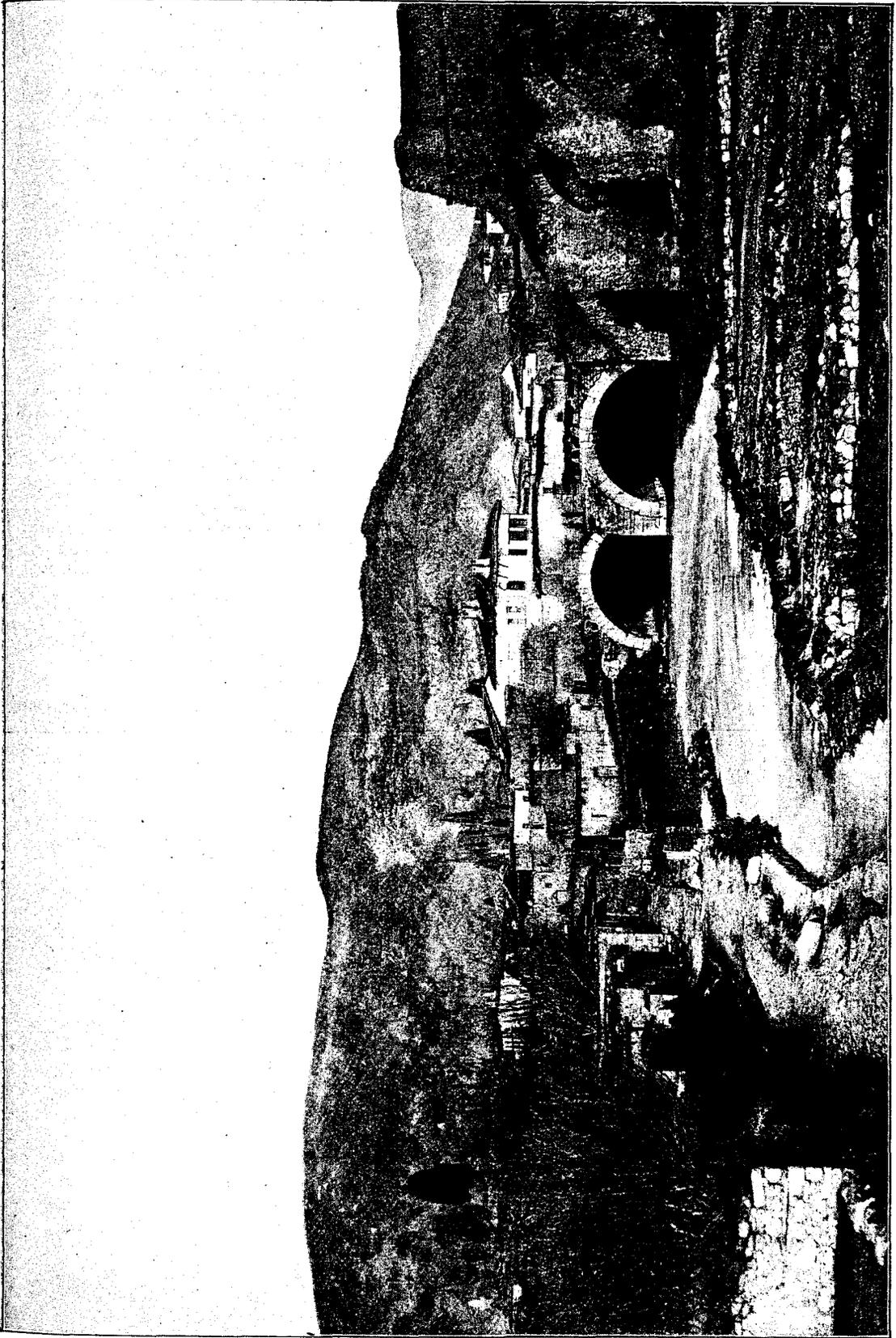
—and when the child is finally given it appears to be in answer to devout supplication. We need not pause at this point over the details of the family history. Suffice it to say that we have as the total outcome of Jacob's marriages and his alliances with the concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah, twelve sons. One daughter, Dinah, is also mentioned because of certain historic relations to the patriarchal group; but, no doubt, other daughters of whom no mention was made were born. Indeed, there are two allusions to daughters.¹ But daughters were not considered of any account in the historic development of a family, because under the patriarchal system women belonged rather to their husband's family than to the family of their father.

The business of Jacob in Padan-aram was the care of the flocks and herds of Laban. It is not unlikely that he had, also, large commercial dealings. Evidently, under his thrifty and skillful management the Syrian found prosperity and profit. It was his intention to avail himself to the full of Jacob's ability and to leave him as little as possible for himself. No doubt Jacob had from the very beginning cherished the purpose of returning to the promised land, and he must have chafed uneasily as he saw that through Laban's craft he was deprived of the means of setting up an independent household. After the birth of Joseph, Jacob besought his father-in-law to let him depart; but Laban, knowing how valuable Jacob's services were to him, refused his consent. But he made a new bargain with Jacob and unintentionally, probably, put it within the means of Jacob to become independent. Not knowing how skillful Jacob was in the breeding and rearing of sheep and goats, he was ready to consent that only those that bore certain marks should be Jacob's share. Under ordinary circumstances this would have been a small toll and the great increase would still have been Laban's. A wide space was put between the flocks in the charge of Jacob and those under the care of Laban and his sons—a fact which shows the enormous increase that had come to Laban in consequence of Jacob's energy. The separation helped Jacob's purpose. He immediately instituted devices which brought the larger share of the increase of the healthy portion of the flocks to him, leaving only the smaller and poorer portions to Laban. By devoting himself thus with great assiduity to the task he had undertaken, it was not long before

Jacob began to increase greatly in wealth and power. As soon as this fact was discovered it was very displeasing to Laban, and his sons as well. Notwithstanding he was of their kindred, and was allied to them by multiple marriages, they could not brook his prosperity. But Jacob kept on, as he had now a grand object that seemed to be worthy of all his energies; and not until he felt that he had acquired enough to carry him again into Canaan with dignity, and with such power that he need not fear to meet his brother, did he relax his efforts.

Meanwhile the opposition of Laban and his sons had manifestly increased, and Jacob felt that the time had come for his departure. So, choosing the most favorable time of year, both for the driving of the flocks and for their sustenance by the way, he calls his wives to him in the field and unfolds his plans to them. Not relishing the treatment of their father to themselves, they are only too ready to assent to the proposition to depart. Therefore the proper measures are taken. The flocks are sent forward under the care of the older sons of Jacob, some of whom are already grown to manhood. Everything is made ready for a flight that will put many days' journey between them and their point of departure before the fact that they have gone at all shall become known to Laban. Then the movement begins and the sojourn of the Hebrews in Haran is ended forever. The time occupied by this sojourn is not easily computed; but in the very nature of the case it must have been a long while. Sufficient time had elapsed not only to enrich Laban and secure a fortune for Jacob, but for the birth and rearing of a large family of children. Many of his sons at the time of his departure had already grown to manhood, and he served seven years before his marriage. It is difficult to see, therefore, how all this could be accomplished in a period less than forty years. In our English version there are two references by Jacob to a period of twenty years. A scrutiny of the original discloses that these references may be to two different twenties. Putting these twenties together, we have the requisite forty years, which is the shortest possible time for the accomplishment of the results that had been achieved when the great Hebrew patriarch separated permanently from his father-in-law, and returned again to Canaan for the enactment of the scenes which, to this day, we must regard as among the most memorable in the history of the chosen people.

¹ Genesis xlii, 35, xli, 7.



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PERGAMOS.

CHAPTER IX.

JOSEPH SOLD INTO SLAVERY.

MANY important reflections are suggested by the return of Jacob to Canaan. There is one that must not be wholly overlooked. This return signalizes the complete and permanent separation between monotheism and polytheism. Abraham was called to go forth and become the founder of a new religion. He obeyed the call. Still, some communication was maintained between the migrating people and the old stock. But now, when Jacob takes his family and his substance and turns his face to the west, the sign is given for all the relations to cease. Henceforth the race is to be compacted and solidified through the descendants of Jacob, and the worship is to be of Elohim, or Jehovah, only. To be sure Rachel, who may not have been fully converted to monotheism, stole and carried away in secret her father's teraphim. This thing was done wholly without the knowledge or approval of Jacob, and upon his discovery of the images he promptly buried them. To him, scarcely less than to Moses, are we indebted for the command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." With increasing fidelity to the end of his life he kept the vow he had made at Bethel.

Turning now to Laban, we can imagine the consternation and anger with which he learned of the flight of Jacob. A space of forty miles separated the pasture grounds of Jacob from those of Laban. Some days, therefore, must have elapsed — three days the record says — as Jacob kept his own counsel and only imparted his purpose to his wives when the plan was ripe for execution, before the tidings of the departure were carried to Laban. Preparation had probably been made by sending the flocks and herds far on, ostensibly to feed around the foothills of Western Syria. Then Jacob, gathering his stuff hastily together, mounts his wives and children upon camels and commences a rapid journey toward the land of his nativity. Before Laban could complete preparations for the pursuit Jacob was already a long distance on the road, so that, even by forced marches, Laban could not come up with him before he had passed beyond the jurisdiction within which he might compel his return. Jacob set his face toward the mountains of Gilead — the high rocky ridges that constituted the boundary between the Aramean territory and Canaan. Once there he was safe from the pursuit of Laban. This, apparently, he easily accomplished by reason of the distance traversed before his kinsman could begin the chase.

The meeting between Jacob and Laban, if not friendly, is at least a meeting of treaty. Laban rehearses at length his grievances, under which there is for the most part a basis of truth. He claims that Jacob's property is his property, and that his wives, their servants, and children are his. Under the patriarchal system, all this was strictly true. Jacob himself was but an adopted son, and he could, therefore, have neither property nor family that was absolutely his own. At the same time Laban seems to recognize that the longing of Jacob for his father's house was natural, and if he were to pass out from under his authority, it would be only creditable to him that he should not go empty-handed. Therefore, he signifies his willingness to confirm him in his possessions and make a covenant with him that he will not pass beyond the boundaries of Gilead to molest him. The treaty having been made and celebrated with proper ceremonies, Laban kisses his children and departs again to his own country, while Jacob takes up his journey again toward Canaan.

But, having escaped the danger that threatened in the rear, he now begins to contemplate the peril he is approaching. He remembers that, when he passed out of Canaan forty years before, he was fleeing from the wrath of his brother, Esau, who felt that he had suffered an irreparable injury at his hands. He wonders now whether that anger has subsided or whether, notwithstanding the lapse of years, Esau will seek to be avenged. As he goes forward he has some signs of angelic protection. The vision of heavenly ministration which comforted him long before at Bethel is repeated in a different form; and yet, not so much for his own sake and the sake of his property as for the sake of his wives and children, he is anxious to placate the heart of Esau and be reconciled to him. Therefore, he sends messengers before to announce his coming to his brother, and follows the herald by other messengers with rich presents from his numerous flocks and herds. Long ago, however, the fickle Esau had forgotten the affront that had been put upon him. Perhaps the oblivion of the unhappy event had been hastened by the fact that Jacob had gone forth with his staff only, and, as far as the patriarchal succession was concerned, Jacob had been so long absent that even that had failed to make any impression upon him. He could only view the munificent presents of Jacob, the evidence of uncommon wealth, with astonishment.

Before, however, Jacob beheld the face of his

brother, there occurred one of the strangest episodes of his whole career. He had sent forward in the care of trusty servants the more vigorous of his flocks and herds. Those that were unsuited for fast travel remained behind, together with the women and young children. These Jacob had seen safely across the wady, or brook, as it is called in the English version. Returning, probably for a few last things, he was overtaken by darkness and was obliged to pass the night in the valley. Instead of finding a peaceful and refreshing slumber, he was forced to an all-night struggle with a strange visitor. All sorts of conjectures have been offered concerning this wrestler. Some have supposed this was the Almighty God in the form of a man. Some have maintained that this was the divine Son of God. Others have declared that it was an angel. Still others have thought that it was not a real person at all; that it was a spiritual struggle, induced first, perhaps, by a dream, and then by the consciousness of the sin of his life. All this, however, is conjecture. We have nothing but the record to guide us, and it is pretty hard to get out of the record more than it contains. That gives an account of a real struggle, with a palpable result. Indeed, the struggle had been so fierce that in the morning Jacob's thigh was out of joint. But notwithstanding that fact Jacob had prevailed. It is clear, also, that he felt that his antagonist was endowed with mysterious power. He regarded that struggle as a new vision, teaching him that God abides not only in the heavenly glory, but in the sweat and agony of daily toil. Therefore, he rises to a new consecration of patience that will not let him forget God even in the hour of humiliation and sorrow. This is what gives him his new name and secures for him a new blessing, higher and more precious than any that comes through worldly prosperity and happiness. In obedience to Jacob's importunity, the stranger said: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but *Israël*, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." With this new name, no longer as the supplanter, but as a veritable prince of righteousness, he goes forth to meet his brother. This is what his long years of alienage from his father's house and hard discipline with Laban have wrought in his character.

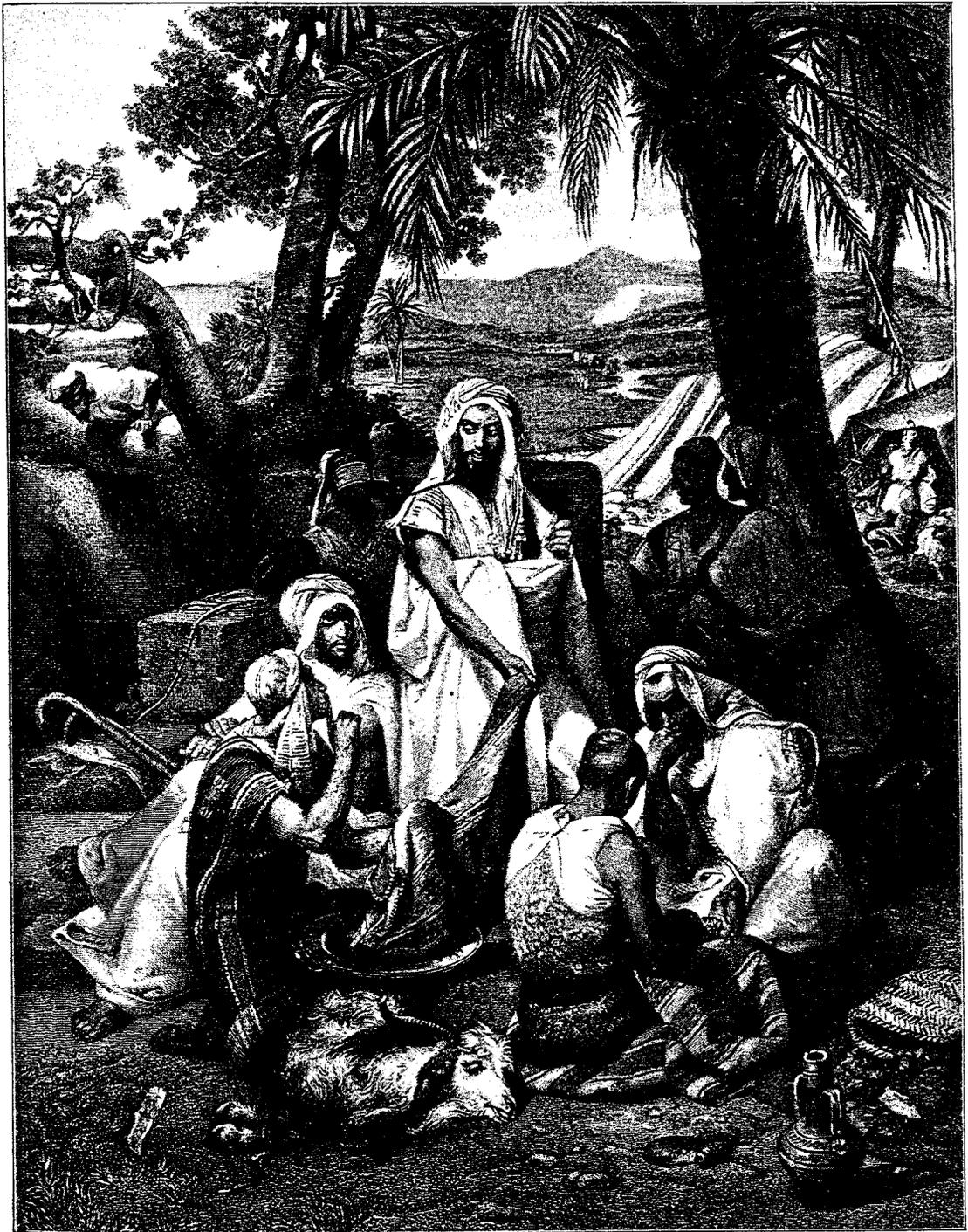
It is delightful to observe that the meeting with Esau is one of amity and affection. All vestiges of hostility and hatred appear to have vanished from the brother's heart. He bids Jacob a cordial welcome to Canaan and urges him to accept his escort into the presence of his father. But Jacob excuses himself. He has under his immediate charge the more tender portion of the flocks and the women and children, and he must proceed slowly. Indeed, he

is incapable of pursuing his journey by reason of his lameness. He remains, therefore, where he is at the forks of the river where there is both pasturage and water, and even builds booths for the shelter of the herds, which betokens a residence of some permanence. But when he is recovered from his lameness, he moves forward as far as Shechem, which was the first camping ground of Abraham when he came into Canaan. It is here that all the implements of the idolatrous Syrian worship are gathered together and buried. Here, also, he purchases a piece of ground for his tents and for an altar. This shows that the country was somewhat settled—to what extent we cannot tell, but probably from the nature of the event recorded as taking place here, not very numerously. Dinah, the only one of his daughters whose name finds mention in Scripture—although, as has been said, it is probable from certain statements that there were others—went out of the camp, probably in secret, to see the daughters of the land. She was beguiled or captured by the son of the chief man of the city and dishonored. This produced a crisis. Two of her brothers by the same mother, Simeon and Levi, felt themselves called upon to avenge the wrong that had been put upon her. Accordingly by a stratagem, aided no doubt by the more warlike portion of their father's servants, they put to the sword the whole city, and either killed or captured the greater part of the inhabitants. This act naturally filled the mind of Jacob with consternation and horror. He believed that after such an outrage it would no longer be safe for him to remain in that place. It is likely that he feared, although his sons were victorious, either that the friends and allies of the defeated Shechemites would attempt to avenge the indignity that had been put upon them by reprisals, or that the surrounding tribes, mistrusting the object of his advent into Canaan, would make war upon him for the purpose of exterminating him or driving him back into Syria. Gathering his possessions together he passed on to Bethel. His march was unmo- lested, the occupants of the land, perhaps, being filled with fear because of the relentless slaughter of the Shechemites. At Bethel he kept the vow which he had made to God when he beheld the vision of the angels ascending and descending between earth and heaven. Here Deborah, the beloved nurse and servant of Rebekah, died, and was buried under what was thenceforth called the oak of weeping. This circumstance leads to the conclusion that Jacob had already visited his father at Hebron and had brought Deborah back with him. No mention is made of the death of Rebekah, perhaps because many years had elapsed since the event occurred. It is impossible to suppress a feeling

of sorrow that the woman who had sent him forth to her brother's house to find a wife could not have survived to welcome him on his return to fulfill the destiny which she had been so important a human instrument in marking out for him. The stop at Bethel does not appear to have been for long. Evidently Jacob was pressing forward to get near to his father who still survived, although at a great age. On his way to Ephrath, which was as near as he could come with his immense retinue to Hebron, when he had reached Bethlehem, Rachel travailed and died in giving birth to Benjamin. Thus the woman whom he had gone out of his father's house to seek, whom he had loved with tender and unfaltering devotion for more than forty years, was never to receive the welcome of that house. Truly the afflictions of Jacob were beginning to multiply, and were fast becoming as numerous as his blessings. But he had learned, through fiery discipline and trial, to believe in God in sorrow as well as in joy. This was a mighty step forward, not only for Jacob, but for the human race.

Isaac died at 180, when Jacob must have been 120. He was buried by his sons, Esau and Jacob, in the cave of Machpelah, where had already been buried Abraham and Sarah, and Rebekah. To this august list in due time was to be added the bones of Leah and Jacob's own body, embalmed in Egypt and borne thither by a mighty caravan with all the pageantry and pomp that could attend the burial of a prince. But a dozen years before the death of Isaac there occurred an event of far greater significance to Jacob and the people that were to bear his name. The firstborn of Rachel's children, when Jacob came to Ephrath, was a lad of seventeen. As the child of his first and only deep love, he was exceedingly precious, and was distinguished in many ways above the children of Leah and the concubines. Doubtless it seemed to the other sons that his father already designed him for the patriarchal succession. This of itself would be sufficient to excite their animosity toward him. There were doubtless other reasons for their jealousy. One of the worst phases of polygamy is that the children invariably championed the cause of their respective mothers. We know that Leah, at least, had great cause of enmity toward Rachel, and it is altogether likely that both the concubines had an even stronger reason to hate the haughty mistress of Jacob's affection; and, while they might be very cautious about manifesting their animosity openly, their children would not be so backward. But in addition to all these reasons there was another still more potent. Whoever reads the story with any attentiveness must see that Joseph was an uncommon youth. He was already en-

gaged in those meditations which are the sure tokens of genius. He was superior to his brethren, not only in the affection of his father, but in his intellectual endowment. The vision that he had of his brethren doing obeisance to him was only the expression of a preëminence which they must have recognized already. It is scarcely to be wondered at that his brethren should have formed a conspiracy to kill him. Of course, it was a horrible crime; but we have already had some taste of the bloodthirstiness and relentless cruelty of at least a portion of Jacob's children, who lived in an age in which fratricide was common, and very lightly regarded if the victim were born from a different mother. Every indication of the superiority of Joseph only whetted their wrath toward him. It is said "they could not speak peaceably unto him," and as their hatred grew they formed a conspiracy to put him to death. His father having sent him to Shechem, where they were feeding the flocks, to make inquiries concerning them and bring him tidings, they proceeded to put their plot into execution. Had it not been for Reuben, who, whatever other faults he had, was not bloodthirsty, Joseph would have been murdered ruthlessly. But through Reuben's entreaties he was merely stripped of his coat of many colors, which his father had given him as a token of his special affection, and cast into an empty cistern that was in the field, with the intention, doubtless, of leaving him to perish with hunger, although it would seem that Reuben cherished the purpose of rescuing him. In the absence, however, of Reuben, the others, at the suggestion of Judah, concluded to sell him as a slave to a company of Ishmaelite merchants who were going down into Egypt. This was done for twenty pieces—probably shekels—of silver, equivalent to about twelve dollars of our money. Then the coat which they had taken from him was dipped in the blood of a kid, and taken to his father as the proof that his son had been killed by an evil beast. Jacob does not appear to have suspected the brethren of Joseph, and he accepted the bloody garment as adequate proof of the death of Joseph. He said, "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." Surely there is no grander touch of human nature than this in all history. Human ingenuity could not invent anything that would afford such commanding and invincible proof of the genuineness of the story.



H. VERNET.

DIPPING JOSEPH'S COAT IN THE BLOOD OF THE KID.

At this point the interest of the narrative shifts. Instructive accounts of other members of the patriarchal family intervene. But the real interest centers hereafter in Joseph. The mind is drawn irresistibly to follow the fortunes of the slave lad, in the hands of an alien race, going to do service in a strange land. What an awful thing that one born to freedom and high privilege should be sold like an ox! But such was oriental slavery. Such is slavery everywhere. There is this to be said of ancient slavery in general, however, and of oriental slavery in particular: The door to freedom was not absolutely shut. The fact that one was a slave was no bar to even the highest station, provided one had the genius for it. We wonder what was in the mind of the Hebrew youth as he found himself a bondman going down to Egypt. Doubtless he thought that preferable to being in the hands of his cruel brethren. It is, moreover, true of all great souls that they are indifferent to their surroundings. As far as the record goes the condition of Joseph from the moment of his captivity onward seems to have been one of perfect serenity. On the arrival of the caravan in Egypt Joseph was sold to Potiphar, a high officer of the court, and appears to have been almost immediately placed in charge of his household. At first we are disposed to marvel at that. But perhaps it is not so strange after all. It has been generally supposed that the time of Joseph's arrival in Egypt was during the reign of the last of the Hyksos, or shepherd kings. These kings were probably of Aramean descent, very closely resembling Hebrews in their physical characteristics, and, some have thought, in their language. As far as race went, therefore, Joseph was under no disability. Possibly the Ishmaelites may have told how they came into possession of this slave. At all events he probably showed that he was well born and bred. Undoubtedly he manifested, even in his servitude, some of those rare executive abilities for which in mature life he was so distinguished. Potiphar made him his steward and intrusted him with everything. He used the trust so well that all the business of Potiphar prospered in his hand.

This continued until Potiphar's wife falsely

accused him of attempting upon her an infamous crime. Whereupon he was thrown into prison. There is ground for believing that Potiphar distrusted the accusation of his wife against Joseph, inasmuch as he exalted him in the prison, and gave him charge of all the prisoners. Here, then, again we have evidence that great minds are but slightly affected by their surroundings. Genius will manifest itself in slavery and in prison. There are no bars that can circumscribe or confine the expanding and soaring mind. With the coming into the prison of high officers of Pharaoh, Joseph had an opportunity through the interpretation of their dreams to convey, though after the lapse of years, to Pharaoh what manner of man he was. The time came when Pharaoh sorely needed someone to interpret a dream that was troubling him greatly. The wisest men of the realm had tried it and failed signally. Then it was that the chief butler remembered the service that Joseph had rendered to him when he was in great need. He told the story to his royal master and Joseph was immediately brought forth from the prison to give that wonderful interpretation which made him prime minister of Egypt, with power to introduce a policy of taxation which changed the constitution of the realm. Here certainly was a marvelous exaltation—a young man lifted from slavery and prison to be the second person in the mightiest empire on the face of the earth! The act of Pharaoh, however, proved to be one not merely of caprice. The Hebrew boy showed that he was worthy of the vast responsibility and power that had been placed in his hands. He saw at a glance the danger that threatened Egypt. He devised the measures that were necessary to avert it. With plenty of practical wisdom such as belongs only to the highest order of statesmanship, he proceeded to put those measures into execution. With unparalleled foresight he began to fortify the State against the long famine which he knew was sure to come; and when his brethren, who, in their hatred, had tried to destroy him, next saw him, he was so installed and entrenched in the confidence and affection of Pharaoh that there was none mightier than he in all the world.

CHAPTER X.

JOSEPH'S CHARACTER—ARRIVAL OF HIS BRETHREN—COMING OF JACOB.

JOSEPH was thirty years old when he came into power in Egypt. Supposing him to have been seventeen when he was sold into slavery, he must have been thirteen years in servitude. He was a devout soul, true to the religion of his father. He attributed everything in his career to God. He looked to God for counsel, and he knew that God guided him in all things. Reading the story as we do at this distance in time, we see, perhaps, even more clearly than he could the ruling hand of divine providence in making the wrath of his brethren a testimony of God's righteousness, and lifting him from a position of servitude to almost unlimited sway in Egypt. It is inherently incredible that such results, with such far-reaching and beneficent consequences, could have been accomplished by human ability alone, however transcendent. But to say this does not derogate from the extraordinary acumen of Joseph. He was in every way fitted by natural endowment, and by discipline and training, for the great responsibility he was called upon to assume. Even in his childhood he gave evidence of uncommon genius. His brethren called him a "dreamer" by reason of his meditative and prophetic spirit. Even then he was forecasting the future; even then he saw how his life, by reason of certain qualities that were stamped upon his mind, was separated from and lifted above the common life around him. Unquestionably these qualities were, to some extent, developed by suffering and by the exercise of that self-reliance he was compelled to exhibit in the difficult and trying positions in which he was placed as the servant of Potiphar; so that, in the supreme crisis of his life, when he was summoned into the presence of Pharaoh, he could, with the aid of the divine counsel, not merely interpret a dream, but could show a larger wisdom, a profounder knowledge of statecraft, than the most learned, experienced, and trusted of the Egyptians.

Instantly, therefore, Pharaoh saw that this was the man of his counsel—the man for the office and the hour—to institute and carry to perfection the reforms that were essential to the preservation of the empire. With a boldness such as is not often manifested by rulers in this world, Pharaoh resolved to make him the instrument of the work he had to do; and, that there might be no possibility of failure, he placed in his hands unlimited authority to carry out his purposes. Moreover, in actual trial Joseph showed that he had the qualities for which his master had given him credit.

The details of the policy inaugurated by him are not, as far as we know, given in the Scripture or elsewhere. What the mummy cases and monuments yet to be unearthed have to reveal no one can tell. All we know is that this new minister, chosen and exalted by Pharaoh, went forward, laying a new and heavier tribute upon the people—which does not seem to have been hard for them to bear, by reason of the great harvests and the consequent prosperity of the nation—and laying up a store against the time of predicted famine. The means he adopted were so wise, so salutary, and so effective that the course could but command the approval and even the admiration of Pharaoh. Indeed, we are compelled to believe from the way the account runs that the more the monarch knew his minister the more he esteemed him. As far as appears during the whole of the life of either of them, nothing occurred to interrupt the harmony of their relations, or to weaken the confidence of the monarch in Joseph. They seem to have been even on terms of intimate and close friendship. Nothing that Joseph could ask was withheld. Pharaoh was instrumental in assisting him to enter into marriage relations with an Egyptian woman of high family. All this is testimony of the strongest sort to the extraordinary character of Joseph as a statesman and a man. In the ranks of great men of the ages, probably few have equaled and perhaps none have ever surpassed him.

Of course, Joseph's policy was most triumphantly vindicated by the coming on of the years of the famine as he had predicted. As the years went by his astuteness was attested still further when it was seen that through his foresight Pharaoh was able not only to preserve the lives of the people but to secure such concessions from them in regard to their estates as would strengthen and confirm his power, weakening the authority of the nobles and petty princes and making the people directly dependent upon him. Pharaoh, therefore, had reason for the deepest gratitude and most abiding affection for Joseph. It is conjectured by many authorities that the monarch under whom Joseph wrought was the one who planned and carried to execution the system of dams and other devices designed to regulate the flow of the Nile. It is not improbable that the suggestion of these works came from Joseph himself, and perhaps he was the officer intrusted with their construction. Certainly no one would be more likely than he to recognize the

causes of the protracted drought to which Egypt was periodically subject, or to conceive of the measures requisite to prevent their recurrence; undoubtedly the prediction of years of drought was based, to some extent, on the past experience of the nation; and it is but reasonable to suppose that the man who had the capacity of such wide observation and large induction would be the one of all others best fitted to consider the means of prevention. Moreover, having, as the minister of both agriculture and finance during the years of the nation's plenty and prosperity, gathered together and compacted the surplus wealth of the nation, he would be the one vested with the resources necessary for the inception and carrying out of so vast an undertaking. The strongest *a priori* considerations, therefore, point to this reign, and even to this extraordinary man, for the conception and consummation of the improvement that was of such immense and far-reaching consequence to the prosperity of Egypt. But for the confirmation of these conceptions we shall be compelled to wait for what the researches and discoveries of scholars may reveal to us. The wreath which the record alone puts upon the brow of Joseph is ample for his future and abiding fame. By appeal simply to the record, we see that he was not only the savior of Egypt, but of other peoples as well. We are told that "the famine was over the face of the earth," and that, besides the Egyptians, "all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands." The primary cause of the dearth in Egypt was, of course, the failure of moisture in the mountains from which the Nile receives its supply of water. Such a cause would, in the nature of the case, be widespread in its operation. A failure of moisture there would be accompanied by its failure in a much wider area; so that we perceive that people far removed from the borders of Egypt would in the same manner, and perhaps to an even greater extent, suffer from the effects of the drought. Still further, as this drought was a protracted one, confined in its operations not to a single year, but spread over several years, the suffering would become widespread and terrible, causing the surrounding countries to look to Egypt for relief. It was to be expected, therefore, that Canaan would be affected with the other countries. Indeed, Canaan often suffered from an insufficient supply of moisture. Abraham had been compelled to go down into Egypt on account of famine in Canaan. Isaac had been driven as far south as Gerah to find water and forage, and would have gone into Egypt had he not been restrained by the divine hand. It is not strange, therefore, that Jacob should have

turned in the same direction, in his distress, for relief.

It will not be without profit to go back a little in our narration and see how it has fared with the patriarch since Joseph was taken from him. At first, as we have seen, his sojourn was at Ephrath. Here, within a convenient distance of his father's abode, he busied himself with the care of his flocks and herds, receiving the active assistance of his sons. His object was evidently to strengthen and compact his fortunes so as to make ample provision for his numerous family. In due time Isaac died and "was gathered to his fathers." Then Esau, who had for the most part resided with his father, removed to the region of Mount Seir, and Jacob removed to Hebron. What was done with Isaac's possessions the record does not state. Whether they were divided between Esau and Jacob, or whether the fact that they had fallen mainly to Jacob was the principal reason for his going to Hebron to reside, we cannot tell. But we do know that the years were full of sorrow for the patriarch. The loss of Rachel had filled the whole remainder of his life with sadness. The loss of Joseph he felt to be irreparable. Then, too, somewhere in these years, not only Isaac, but Leah, to whom he doubtless turned with more affection after the death of Rachel, died and was buried; so that he must have felt that he was in a passing world. In addition to this, he must have been troubled more or less about the succession, and was casting about in his own mind to determine which of his remaining sons was best fitted for the great trust. There is reason for believing that the sons, after their great crime, and especially after observing the terrible sorrow it had produced in their father, were somewhat chastened and were more disposed to do what they could to lighten his burdens. Hence there was some compensation in his manifold afflictions.

Then came the famine, and Jacob saw the fruit of all his years of toil and anguish likely to vanish away. The flocks and herds were like to die for want of sustenance. Sickness, which is one of the inseparable accompaniments of famine, was doubtless beginning to assail his servants, and possibly his children. The sons were beginning to "look one upon another" with a kind of superstitious dread. They were beginning to feel that a terrible calamity—perhaps total extinction—was impending over them. But Jacob's heart never failed in emergencies. He had the quality of all great souls, which triumph in adversity. The more terrible the threatened evil, the more irresistibly his courage rises to meet and overcome it. He who had wrestled all night with the mysterious stranger at Peniel and come off

victorious, although he carried marks of the conflict that would follow him to his grave, was not likely to be dismayed by famine. So when he sees the anxiety of his sons he bids them go down into Egypt, where there is still an abundance, and buy food for their households.

In obedience to their father's injunction, all the sons except Benjamin went down to Egypt. Benjamin was kept at home to comfort and care for his father. Since the loss of Joseph the heart of Jacob had turned with increasing fondness to the only remaining child of Rachel. He did not feel, therefore, that he could quite spare Benjamin for so long and dangerous an expedition. The question may arise why it was necessary for so many as ten to go. The answer is plainly that the number of people to be relieved, not to speak of the flocks and herds, was very great, requiring a large supply of grain — much larger, no doubt, than appears from a casual reading of the record. It was unquestionably the large and important caravan coming from a distant country like Canaan that secured an audience with the minister of the realm. Possibly he had been expecting their advent, and was on the lookout for them. As soon as they came into his presence he knew them. They had changed but little. He had grown from a mere lad to a man in middle life. Clad, too, in the robes of high office there would be nothing in his appearance to suggest to them the stripling whom they had sold to the Ishmaelites fifteen years before. As they bowed in abject humility before him he was reminded of his dream in Canaan for which they had upbraided him. Yet in a measure his heart yearned toward them. He was impatient to get tidings of his father and his younger brother. By harsh treatment and compelling them to give an account of themselves he learns what he desires to know — that his father is still alive and that Benjamin is the stay and comfort of his old age. Then, while he grants their request for food, he insists on keeping one of their number as a hostage that the younger brother shall be brought down. Evidently his desire is to see Benjamin, his own mother's son. But while he seems to be so harsh and relentless, in reality he is very tender, concealing the money which they had brought to pay for their food in the grain which they were to carry back.

Having left Simeon behind them in prison, and being commanded to fetch Benjamin, they returned with heavy and downcast spirits. When they reported to Jacob what had befallen them he was filled with consternation. But he could not part with Benjamin. Not until the famine began to press sorely again would he even discuss the subject with his sons. Indeed

the cry he uttered when they proposed to take Benjamin and go down again must have cut them to the quick. "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." Still the exigency became more and more imperative. "The famine was sore in the land." Though he had resolved that Benjamin should not go down with them, the time came when Jacob was forced to consider the question. Indeed, it was getting to be a matter of life and death. While there was apparently some food for the live stock, enough to keep them from perishing altogether, yet for human beings there was nothing. The crops had failed and food must be had. Jacob, therefore, urges his sons to go down again. But they are resolute, because they are sure it will be a hopeless journey unless they can take Benjamin.

After a feeble opposition Jacob accepts the inevitable, and the brethren go down again, taking their youngest brother with them. It is pretty evident that Joseph had awaited their coming with some impatience. The eagerness with which he made arrangements to receive them at his own house shows how his mind had dwelt on the reception of Benjamin. Indeed, he finds it hard to suppress his feelings in their presence. The uneasiness of their consciences, on account of the great wrong they had done to him so many years before, takes away all resentment from his mind. He distinguishes Benjamin in so marked a manner above all the rest that it is a marvel that some hint of his identity did not flash upon them. But apparently they had not the faintest suspicion that it was Joseph. How strange it must have seemed to him to hear them talking in his own vernacular of himself, his father, and all their home affairs without once imagining that he could understand them! But he restrained himself and made no sign. He preferred, in true oriental taste, to make the announcement in a more dramatic fashion. He orders his steward to conceal his drinking cup in Benjamin's sack and when the brethren are well on their journey he sends after them and charges them with theft. They, of course, are indignant, and make some very rash promises in case it shall be found in the effects of any one of them. A search, of course, reveals it with Benjamin. Now they are completely undone, and return to the house of the minister with hearts ready to break. When it is proposed by Joseph to retain Benjamin in custody because of the theft, then they unfold the whole story of their life, showing how deep their contrition is for their great sin, how they have sought to make amends for it by superior devotion to their father, and how deeply they

are troubled, not so much by what has befallen themselves as by the sorrow that will come to him. Then Joseph can restrain himself no longer, but, sending out all the attendants from the room, he makes known to them that he is Joseph. Naturally they are more troubled than ever, for now they are in the presence of the man who has an unbounded right to punish them. But he reassures them, saying, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earring nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." How splendid is not only the magnanimity of this man, but his faith in the one living and true God! It is hardly the voice of human wisdom speaking in him, but the voice of prophecy, as if his tongue had been touched by a living coal from the heavenly altar. The strange worship of the Egyptians, though he had married the daughter of a priest, had not turned him from the simple faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but there, in a strange land, far from his kindred and his father's house, he was true to the religion which Abraham had been called from Ur of the Chaldees to set up and maintain, and which he himself had received as the grandest inheritance of that majestic line of patriarchs.

But now he bids them hasten and be gone. The eagerness which he before had to see Benjamin is intensified to see his father. He bids them to report to Jacob his state and power in Egypt, and urge him to come with all speed, disregarding his substance, because out of the abundance with which Pharaoh has rewarded him he can supply all his wants. With what feelings of mingled shame, humility, and joy they must have taken that journey back to Canaan! Now they must make known to their father, who had never suspected them of wrongdoing, their perfidy. Now their consciences are

smarting for the evil they have done. There is no more striking instance, in the Bible or elsewhere, of the certainty and terribleness of retribution. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." We may remember in this connection that not only in the hour of Joseph's revelation to them, but later on when Jacob was dead, the consciousness of the wrong they had done to their brother revived and overcame them in his presence, showing that a wound had been imprinted upon their spirits which time was almost powerless to heal. At the same time there was a surpassing joy in their hearts because Joseph had not shown any resentment to them, because they were going to save their families and their flocks and herds from destruction, and, above all, because they were carrying to their father the tidings that Joseph was alive. One can hardly doubt that, when they thought of the transport of delight that would take possession of Jacob as they should break the news to him, they could scarcely keep their feet from flying over the ground. The record, however, gives us no details. We are told in the briefest possible terms that they went back to Canaan. Still the Scripture does not fail to tell us that, when they reported to Jacob that Joseph was alive and that he was ruler over all Egypt, the father could not believe their report. It was only when they had told him their story with particularity of detail that he was convinced. Then his soul overflows, and his joy breaks forth like a song of triumph. "It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive; I will go down and see him before I die." Then preparations for the journey were made. The several families and all their belongings were gathered together and all went forth on what may well be called a new migration. For, though Jacob called it a sojourn, and doubtless thought it was to be only for a few years, centuries were really to elapse before any of the stock of Israel should again see Canaan. The steps of the company were directed to Goshen, a rich pasture ground on the northeasterly side of the Nile, and there Joseph went in his chariot to meet his father.

CHAPTER XI.

JACOB AND PHARAOH.

THE land of Goshen was well adapted to grazing. Notwithstanding the drought which was prevailing, there was much low ground in that region that yielded a coarse herbage that would sustain the flocks. It was, moreover, an unsettled country, and there was room in abundance, for both the animals and the people. There were other reasons for not taking the company of Israelites into the more settled parts of Egypt. A great prejudice—growing, perhaps, out of the fact that the reigning dynasty, which was a usurping dynasty, belonged to the shepherd race—existed against shepherds. For some reason Pharaoh does not seem to have shared the prejudice of the Egyptian people. It is hard to account for this except on the ground that he inherited a different tradition and belonged to a different race from the Egyptians. At all events Pharaoh desired to see Jacob. This may have been an act of courtesy to his prime minister. But it is more likely that some fame of Jacob had reached his ear and he desired to see him and perhaps talk with him. So Jacob is sent for to come into the presence of the monarch of Egypt. One can hardly repress a smile as he detects in the narrative a kind of condescension on the part of Pharaoh. Doubtless there seemed to be a wide disparity between them. Pharaoh ruled over the greatest empire in the world, and his word was law everywhere within his dominions. Jacob was only a humble Canaanitish shepherd. But the really great man, the mighty prince who had power with God and with men, was Jacob. The very name of the Pharaoh has perished, and the wisest scholars are still in doubt as to the dynasty to which he belonged. But the memory of Jacob is green. Wherever man worships Jehovah his name is revered, while one of the most remarkable races the world has ever seen traces with pride its lineage from him. Instructed by Joseph beforehand how to behave and what to say, Jacob, when asked, gives some account of his life and blesses Pharaoh twice over and goes out. Pharaoh is evidently well pleased with Jacob and his sons, and readily not only grants them permission to take up their abode in Goshen, but requests that the more capable among them be appointed to have charge of the royal herds. Thus begins the long residence of the chosen people in Egypt, which is to end only when Moses shall lead them forth from bondage to freedom.

The history of Jacob and his sons is now drawing to a close. Indeed, we may conceive that in the main the great patriarchal mission

had been fulfilled. It is exceedingly grateful to feel, also, that after all his trials he was to have a long season of profound peace. The children of Jacob, if they reflected at all, must have seen that by the over-ruling power of Jehovah, the evil which they meant had been turned to good. It must have been a joy to them to witness the comfort and happiness of their father as he drew near to the end of life. To be there so near his favorite son, to live under his protection and to observe his exaltation and power, must have afforded him a satisfaction such as few men in this world have ever been privileged to feel. He richly merited it, too, after all his years of suffering and sorrow. No doubt the growth of the family in Goshen was rapid. Though it was not the part of Egypt best adapted to the more settled forms of agriculture, it was, as has been said, well suited to grazing, and the flocks and herds would naturally multiply rapidly. Being, also, near a great market, the breeding operations must have been a source of profit. The increase of the population must also have been very marked. Indeed, it was no small company of people that went down with Jacob into Egypt. The record mentions nearly seventy. But this enumeration embraces mainly the male descendants of Jacob—only two or three women find any mention whatever. Nearly all these males were married and brought their wives with them. Moreover, it is hardly reasonable to suppose that Jacob had not as many female descendants as male. But these could not have constituted the whole body of people that went with the patriarch to settle in Goshen. We must not forget the great body of servants, who spoke the same language and were largely of the same blood. If Abraham, in his time, could arm 300 men "born in his house," how can we well suppose that Jacob was the head of a smaller tribe than his grandfather? It is impossible to account for the princely character ascribed to Jacob except on the supposition that he was the head of a numerous band. The term Israel, as applied to the people, meant a great deal even then. Nor can it be inferred that all the people of kindred speech and blood came down with Jacob from Canaan. We know to the contrary. There were the descendants of both Ishmael and Esau, in great numbers, left behind. Any of these coming down to Egypt would naturally come through the land of Goshen. Thus the great Hebrew colony would be in the way of important augmentation, so that in the very lifetime of Jacob there must have been a vast expansion

of the population, justifying in a purely worldly sense the high honor that was bestowed upon him as a prince at his death. Those seventeen years of Jacob in the land which Pharaoh had assigned to him were of the highest significance, and must have afforded to the brethren of Joseph a lesson of the profoundest meaning. They must have felt that, indeed, a nation was growing up that would bear the name of their father, and would have an important part to play in the history of the world. It is unlikely, however, that any but Jacob himself realized the religious import of what was going on. He doubtless meditated deeply upon it. With prophetic vision he saw much of what was to be. He foresaw something of the bondage that was coming, and understood the conflicts and trials through which the Hebrew race was to attain its glory. He recognized, as no one else could, that the hand of God was not only in his own life, but in the life of the people, to the end that the blessing promised to Abraham, and repeated to Isaac and himself, might be fulfilled. There are some indications that he had even a Messianic forecast and conviction. He never lost sight of Canaan as the ultimate home of the people, as the place where the ultimate glory of Israel was to be achieved and where the promise of God to him and his ancestors was to be fully entered into.

Accordingly, as Jacob's strength failed him and the time was manifestly drawing near when he must die, he sent for Joseph. The desire of his heart was not to be buried in Egypt. Following a great instinct of our nature he wanted to appoint the place where his bones should finally repose. There was the tomb of his fathers in Hebron, the field, and the cave therein, which Abraham bought of Ephron the Hittite for a burial place for Sarah, and which was the only piece of ground which Abraham ever owned in the land that had been given by divine promise to him and his seed after him forever. In that tomb were buried Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah and Leah, and Jacob desired to lie beside his kindred. Possibly there may have been a higher reason in the divine purpose. Jacob's body was to be embalmed after the manner of the Egyptians. If that body has lain undisturbed where it was deposited by Joseph and his brethren the world may yet behold the face of the great patriarch, as it has looked upon the face of Rameses II., the great Pharaoh who oppressed the Israelites, and who, by the cruelties he instituted, compelled them to seek once more the Canaan of their promise. It is impossible, of course, to tell what the Mosque at Hebron covers. In view of the ages of violence that intervened between the burial of Jacob and the setting up of a stable

government in Palestine there is every possibility — perhaps probability — that the tomb has been rifled. Still, there is also the possibility that the graves have been undisturbed, and if so, when that territory shall come under the control of Christian powers, there is awaiting the supreme moment of discovery a contribution to history and archaeology surpassing anything that has yet been discovered. Think what it would be to look into the mummy case of Jacob and to read the mystic symbols inscribed upon it by order of his almost royal son! There is not an archaeologist alive who would not give the best years of his life for such a privilege.

But putting all this aside, for reasons that are perfectly natural Jacob desired to be laid in death in the cave of Machpelah. As the time of his departure drew near he sent for Joseph, and Joseph came. We can imagine him coming in royal state, in a chariot such as we see figured upon the monuments. A retinue of servants undoubtedly accompanied him, and very likely, also, an escort of soldiers. His coming must have been an event in Goshen, and whenever his brethren saw his glittering equipage they must have remembered the dream in which their sheaves bowed down and did obeisance to the sheaf of Joseph. On his arrival in his father's chamber, Jacob makes known to his son his last wishes and said unto him, "If now I have found grace in thy sight put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt. But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head." This, however, was not the last interview of the patriarch with Rachel's elder son. Some time probably intervened between this vow of Joseph and the final scene in Jacob's chamber, when, after setting Ephraim the younger of Joseph's children above Manasseh, and after blessing Joseph and giving him above his brethren as a portion the field of Shechem, he called unto him his sons, and said "Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and harken unto Israel your father." This was the last and most impressive of all the colloquies of Jacob with his descendants. Indeed, the prophecies which he then uttered are among the loftiest and most impressive of the recorded utterances of man. Though Jacob is in the last extremity of life he showed his sense of his son's dignity by strengthening himself and sitting upon the bed to receive him. Then he proceeds, in prophetic language, not only to sketch the characters of his several sons, but

to point out the career which is to be achieved by their descendants. The most remarkable of these prophecies is that relating to Judah, the fourth son of Leah. "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes; his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Whether Jacob was fully conscious of the import of his words or not, there is not in the Old Testament a passage of clearer, stronger or more emphatic Messianic intent than this. "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him." Then the process of embalming the body, occupying forty days, took place. When that was completed the funeral procession was prepared. "The asses and camels of the pastoral tribe," says Dean Stanley, "mingled with the chariots and horsemen, characteristic of Egypt." A martial escort such as would one day accompany the remains of Pharaoh himself to their resting place in pyramid or rock-hewn tomb, began its long march from Egypt to the banks of the Jordan bearing the dust of Israel, "the prince of God"; and for the last time the Israelites looked upon the familiar scenes of the promised land until, centuries after, led by Joshua, their posterity should come to take possession of it and build therein a nation.

At this point we might very properly draw the curtain, having followed the story of the patriarchs from that point where Abraham was called to part from his kindred and his father's house, that he might set up an altar of worship to the one living and true God, to the final gathering in of Jacob. Indeed, there is not much more to tell. On the death of Jacob, the fears of the brethren naturally revived once more. Now that their father is no longer present to plead their cause, Joseph may call them to account for the evil they did. But he reassures them again that God was in the event, directing and guiding it for a great and noble end. Moreover, he gives evidence that he is a true Israelite and not an Egyptian, by exacting from them a promise that his bones

shall be carried up to Canaan when their posterity shall go up to enter into their great inheritance. Joseph's life was prolonged after his father's death for fifty years, during which time his brethren prospered under his protection, and the colony grew and multiplied amazingly. What happened after that no man can tell. But it is pretty well understood that about this time a revolution occurred in Egypt. The dynasty to which the Pharaoh who befriended Joseph belonged was overthrown and there succeeded a new dynasty, which did not recognize the obligations of Egypt to Joseph for his industrial wisdom and foresight, his financial policy, and his marvelous system of public works. Nay, if, as is now commonly supposed, the Pharaoh who gave audience to Jacob and showed no resentment when he told him that the business of himself and his brethren was about cattle, belonged to the Hyksos dynasty, or, in other words, to the Hittite race, nothing would be more natural than that the new occupants of the throne should identify the Goshen colony with them, coming as they did from the same general region of country and speaking, perhaps, a kindred language. That was how, it is most likely, the oppression began, gradually, at first, by a curtailment of privileges and by a displacement from a post of honor to one of contempt, but growing more insulting and onerous from year to year and from generation to generation, until their complete enslavement was effected. So slowly was the pressure brought to bear upon them that no restraint was put upon the fecundity of the people, and they grew and multiplied at such a constant and steady rate that, in the time of Rameses the Great, they had become so numerous as to appal by their very numbers the Egyptians themselves. Indeed, if we were to give credence to the account of their oppressors, their habitations had become so overcrowded and their habits in consequence so objectionable, that leprosy was with them a national disease, so that Pharaoh, in self-defense, was obliged to exclude them from his dominions. Doubtless there is some truth in this Egyptian view of the case. Still, until indisputable evidence is given to the contrary, the Scripture account must stand. Judging by that, it is true beyond question that the stock had suffered great deterioration physically, intellectually, and morally, by reason alike of their numbers and their privations. But while there are instances of leprosy among them—both Moses and his sister being afflicted with it—the disease does not appear to have been general or widespread. On the contrary, it is clear that the hand of God was in all their affairs, and that in like manner as he brought them down to Egypt to

"save life" and secure the beginning of a nation, so, though it were through tribulation and anguish of spirit, through humiliation and contempt, through disappointment and deferred hope, he was bringing them forth again to become a great people and play a mighty part in the salvation of humanity.

As to Joseph, it must be said that he does not belong to the order of the patriarchs. Though Jacob, in the partiality of his thoughts and affection, would have gladly made him his successor, though he did all in his power to exalt him above his brethren, yet by the evident design of God he was compelled to occupy a distinctly lower place. Neither the power nor the glory of Israel in the great story of its development is traceable to Ephraim but to Judah. Yet there can be no question that he was a divine instrument set to accomplish a divine purpose. He fully recognized himself as such. His strange experiences must have that interpretation, or they must remain without rational interpretation forever. Many writers have delighted to trace certain resemblances between Joseph and Jesus. But it is most doubtful whether there is any just warrant for such treatment. It is true he was the best beloved son of his father; that he had in his youth wonderful visions which almost betokened conversation with God; that he bore his sufferings in meekness and without reproach; that in prison he waited for the hand of the King to exalt and lift him up; that he descended from Canaan—which, in both Jewish and Christian thought, has ever been regarded as the figure of heaven—to Egypt; that he went down into that pagan realm, even

as Jesus went to hades; that he suffered his bones to remain there in the hope that his brethren would in due time carry them back to Canaan. Doubtless some of these resemblances were of prophetic import. Doubtless, too, in a higher sense than any other Hebrew from Abraham to John the Baptist, Joseph was the spiritual ancestor of those who were to constitute the kingdom of God. But it is not wise to press these analogies farther than they will bear. It is better to accept him as a man, on the natural side of his life, of the most extraordinary intellectual, moral, and spiritual equipment. Few men have ever lived who could stand beside him as his equal. In this respect he is a true descendant of Abraham. Yet no man can candidly study the record of the Book of Genesis without perceiving that he is more than that. He is scarcely less the favored and favorite son of Jacob than of God himself. He was raised up to do a work without which not only would Israel have perished, but the very way by which the Son of God was to come into this world would have been torn up and destroyed. No doubt God would have found other means of declaring himself to the world, but this was the means chosen and as such deserves our thoughtful and devout attention. So everywhere throughout this wonderful story of the patriarchs and their children, from the call of Abraham to the bondage of Israel, the tender but steadfast and triumphant purpose of Jehovah runs like a golden thread, ever becoming more distinct, and bright, and glorious as we steadily behold and profoundly examine it.

Eleanor H. Cagen

BOOK IV.

FROM THE BIRTH OF MOSES TO THE BEGINNINGS OF FREEDOM.

BY REV. FRANK W. GUNSAULUS, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

"THE CRADLE OF THE HEBREW NATION."

THERE are two majestic silences in the story of the Bible. One stretches from that hour whose chronicle we have in the closing words of the Book of Genesis, to that later hour, separated from the earlier by three hundred and fifty years, with which the Book of Exodus opens; the other, four centuries long, measures the distance between the utterance of the last prophet in the Old Testament and the outpoured melody of angels at the birth of Jesus in the New. In the lights and shadows of this first silence, we behold dimly outlined by the side of the dreamy Nile and the solemn pyramid, revealed only by the flash lights of a few short sentences written in a later period, the almost formless Israelitish host, around them that strange air invested with the purposes of Almighty God, and over them his distinct word of promise: "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation."¹ Recent readings of ancient monuments, the deciphering of moldering papyri, the pages of the Greek historians or Egyptian priests, vie with that magnificence of nature and of art which salutes the modern traveler, and that indubitable record made in the life and character of Israel, to show how admirably Egypt at that hour was fitted to be "the cradle of the Hebrew nation." The gift which, Herodotus says, was made to humanity by the Nile, was a seed bag containing the world's former harvestings.

The significance of all nature blooms into its fullness in the life and destiny of man. The equatorial rains creating the sluice-way for their outflow to the Mediterranean were ministers of him who sees the end from the beginning, and the delta thus created, as the torrents faded with the recession of the Nile, produced a civilization as opulent and various in its forces as were those material deposits on whose fertile surface it grew and flourished. But without a soul like Moses, and a people

educated to be led forth by such a leadership, despite what civilization had thus far achieved, these unrelated and unimpersonal energies were impotent. Egyptian life and idealism were able to preserve only as a memorial and a school for some divinely inspired people this wealth of the past, and this splendid present rapidly identifying itself with the past.

One of the facts which were certainly invalidating the intellectual and moral power of the throne of the Pharaohs to deal hopefully and in statesmanlike way with the possibilities of land and population was this enslaved mass of Jews. No other race could have contributed a multitude of bondmen so likely, even in the opinion of the Egyptian, to rebel, to incite trouble, and even to bring about revolution. For ages, Egypt and Israel had been hostile on every field. For centuries of Israel's sojourn, Egypt had beheld the people grow, develop a fierce independence in numerous predatory excursions into Canaan, and exhibit a far-sighted mastery of radical ideas. Taxes and burdens of incredible weight, seizures of ancient rights guaranteed by Joseph, and offenses against their old dream of freedom under God, only served to intensify a proud spirit of revolt. The oppressors feared the oppressed, as they were seen to assume new dignity with each new outrage visited upon them. The system of slavery was working its own destruction, largely by enslaving the throne with a wholesome dread of the enslaved. Conservatism, such as held visible empire but failed of real supremacy, then and there did, and always, indeed, does count up its traditions and wealth, its franchises and institutions, with such self-bewilderment that all young and righteous opposition, especially if it be in chains, appears as did the agitation of the American slave question in 1850 even to Daniel Webster, who called it a "rub-a-dub" agitation. Ancient privilege and crowned wrong are always being asked by the progressive and radical Christ of history to behold its institutions, while he says: "See ye not all these

¹Genesis xlvii, 3.

things?" and, because they are *things* and man is a *soul*, the Christ of history adds somewhere and sometime: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."¹

Egypt was rich in "*things*." She had wealth of soil and unbounded capacity of production. If ever slave labor may be called cheap—a proposition which the history of every slaveholding dynasty refutes—then did Egypt have cheap labor, which, with abundant food easily obtained from the luxuriant breast of nature, helped to make her a dowered queen in the company of half-fed oriental peoples. As day by day the spirit of freedom, grown up out of a sense of God's purpose, brought them nearer to the hour when the pilgrim children of Israel should look back upon all the past, there was deepening a richer material background, not the least impressive of whose elements was the Nile, teeming with fish, lakes brilliant with the plumage of birds, great stretches of garden land furnishing "the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic"; roadways trodden by caravans of laden camels moving between fertile and succulent pastures, and the yellow wheatfields in which the shepherds of Israel had become agriculturists; wide channels for irrigation, near whose banks flourished the fig and date trees, and over whose enriching currents bended the sycamore and the palm. That portion of Egypt in which Israel was cradled and trained might well be worthy of the praise which the reigning Pharaoh bestowed upon it, when he addressed Joseph, calling it "the best land."

In peace and war, commerce had added large wealth, material and mental, to Egypt. In the fourteen dynasties which had lived and perished before Joseph's day, ships had entered the harbors from every land; the beer of Galilee came in Palestinian galleys; cattle and rare woods, furs and perfumes, negroes and precious metals, were floated down the Nile to her cities; the products of Libya burdened the dusty caravans. The Nile valley had always been attractive to the shepherd tribes. Cushites and the nomadic races joined with Phœnicians, and probably Syrians, to open this opportunity to enterprising power. The conquered Hittites contributed vases of gold, artistic material and products for temple and residence, war chariots and woven silks. Egyptian greed never forgot the hour, when, under the powerful Thothmes, she imposed tribute, like some earlier Rome, upon the whole world. Fourteen campaigns against Western Asia have left a record of their booty on the walls of the temple at Karnak. Even Ethiopia was despoiled of treasure. But,

¹ Matthew xxiv, 2.

greatest of all the gifts for the future of humanity, the commercial spirit at its basest moment had given to this land, Joseph to be Grand Vizier; and now in his bones was Israel's imperishable hope.

To her own thought, Egypt had a finer wealth than all this. This very district is its fragmentary memorial. Ghostlike and sublime, the gigantic wreck of a great artistic life is beheld in the multitude of sphinxes and columns which dot the weary monotony of sand. The ancient canal is dry, but the granite features of the king still command from the company of the gods. While the wealth of turquoise from the mines of Sinai, or gold ore from the desert of Nubia, was borne slowly upon the Nile, and large dykes guarded the arable land, architecture had already employed millions of human beings, in the quarries, at the cataracts, with huge instruments of engineering, with fine tools for cutting and polishing, to complete the most astonishing results that now challenge the wonder of our race. Abraham had probably mused and pondered there of the strength of man, as sixty pyramids rose up to assure him that certainly the princes of Pharaoh were descendants of men of power.¹ Joseph had beheld a whole realm of art in the multitude of sepulchers and huge relics—the burial place of kings and cities. Sanctuaries were there whose wilderness of columns and overwritten walls were only surpassed in splendor by their vast and gorgeous approaches. For ten centuries the pyramid of Cheops had given promise that, twenty centuries later, western culture might look upon it with increased surprise. The one city, Memphis, the capital, was so magnificent as to continue its fascination for a millennium and a half, until the Father of History might be taught within her walls. Obelisks and pillars, giant statues and wonderful carvings compel the belief that still finer and grander was the capital of the Middle Empire, Thebes, while the City of the Sun remained at once the religious and educational metropolis, a veritable Vatican of priests and an Oxford of scholars, the memorial of Joseph's love for the Egyptian maiden and the spot where the Hebrew student was to become "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."² Like the sphinx itself, cut from a single enormous rock, stands out for the amazement of to-day the unique art-movement of this people.

Egypt was the college of the nations. Here was the academy in which the Platos and Bacon of the period held high converse—the birthplace of what is most attractive to the intellect in all human culture. This very fact was wealth. Egypt had the haughty self-con-

¹ Genesis xii, 15. ² Acts vii, 22.

fidence which sprang from the fact that her people were the most refined and cultured, if, indeed, they were not the only educated people in the known world. Greater than the builders of the capacious granaries and oil cellars, more deft and subtle than the artists of the wardrobes of all her thousand dignitaries in religion and government, partially accounting for her unmatched engineers, astronomers, chemists, architects, physicians, and philosophers, were Egypt's common-school teachers, a republic of primary pedagogues, which made her able to give to the first-grade boy in our schools his arithmetic as easily as she gave back to Greece her Pythagoras, but not until he was able to send a Plato to the City of On. A lettered class was formed of the scribes. The priest was the instructor. From the knowledge of the scales of notation, the student advanced to geometry and trigonometry. Civil engineering and mechanical engineering point to the aqueducts, and the huge stones lifted to their places in pyramids six hundred feet high, as proofs that the Egyptians understood not a little of their secrets. It is contended that their astronomy has left its memorial in the great pyramids; and it is certain that the year of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter was measured with a scholarship equal to our own. Our metallurgists have not scorned the blowpipe and bellows used at Thebes. The hydraulic engineer does not disdain the practical Egyptian's siphon; and the Israelites themselves became witnesses of what Egypt could give to slaves, in quite another direction of applied science and art, as they afterward manufactured beautiful works in gold and silver, embroidery and the setting of gems.

Egypt had government and religion. A long line of able rulers, a most brilliant career as a progressive people and the instinct for organization had furnished her with political traditions and revered methods of procedure. Herder insists that her pyramids and sepulchers are to be considered proof that her people had reached a misery and degradation incredible to us. Certainly, however, at an earlier time, very vital and energetic must have been the autonomy and self-dependence of the population to have produced such a specimen of what is called "a strong government."

Ancient paintings and sculptures reveal a high and firm civilization, as perhaps the earliest. At the time with which we are most concerned, Egyptian statecraft and politics added much to the richness of that background against which we may behold the portrait of Israel. The power to enslave foreign peoples was almost equalled by the finer strength

which wrought out of dissimilar populations such results as were achieved for government when Egyptian scribes, by a dominance of ideas, reconquered the rude shepherd kings. Such a warrior as Amenemhat I. enabled his successor to found such a city as Heliopolis. Her kings builded fortresses at the south and reservoirs for the Nile, while her priests crowded the cloisters with students. Her multitude of officials and her elaborate court ceremonial are to be considered along with a developing literature, a prophetic art-movement, and the career of a Thothmes who made Egypt the center of the world. Yet it was a statesmanship which dealt less earnestly with man than with "things."

As much may be said of her religion. Rich enough to contribute to Israel, it was, like her statesmanship, to afford by contrast a startling picture of the inherent supremacy of even an enslaved truth. If it had granted woman a high place, it had preached pious exercises of almost shameless beastliness. If it enthroned the Invisible and fostered some lofty ideas of God, it could deify cats and crocodiles, and prostrate itself before a golden bull or a chattering ape. Osiris might sit in the Judgment Hall of the two truths, himself a picture of justice; but vice was rampant under the blessings of the priesthood, and in the use of the Ritual for the Dead, while confession was made of the truths of divine self-existence and the soul's immortality, the pilgrim soul, on escaping a debased body, protested its virtue and righteousness. All this huge anomaly was made gorgeous in magnificent temples, musical or eloquent in a rich service, vital in the eager orthodoxy of countless priests, inclusive of astonishing achievements of science, and identical in methods and hope with a powerful government.

Against all these, wrapped up in the form of a helpless baby, lying in tears amidst the tall flags and lotus blossoms of the Nile, were the unredressed wrongs of a whole people, and the purposes of the unforgetting God. As a man-child of manacled Hebrewdom, he encountered the command of Pharaoh in the first breath he drew: "*Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river.*"¹ Doubtless many sons had perished, as mother after mother sighed near the bank of that river where a large portion of Israel had its dwelling; but the cause of the oppressed had not been drowned, and here, at this moment, that cause was identical with divine providence and human pity in saving for the leadership of the bondmen, Moses, the Captain, the Lawgiver, the Prophet, and the Emancipator of his people.

¹ Exodus i, 22.

CHAPTER II.

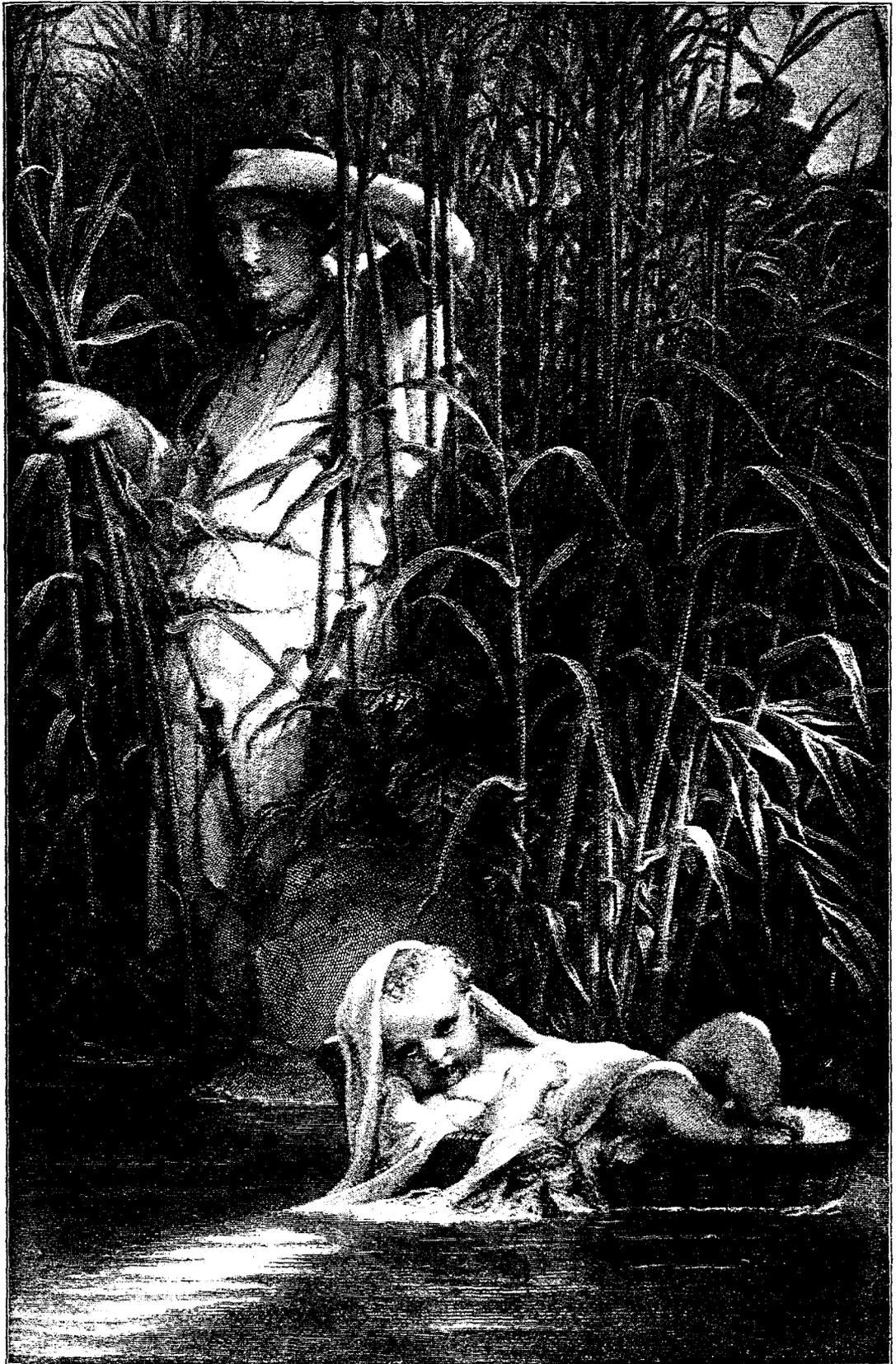
THE YOUTH OF MOSES.

WHEN Amram was joined in holy wedlock with Jochebed, there was consummated an alliance of great significance to human history. The name Jochebed was one of those anticipations, of that of which much has elsewhere been said — Israel's perpetually widening and enriching revelation of the character of God — a prophetic revelation of the covenant-making Lord, of whom Moses, their son, was soon to have a fuller vision — for her name means "*She whose glory is Jehovah.*" Amram, whose name signifies "*Kin of the High One,*" was of the tribe of Levi, the offspring of Kohath, who was the second son of the head of the Levitic priesthood. Any child of this marriage, therefore, belonged to the truest aristocracy of God. This blood had thrilled to the commands and inspirations of the purest faith. Their creed was continually alive with promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Almost alone, amidst the corrupting influences of Egyptian mythology and worship, the tribe of Levi had kept the faith. Already, Miriam and Aaron had been born, and the daughter was a grown-up girl of twelve or fourteen, the son a child of three, when God blessed their union again, and Moses, a child of "exceeding fairness," lay in his mother's arms. Probably Aaron had come to them before the inhuman tyrant had issued his desperate command that the male children of Hebrewdom should be drowned. But, here and now, motherhood meets this dreadful order with her fair babe. Three months of hiding her child made Jochebed more heroic in her faith in God. Trusting the "eternal womanly" in woman, she really trusted God. There were the growing rushes; they could be made into a waterproof ark by the use of slime and a coating of pitch. Silently and lovingly Jochebed might deposit the treasure of her love and hope in the Nile's shadows amidst the bulrushes. There Pharaoh's daughter would come to bathe with her attendant maidens. And there — it was motherhood's dearest dream — the child would be safe, because of God. Then occurred the most marvelous of "the marvelous things" "in the field of Zoan."¹ No vicious crocodile infested its beautiful waters, almost shadowed by the ancient royal residence; and, as the princess bathed, the cry of the babe, which she could not yet interpret as the cry of an enslaved race through her to God, came to her pitiful soul. The Egyptian Ritual for the Dead compelled any spirit to answer at the last: "I have not afflicted any man: I have not made any man weep: I have not

¹ Psalm lxxviii, 12.

withheld milk from the mouth of sucklings." Besides, in spite of the evident fact that this, by Pharaoh's law, was a doomed child of the hated and feared Hebrews, here was a woman's responsive heart ready to reëcho the baby's cry. Humanity has shaken many a dynasty into dust. At the moment when the discovery became a problem, and Pharaoh's daughter was perhaps pondering the words: "I have not withheld milk from the mouth of sucklings," the sister, furnishing for all ages a delicately and strongly drawn portrait of true sisterhood, naively offered the love-begotten proposition that some Hebrew woman be asked to nurse him. What the Nile-god had given to Pharaoh's daughter, the Almighty One had first given to Jochebed and Hebrewdom. Consent was easily obtained; the mother of Moses was chosen — and that night he lay in Jochebed's bosom.

Ebers has devoted many of his brilliant sentences to the description of the appearance of the princess, who probably was, as he insists, none other than the sister of that young Ramesses who was at that time associated king with Seti I. Traditions and inscriptions give her the names of Thermouthis and Merris. It is of more importance that Moses, whose name signifies "*Taken from the water,*" became, in due course of events, a member of the royal household. Here, and at the institutions of learning frequented by such distinguished youth, he was to be "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." He had soon entered the priestly caste. We have already referred to the fact that Egypt was herself a university in which every docile youth was matriculated. To know Egypt, as any bright young boy would know that superb memorial and grand workshop of scholars, was to be "learned." But Moses was vouchsafed all the unique advantages which were offered by the throne and the priesthood in which he was at least a novice. He trod the cloisters and sat in the lecture rooms where intelligence was imparted from the lips of illustrious professors. He mused in the libraries where eminent scribes were reproducing for such bibliographical museums as that of famous Alexandria was to be, the results of human thought and discovery; he was inducted into the art of song and the knowledge of the sacred physicians and astrologers, horoscopers and idol dressers, amidst the perpetual pageant of the palaces and the temples; but, more important still, he became the scholar of the "*Wisdom of Egypt.*" This was the sacred possession of a small circle of the intellectual and religious aristocracy. Into



P. DELAROCHE.

PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND THE CHILD MOSES.

the secrets of that treasure, of which we learn both so little and so much from the glimpses of Greek and Roman philosophers hundreds of years afterward, Moses entered with such docility and thoroughness that, through all the pilgrim march, at Sinai, and in his earnest appeals in the wilderness, he is still the debtor to the culture obtained in the land of his youth. Probably the university at Heliopolis took him for a large portion of his youth from the imperial palace, but it was only the residence of a king's favorite at the spot where more kingly minds than Pharaoh's contributed their science and philosophy to his large and open soul. Along with this, another culture grew. Amram and Jochebed and Hebrewdom, through solemn memory, ancient psalm, and inspiring promise, had obtained the start of the throne and university of the City of the Sun. The mother's knee is the altar at which the child-soul makes the sacrifice of itself to the learning which is life's chief resource and highest commandment. Against all this culture from Egypt, over it and through it, supple and strong enough to master and to use it, was the home culture of the Hebrew hearthstone. Then and there came what Principal Fairbairn calls "the conflict of the two natures, the native and the acquired in him; the victory of the Hebrew over the Egyptian."

On one of those days when slavery sullenly vaunted its hateful prerogative, the patriot Jew flashed forth from the scholarly courtier, as afterward William the Silent was to rise, with a sword in his hand, from out the sometime easy-going and compliant inmate of the palace of Charles V. One of the native masters was beating a Hebrew slave. In his wrath, Moses slew the Egyptian taskmaster. Of course, this conduct was murder, and it courted death as punishment. It separated him from his brethren. He added to his crime, in the eye of the Egyptian law, for, by concealing the corpse, he had prevented embalmment; and Egypt believed that the soul of the dead could not enter heaven. Nothing but exile remained for Moses, if he desired to live. Away to the craggy Sinaitic peninsula he hurried for refuge. The Almighty One was guiding Israel in every step which Moses took. Elsewhere, especially if he had fled to the south of Palestine, the authorities, acting under the Hittite treaty, would have returned him an extradited prisoner. No; God would acquaint Israel's emancipator with that set of facts of which neither Amram's household nor Egypt's university possessed the requisite knowledge. The Moses of Israel's emancipation was to need all he could acquire of the knowledge of Sinai. Barren Midian is better, at this stage in the education of any Moses, than Thebes or On, or even the feast of the Jews.

Cromwell must drain the fen country. So did God give Washington the English colonial territory to win, or to survey, before and after Braddock's defeat, that he might save it to the cause of the Continental army; so also did God educate Lincoln in the Midian of Kentucky, where he could know American slavery and survey the actual intellectual and spiritual territory through which he was to lead a race to the Canaan of liberty—a Canaan which, like Moses, he saw from afar as he died on Nebo.

Here in Midian, where he met Abraham and Keturah's wandering descendants, the man Moses, now forty years of age, was certain to obtain, not only from the nomadic race, but also from the vast solitudes of nature, a nobler and clearer idea of the Almighty One. Moses was full of fiery quality which was to temper his character, while now and then it burst forth, as it did at one of the ancient wells. Base and insulting shepherds had offended the daughters of the priest of Midian, driving away their flocks. The chivalric Moses protected them with a strong hand. Every such act deepens the soul's receptiveness for the truer vision of the Eternal Righteousness. Out of this came the invitation to their father's house and the marriage of Moses to Zipporah, his daughter. Slight indeed is the record of those forty years; but there is much evident, though it be unrecorded, history in these silences. Zipporah afterward proved to be strong-willed and high-tempered; and with her the soul of Moses was wifeless. When at length he went to Pharaoh, Zipporah was sent away. Doubtless the house of the rich sheik, Jethro, served Moses best, as it sent him back into the resources of his own spirit and the worship of God. His two sons seem by their very names to indicate that, while there, he was also exiled from the real business of his life. Their names were *Gershom*—"banishment"; *Eliczer*—"My God is help." All this while, Moses was moving toward God and divine destinies. Here were the Horeb mountains and there was Sinai—to them he would return. Here he was making definite and larger the knowledge of that land, many of whose valleys and heights, roadways, wells and streams would, at a future day, challenge or assist his ability to lead a nation to liberty. Those sandstone hills, purple and red in their craggy sublimity, lit by every variation of light; the vague and wide desert, less barren than now; the numerous wadies, shadowed by pinnacles and cliffs; the eagle flying with her young—these all deepened the solemnity of human life; and the musing man found here the majesty of God. All of these, like so many nourishing forces, prepared him for that event in whose mysterious lights the Hebrew nation found its torch lit for revolution.

CHAPTER III.

THE BURNING BUSH AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

“AND the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”¹

Such is the divine narrative of the event most genetic and formative in the character of the Hebrew chieftain. Moses never before had an intelligent hold upon himself; never before had he a just conception of how his own life took hold of other lives and bound itself up with the fate of human society and the reign of God in the world. In the vision of God he gained the vision of himself. It is interesting to study the inner life of Moses before the vision of this burning bush and afterward. Nothing in the whole Bible, so truly as this, gives the portrait of a man's spiritual self in those moments of mingled hot-headedness and indifference, before he finds God and himself in some hour of vision, and the portrait of that other self when by that vision he has become an intelligent and conscientious force which knows no wasteful outburst of energy nor has a moment in which its constant vitality is not at work. Years before he had felt, in that unintelligent way in which men feel the pressure of great wrongs, the atrocity of Egyptian bondage, and when the Hebrew was receiving the cruel stroke, he dispatched the Egyptian taskmaster. It was an unregulated outburst of indignation which, so far as we know, did not leave a single great purpose in his heart. Indeed, it had left him poorer in all the requirements of a constructive reformer, rather than richer. There is always something enervating and dissipating in those fire-sweeping movements of the soul, when the blaze has not come from a great flaming truth or a torch-like principle lighting men on to a definite goal. Moses fled from the court of the king, and after years of love and exile, wherein no word is spoken,

so far as we know, of the mighty problem which he encountered in that beaten slave, and which he does not seem at all to try to solve, we find him an oriental shepherd. He is well married; why should he trouble himself about the great world and its perplexing questions? He reclines on the soft turf and sees the feeding flocks of a rich father-in-law; why should he worry about the people who are unfortunate enough to be in slavery? Let the fanatics take care of those matters. He once was all on fire, too. And he thinks, as he looks out from the mountain-side over the delightful valley, that his enthusiasm cost dearly enough. But yet, before that wretched self-content which keeps many a well-housed son-in-law and many an untroubled man from being of service to his race—just before that self-satisfied, comfortable and easy life puts its crown on—the native man in this shepherd wakes to behold the vision of God, the burning bush, the revealing omnipotence of righteousness, and the glowing but perpetual victory of truth.

Many a man has had all this experience, save the recognition of the burning bush. He, too, has been living in a world full of sin, and cruelty, and crime. In his ardent youth, he has seen some proud iniquity beat its slave, and he has hurled himself against it to put it out of existence. There has been no great principle at the bottom of his act; no peerless truth lay like a revelation in his soul; no profound righteousness shone like a star above the swelling anger of his indignant spirit. And that experience of trying to help the world has left him much less strong. It has exiled him from the very society in which he might be expected to shine. It has so thoroughly impressed him with the littleness of his power and the loneliness of his effort, that he is half ashamed that he has tried to do anything at all. Like Moses, domestic life is probably his chief concern. To be well fed and well clothed mean more than they meant then. To have a respectable income, even if it comes only by a fortunate marriage; to be sure of an easy, quiet life; to muse about nature, and, at a great distance, to pity the unfortunate—these are now of priceless value. When men talk about enthusiasm and the flaming truths of God, it is enough to remind them that once he was on fire too, and that he burned out with great rapidity; that these glowing moments are very brilliant, but full of dangerous heat and consuming flame. His dead Egyptian did not save Israel. But here Moses is transformed. He has found God;

¹ Exodus iii, 2-7.

he has found himself. Before, he was easy and content; now there blazes in his spirit the flame of glowing truth which shall furnish ensigns for the great revolution. No longer shall the beautiful pastures enchant his spirit; no foot of land shall be but cursed to him so long as Egypt bears the footstep of a slave. Before, he was isolated and knew no feeling which made the life he lived and the life his kinsmen lived one; now the full responsibility of humanity is upon him, and, with a consciousness of being in the presence of God, the luxuriant and selfish individualism goes out as the true personality comes into him. How strange was everything! Over the splendid sky under which he was delightedly watching the flock, was written, "*Let my people go!*"¹ On the rock against which he leaned, or in whose shade he fell asleep aforetime, blazed the words, "*Let my people go!*" Into the playful brook and along the rapid river on whose banks he had stood in easy grace and pastoral mood, there sounded the alarm to Pharaoh, the tocsin of war to the Egyptian throne, the first movement of freedom to the hapless slave. "*Let my people go!*" God had revealed himself, and Moses was a transformed man.

Truth will burn, and by its burning illuminate, yet it is inconsumable; principles will flame with living fire and make the very air to glow and quiver with heat, yet they are indestructible; right, love of God and love of man will blaze in their significance and tremble with their withering or beneficent fire, but they will know no consumption or waste; they cannot be reduced to ashes; they are as eternal as God. That little thorn bush which Moses saw has gone down into history as the teacher of these things. But it is not alone. Wherever any noble creature of God has seen the truth, which, through a thousand heated struggles, has burned its way into the air men breathe and perpetuated its existence while it made the tropics in some polar region of public sentiment, safe after all the fury of fire, still standing and still burning with a divine glory — there has been the vision of the burning bush. When any soul has seen a flaming principle, which, through dark and dismal times, has sent its illumination afar, still blazing after the eyes of men have been entranced by its revelation, waiting while it glows with the fervor of God to light up a new era, or scatter the darkness of some new danger — there has been the vision of the burning bush. Wherever the quenchless right which has trembled with fire divine through long ages, and warmed the damp air and made bright the landscape around it, still is seen to abide in the furnace

heat of its old splendor and wait to rouse men to new duties — there is the burning bush. Wherever some great heart feels the inextinguishable love of humanity which has felt the drenching rains of centuries of doubt and despair, and still believes that man is God's child, and still is ready with the old inconsumable enthusiasm to brave defeat and endure danger for man's sake — there the burning bush of Moses stands, and there a new Moses finds God.

Israel here found her greatness through the experience of her greatest soul. The revelation of himself in the commonplace is one of the most interesting facts of God's dealings with men. And the more we see of the nature of this burning bush, the more we discover of the fitness of this characteristic of the event. If that point in every man's history, where he becomes the true and earnest man he ought to be, is where he is fascinated with the permanency and missionary quality of truth, and right, and love, it is certain that God must get him to feel all this, in perfect independence of the circumstances in which it comes to him. To be great, a nation through its leaders must see God in the least of its events. There was just as much in the episode with the Egyptian to make a reformer; there was just as much of principle and righteousness involved as there was in the burning bush. Why did the bush arouse this man? The answer is: God was in it, to the eye of Moses. Of course, the years lying between had trained his vision to depth and spirituality. Never before did Moses see God shining in the truth that he was to use through that whole revolution; never before did he see the Omnipotent One behind the impersonal principle, which, because it was unilluminated and cold without God, had not yet roused him; never before did he know that *his* love for man was *God's* love for man in him. God might have spoken to Moses by some great event, in some huge way, which would have fitly shown how vast God's hand or voice was, but that would not have found the interior and essential Moses which the exigent future would demand. Moses had work before him to do, as has every man, of the sort which is not to be done by a soul whose sight is not fine enough to discover the significance of that flaming little bush, whose ear was not deft enough to catch the voice which spake in the midst of its flame. It must be a "great sight" to him. Never has there been a great leader, or a real helper of men, who has not been able to see that truth, principle, right, each is one. That eye alone can see the larger which sees intelligently the less. A man must know the infinity inside the right, burning but inconsumable, which is trampled upon, or struggled for, in the least conspicuous event of human

¹ Exodus v, 1.

life. He must be able to see the divine self inside the principle which shines above some little transaction of man with men. He must know the God in the right, or the truth, which is begging for championship in some insignificant occurrence in the whirl of business, the rush of trade, the movement of society, the action of each man toward his neighbor. To see that, is to see the burning bush.

God's training of the eye of Moses began where, by his grace, all training for great deeds ought to be begun. Give the child, Israel, the ability to discover the presence of God as ruler, as judge, as inspirer, in every truth, every principle, wherever he finds it; let him learn to hear the divine voice speaking out of it, in the very least event where the right burns and is not consumed—and his soul is fitted for the loftiest duties of the earth. When he comes to Sinai's thunder and lightning, his foremost man, Moses, shall understand them.

It is very characteristic of so rare a spirit as Moses that he should say, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." For when Moses first noticed it, it was simply "a great sight"—a flame which did not consume. Every quality of mind, which the study of his after-life reveals, was aroused. Always the deeper the nature the more genuine is its wonder, the more profound is its sense of mystery. Just that questioning advance which Moses made toward that bush will be made by any true soul, when first it sees, somewhere along life's pathway, some principle flashing with flame and blazing with heat in some contest of right with wrong, and yet yielding nothing to the combustion, losing nothing in the fiercest fire. He is a dull man who, unlike Moses, does not feel that it is thus far "*the great sight*" of his life.

Israel, through Moses, met another method of God the moment he advanced toward the bush. God said to him what, at some time in the study of such mysteries, God says to every thoughtful soul: "Moses, Moses." He touched for the first time the *personal self* of the Hebrew leader with his own personal self. "*Here am I,*" said Moses. In his discovery of God, Moses had found himself, as every soul must. Then comes into action the old method of God with the human soul, when he says to it: "This mystery is the mystery which inheres in me and my presence in the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is not yours to understand, but to *use*. You are standing on holy ground now. Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet." The use of this inspiring wonder characterizes the life of Israel, and that alone differentiates Israel from all other ancient peoples.

It is a great step in the progress of any soul, or nation, toward the practical, useful understanding of God, when it obeys this voice from out the heat of the flame. Many a soul stands by that bush and loses all the benefit of God's revelation of himself in the good, the true, the beautiful, blazing yet unconsumed, because it will not recognize that the mystery of it is to be *used* as a mystery, not to be analyzed into the category of life's comprehended facts. God says to our speculation and rationalism: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet." It is profanity, and no soul or nation is deep, so long as it is irreverent and unawed. Heaven pity the soul or nation which, especially in its beginnings, has no holy ground. After all, it is the reserve of all noble life. Men and governments are great by the length and breadth of "holy ground" in their lives.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MEMORIAL NAME AND ITS INFLUENCE.

IT is not too much to say that the majestic possibilities afterward unfolded in the character of this people inhered in the call of Moses which was communicated to him before he returned to Egypt. "The great events of the world," says the penetrative Amiel, "take place in the intellect." The author of the kingdom of love, himself a refashioner of man's life and conduct by means of inculcating a larger and truer conception of God, always spoke of the divine order of progress as "from above." First, "the new heavens" of thought and worship, then "the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Progress," says Hegel, "first in the idea,

then in the thing." This consideration, so variously stated, helps us to see that the resource which every great and reforming soul draws upon for strength is that which he calls supreme—the power that rules the worlds. The character and potency of *that which governs* is the base of supplies for every soul undertaking a task worthy of himself. If the task is greater than any preceding it, it is so partly because it involves greater truths. It must, therefore, call upon deeper fountains of inspiration and guidance. Every Moses makes new tasks command him, and every Moses goes deeper into the nature of God for the supply of his intellectual and spiritual necessities.

God discloses some hitherto unknown tract of himself: He renames *Moses* by renaming himself in the experience of his prophet. This is the significance of that episode in the life of mankind—for his was a contribution to the race's theology and statesmanship—in which Moses beholds the burning bush.

Nothing can excel in simple strength the account in the Bible: ¹ "Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: moreover I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he

said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

All these incidents led, with that naturalness which characterizes the divine method of education, to an event of the supremest importance. The hour had come for God to give to his servant a new name for the supreme power above him—a name so profoundly related to the deeps this task might call upon, so intimately close to the heart of the people whose every throbbing energy it must tax, that it would stand as a memorial name. "And Moses said, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" That question "*Who am I?*" is not fundamental. God does not answer it to any hesitant soul. It is not so important to know "*Who am I?*" as to know "*Who art thou, O God?*" The resources and inspirations of every great task are not in Moses, but in the power which he calls supreme. No man sees himself, or knows himself, except as he knows the life that is his life, the spirit that inspirits him. It was not strange that Moses should find his own personality only in finding the surer lines of the personality of God. Moses then and there asked for the new name. And God answered: "I AM THAT I AM." In order to strengthen the idea which doubtless leaped into being, that he might *use* this new name, and that it had an inherent authority, God added: "*Tell Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you.*"

Already God's name, as Israel knew it, had served as a protection against the entrance into their worship of the animals of Egypt and the monsters of the river. In his exile in Midian, Moses had found, still more grand and awe-inspiring than ever before, the Almighty One. There was enough in that name by which his fathers had worshiped God, and enough in their deeper experiences in obeying and serving him, to suggest, even in the time mentioned in the Book of Genesis, the name *Jehovah*. But, at this hour, Moses was really to reveal its meaning, as past ran through present into future events, and to hear God utter to the growing life of Israel the truth of any prophetic idea of him. It was to the life of Israel a *new name*. From henceforth, they were "the people," not only of the Almighty, certainly not of Baal or Moloch: they were "the people of Jehovah." A long step had been taken toward that far-off hour when the greater Jew, whose life was a burning bush, would

¹Exodus iii, 1-16 (Revised Version).

teach his followers to say: "Our Father who art in heaven."

Moses might now build loftily, because he had gone to the foundation of all being. His first stone of the edifice rested on the self-dependent. His appeal was to the cause of causes. Out of that name would arise commandments and codes, government and prophetic visions, as the blossoms from a seed. Pharaoh was right when he said: "*Who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah.*" To name the power of powers *Jehovah*, was the declaration that the soul of all history and all hope is. All true philosophy of history begins in that moment of which God gives the account in the words: "And God spake unto Moses and said, I am *Jehovah*; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of *El Shaddai* [The Omnipotent], but by the name *Jehovah* did I not make myself known unto them."

"I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Here, then, is the covenanting God—the supreme God of promises. One fact connects and relates the ages. "I AM THAT I AM" is himself both the promise and the promiser, to every Moses of civilization. This personal and care-taking God puts a soul into all the apparent chaos of ideas and things. These burning bushes are the beacon fires of the race's pilgrimage. Alone they last, while generations come and go. Man is never out of sight of their ardent glow. His children come to hear the same voice from the center of the flame, which has scarcely died away on the ears of their fathers. The ages of human life are thus, under *Jehovah*, one and indivisible.

With this resource, with this light illuminating the past, the present and the future, Israel could now speak, through Moses, to saint or to tyrant. The dead Joseph lived again in the words with which Moses addressed the elders of Israel. The dying words of the patriarch were: "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."¹ Now, nearly four hundred years later, they trembled again on the unquiet air, when Moses spake: "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying: I have surely visited you."² Joseph had made an oath: "Ye shall carry up my bones from hence."³ In the ampler eloquence of Moses, the glad and heroic funeral procession was already forming. In this steady and sagacious leader, what a different man lives than was the self-confident, lawless, and rash avenger of that beaten slave!

Moses' ardor, however, while it had cooled, had permanently contributed to the intensity of his purpose to do something for his own people. In that exile of forty years, consequent upon his rash act, the slaves had been growing readier for noble revolt, and when their unknown leader returned, the very dependence he placed in the elders of Israel showed that he appreciated the value of organization in his enterprise. All the old fire was there, but now it played upon the resources, developing every cold drop into propulsive steam.

But, through the eyes of the leader, Israel must behold God's will in the most suggestive signs. Surely the method of God's training at such hours helps us to understand the prophet, ages afterward, when he says: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."¹ Moses was commanded to cast his shepherd's staff on the ground. It was transformed into a slithering serpent, and Moses was terrified and fled. God bids him to take it by the tail, and lo, it is "a rod in his hand." So the Lord was leading Israel; so also *does* the Lord lead his Israel evermore. It was more than the announcement to Moses that, as he had hitherto used the ordinary crook of the shepherd, so he was henceforth to use for sovereign purposes the power of Egypt. Even Pharaoh's diadem shone with the serpent—the symbol of royalty, the emblem of Egyptian power. It is true that when, once again, he seized it, his thought would apprehend Israel as his flock and this "rod of God" should be his staff of authority and affection. But more than this is to be learned here. The secret of all masterful manhood is here an open one. Every man is a victim of his power, or the victor over it—the victor *by* it and *through* it. The ambition of a life, if it be thrown on the ground, is a hissing serpent from which any frightened and timid soul flees; that ambition seized by the strong hand of faith becomes the rod of strength. Whatever authority over his fellows the man who possesses it is to have in this world must come from this very factor in his existence. A weakness is only a power cast down on the earth; a power is only a weakness seized and handled by the courage of faith. *Jehovah* continued this teaching of his children of Israel by Moses. He placed his hand in his bosom, and it became leprous; when he placed it there again it was restored to health and strength. The priestly power in his devotion to Israel brings out the leprous relationship in which they stand to Egypt, and that same power delivers them from this contagion. Again, the

¹ Genesis I, 24.

² Exodus iii, 16.

³ Genesis I, 25.

¹ Hosea xi, I.

water of the Nile shall become blood as he pours it on the dry land. Here, God seems to say, is a cause to which all the fruitful energies of the Nile are to be submissive. Surely, as Lange suggests, here are seen the prophetic, the priestly, and the kingly qualities of the deliverer. God gave these to him and developed these in him; and, in their growth, Moses was less self-confident; he was modest in the presence of new energies.

What could be more natural to such a concentrated soul, in the midst of so much din and confusion, than a desire to possess the orator's guerdon of strength? He bemoaned the slowness of his tongue. Here was the Cromwell of the period with what Sir Philip Warwick called a "sharp and untunable voice" and "no grace of speech." Like the stern Oliver, Moses was to change empires by saying "Yea" and "Nay," at the right times and with just emphasis, though he should also leave to the literature of eloquence some of its finest passages. No greater orator lives than he whose words, like his deeds, are God's utterances through him.

It must be confessed that Pharaoh heard a trumpet-tone within the words which soon left the lips of Moses and fell upon the ruler's ears: "The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God."¹ "The God of

the Hebrews!" This expression echoed the arms of ancient battles and whispered of other and future fields of contest. We must remember that Moses was not always beyond reproach; God was delivering men by a man like unto themselves. But, at least, here was no shrewd diplomat seeking only the escape of Israel by way of false pretenses; the earnest-eyed Hebrew leader had not forgotten Israel's ancient rights; and, indeed, in this matter, he was regardful of the rights and religious sensitiveness of Egypt. It must be remembered that Israel had never been captured, or rightfully bound, even according to Egyptian jurisprudence. Under Joseph, it was understood that they "sojourned there." Besides in this case, their worship, in which they were granted such privileges, must be an abominable thing to Egyptian piety. This request on the part of Moses and Israel gave the government of Pharaoh an opportunity for wise and just concession. "All government," says Burke, "is possible only by compromise." A righteous compromise is truest statesmanship. Would he, *could* he, exercise the statesmanship which looked toward an assimilation of this people with the Egyptian nationality? To neglect to do this involved, here and now, such an act of despotism as could indicate nothing else to Israel than a determination to abolish the worship of Jehovah and stamp out the Hebrew. Pharaoh refused. So, and only so, does God "harden Pharaoh's heart."

CHAPTER V.

LAST DAYS IN EGYPT.

THE war of the great exile was on. It was, as Pharaoh dimly saw, a war with Jehovah also. He had felt the force of the Hebrew's vision of God. "Jehovah," said Moses, "God of Israel, saith: Let my people go that they may hold a feast in the wilderness." "Who is Jehovah?" protested the startled devotee of the golden bull — "Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice?"² The King of Egypt had already lost his slaves. Statesmanship without the "*I am that I am*" has no future. It can only say to the strained institution, as Pharaoh said to that mass of bondmen, "Get you to your burdens." All revolution is repressed evolution. "Statesmanship," says Goldwin Smith, "is not the art of making a revolution, but the art of avoiding one." Moses seemed to be the revolutionist; he was only pleading for evolution. Pharaoh was the spring of the great revolt; and God said of him: "With a strong hand shall he

drive them out of his land. I am Jehovah!"¹ Pilgrims with Mayflower compacts in their cabins owe to Pharaoh their glorious exile. "I am Jehovah!" They alone bear republics and democracies into unsubdued wildernesses or lands of Canaan. "I am Jehovah!"

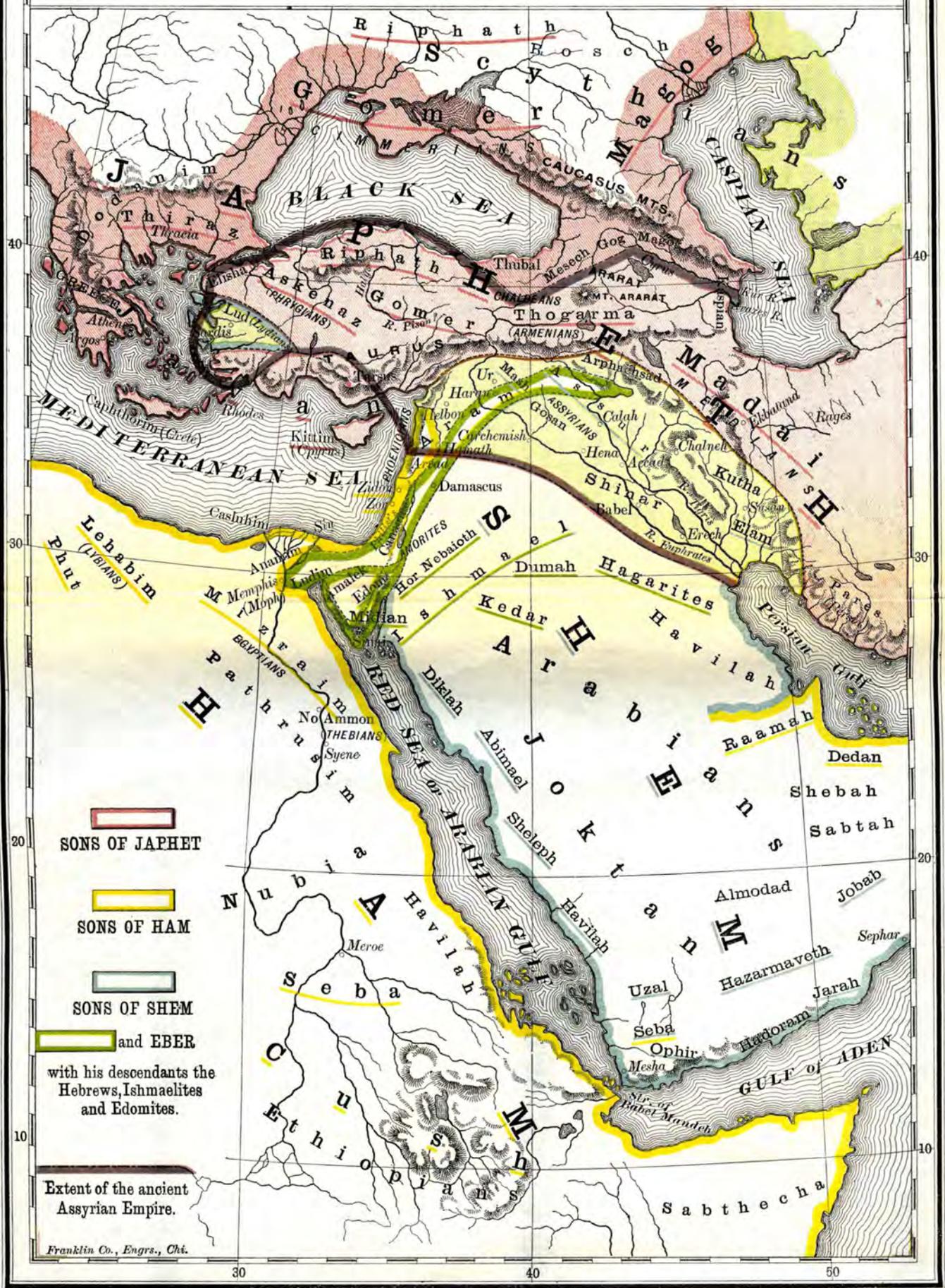
Too much honor is not likely to be paid to the less conspicuous and unrecorded forces in any beneficent revolution; and we are always likely to underestimate even so strong a spirit as Aaron, the elder brother of this divinely led man. While Moses had been in Midian, Aaron had been so sympathetic with God's purpose and so earnest in pushing it to achievement, that, at length, just before Moses returned to Egypt, Aaron journeyed to meet him at Sinai. In that forty years, Israel had grown ripe for revolt. The elders had fostered and guided the growing desire for freedom. As they came to understand God, they understood more truly man and his problem. With the development

¹ Exodus v, 3 (Revised Version). ² Exodus v, 2.

¹ Exodus vi, 1-2.

THE WORLD AS KNOWN TO THE HEBREWS

ACCORDING TO THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT.

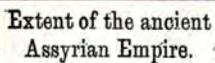


 SONS OF JAPHET

 SONS OF HAM

 SONS OF SHEM

 and EBER
with his descendants the
Hebrews, Ishmaelites
and Edomites.

 Extent of the ancient
Assyrian Empire.

of a sense of Jehovah's righteousness had come the development of a sense of the wrongs they had been suffering. Heavier burdens had created only clearer convictions; the lash of the oppressor had intensified a passionate devotion to the cause into whose deeper meanings their as yet unacknowledged leader had been looking. The hour for a shrinking leader had passed. Aaron had already been mentioned to the timid and awed Moses as a person more apt at public speech, and he was ready to go with Moses to Pharaoh—each of the brothers possessed of a new eloquence. Jethro had said to Moses, as he left Midian: "Go in peace!" but now there was no peace before his footsteps. God had told him that his *personal* enemies were dead; the foe of freedom was never more powerful; and Pharaoh would not let the people go. Before the man Moses was worthy to utter a command to Pharaoh, Jehovah had been compelled to strip Moses of all unworthiness; personalities must be lost in causes. It was a terrible culture; great souls may be wedded to great aims, not otherwise. A violent death, the impending of a fearful disease—God's threatened judgments—made him perceive the value of divine command above his own hesitant individualism and the disobedient whim of Zipporah, his wife. Herself compelled to perform the rite of circumcision upon the younger son, according to the covenant with Abraham, she had only this to say to Moses, "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me."¹ Only on the boy's quick recovery did she utter words of delayed gratefulness. The mighty words of God to Moses had been exchanged for Aaron's report of the condition of the Hebrews, as the brothers had conversed together. Pharaoh had offered them only his defiance. Back to their labors the children of Jehovah's covenant had been sent, no longer to be furnished with the usual chopped straw with which they had been manufacturing clay into bricks, no longer able to search for straw and keep up their tale of bricks, *therefore* no longer able to escape the beatings of the overseers—alas, no longer proof against the taunts of the ruler alleging their idleness. Though so recently the elders of Hebrewdom had expressed joy that the crisis had come, now, to train them more thoroughly, Moses and Aaron were charged by the united voice of Israel with being the authors of Israel's woes. Nothing could have given a harder blow. Yet God followed this apparently pitiless stroke against Moses by giving him additional assurances, all of them ringing with the old theme, "*I am Jehovah!*" Command, however, preceded only their failure to reach Pharaoh's heart.

Assurance from God swiftly followed defeat with man. At length, Moses and Aaron alone have utterly failed; and now let the Almighty One, whose new name is *Jehovah*, speak to him.

The Pharaoh of this date was, if the conclusions of scholars are right, Menephtah I., son of Rameses II., with whom Moses had doubtless been associated in his childhood within the royal palace. Why should *he* listen, even to this interesting and learned Jew? But his attention was now to be engaged by the power behind the Hebrew:

"*Right* forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

There rang through the mazes of the problem a divine word: "Against the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am Jehovah!"¹ Moses and his eloquent brother Aaron again confronted the despot. The leader's mission was attested by wondrous signs. The rod became a serpent; but Pharaoh was unmoved, for he knew the Egyptian magicians might surpass this marvel. Great was the meaning of the serpent to idolatrous Egypt, but Aaron's rod swallowed up all the others. That rod symbolized the fact that God's purpose is all-inclusive. But such a lesson is too difficult for an unteachable ruler to learn. The worshipping Pharaoh, probably more than ever attentive to the Nile-god Osiris, is met at the river bank by Moses, just as always human plans that are wrong are met and judged by some lonely but omnipotent truth. Man is more deeply superstitious toward the old gods, when the command of unacknowledged truth is offensive to him. But the Nile is turned into blood. History has many such events, of which this is the symbol. The pride and wealth of evil—all its productiveness and profits—are suddenly made a loathing and hateful asset, when the hour comes for goodness to execute its plans for humanity and God. Many a people, refusing the true ideal, as did Pharaoh, have been unable to drink inspiration from an old one, which, perhaps, had become as much an idol to reactionary wrong as had the Nile to Pharaoh. It is not to the purpose to explain this phenomenon by reference to the transforming influences of the vanishing year upon the river, or to those still more evident influences of the setting sun upon the languid stream. All these Pharaoh understood. Even to explain the event by reference to the "rapid growth of infusoria and minute cryptogamous

¹ Exodus iv, 25.

¹ Exodus xii, 1

plants of a red color," making the water red, is to miss the spiritual and perennial fact that, whether these accounts are valid or not, even the best idol — be it a constitution or a man — when it has been made to represent crowned unrighteousness, will inevitably be made a curse by the first appearance of uncrowned righteousness.

As much may be said of the spiritual truths conveyed to any but the disobedient mind of Egypt, in the other plagues visited upon the land and people of Pharaoh. The frog had a high place in the animalistic worship of the realm. Probably the mud consequent on the annual inundation of the Nile had produced vast multitudes of these. Magicians could imitate Moses to a slight extent. But only Moses — only the supremacy of righteousness — can ever make the life of man worth living and the air he breathes pure. Again, God was *Jehovah*.

Sir Samuel Baker informs us that, after the rice harvest, it often seems that "the very dust is turned into lice." But, in remembering the plague of lice which followed the plague of frogs in Egypt, he must not forget the fact that Aaron's rod had touched the dusty earth. "Beware," says Emerson, "when God lets loose a thinker on the planet: then all things are at a risk." Aaron's rod was full of the divine vitality of truth, even to the point of budding. One living idea, touching a world of things out of harmony with its command, turns them all into curses. The very dust becomes lice. No magician can imitate this miracle, as those of Egypt could not. It is of God's true magic; only the genius of progressive righteousness may perform it; and it is performed all the while, whenever an unobeyed truth comes into contact with recalcitrant untruth. Old saws of obsolescent wisdom roused into a kind of life by a fresh, inherently supreme purpose in history, are the lice whose presence "hardens Pharaoh's heart." Even the magicians of the dull-eyed time sometimes say, as did those of Pharaoh's court, "It is the finger of *Elohim*." This is only part of the truth. It is more sympathetic with the whole truth to say, "It is the finger of *Jehovah*." But Pharaoh had not been led far enough to utter the new and memorial name: "*Jehovah*." The very name involved a statesmanship which meant ruin to his empire.

Another utterance of God — and other small, pestiferous, winged creatures swarmed in the air. This was a heavy stroke against the popular worship. This plague infests the land to this day; but it can never have such significance. These insects were the nation's very symbols of "the creative principle, its emblems of the sun." The profanity was that

they had become noxious vermin. Every reformer, perforce, by his introducing contrasting justice into unjust life or society, is a Moses whose power no Pharaoh suspects. Still the tyrant cries, "It is *Elohim*." "Yea," Moses would have added, "and *Jehovah*!" "Let the Hebrews go," said Pharaoh, at last; but on the cessation of the plague, he "hardened his heart"¹ again.

Following upon these, was the murrain, with its extensive desolation of death amongst the cattle. This stroke against the religiousness of Pharaoh's nation was severe. The cow and ox in Egypt were sacred; and, therefore, Isis and Osiris were offended gods. By this immense event, Apis and Mnevis had been insulted and profaned. Deities of evil are always dethroned by goodness; and the iconoclast is thought a nuisance, insolent and rebellious. And now man is touched. First, the *things* he worships, or prizes, are smitten by any progressive truth to which man is disobedient — first, his profits, or his ancient and outworn institutions; then the man himself is stricken. It is the method of progress. Even the magicians yielded before the ulcers and tumors of the people. Political and ecclesiastical magic goes down before realities. Liberty and truth cannot hide unpleasant facts. When Moses and Aaron threw into the air the ashes from the huge furnaces, which were the emblems of their slavery, the spirit of freedom used the magic of their visible chains, as later, in writing "Uncle Tom's Cabin," that spirit was able to bring a nation to its better ideal. Still *Jehovah* was unacknowledged by the throne of Egypt. Any victory without that acknowledgment, Moses knew, was a spiritual defeat. All real progress is by the advance of ideas. The harvest-growing fields of Egypt were swept with storm.

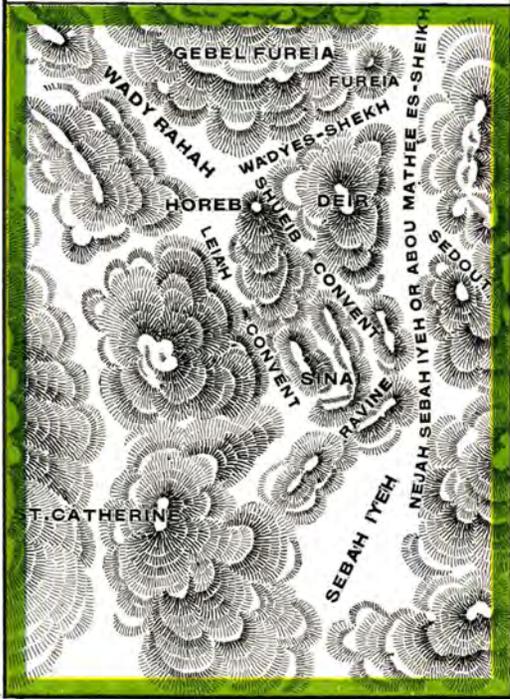
"For what avails the plough or sail,
Or land, or life, if freedom fail?"

Man is not made for grain — grain exists for man; and at such crises, man untrue to his destiny is worthless. Let the grain fail! "*I am Jehovah*."²

Again the humbled Pharaoh listened awhile to the warning voices. Moses was instant upon the essential thing: "Ye will not yet fear *Jehovah-Elohim*."³ It is significant that the reformer tries to help Pharaoh from one step to the next, using what he *has* acknowledged in connection with what he *ought* to acknowledge — "*Jehovah-Elohim*," he says. It was more evident than ever that Moses could not afford, and was not seeking, a personal triumph. God had said to Pharaoh through him: "How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before

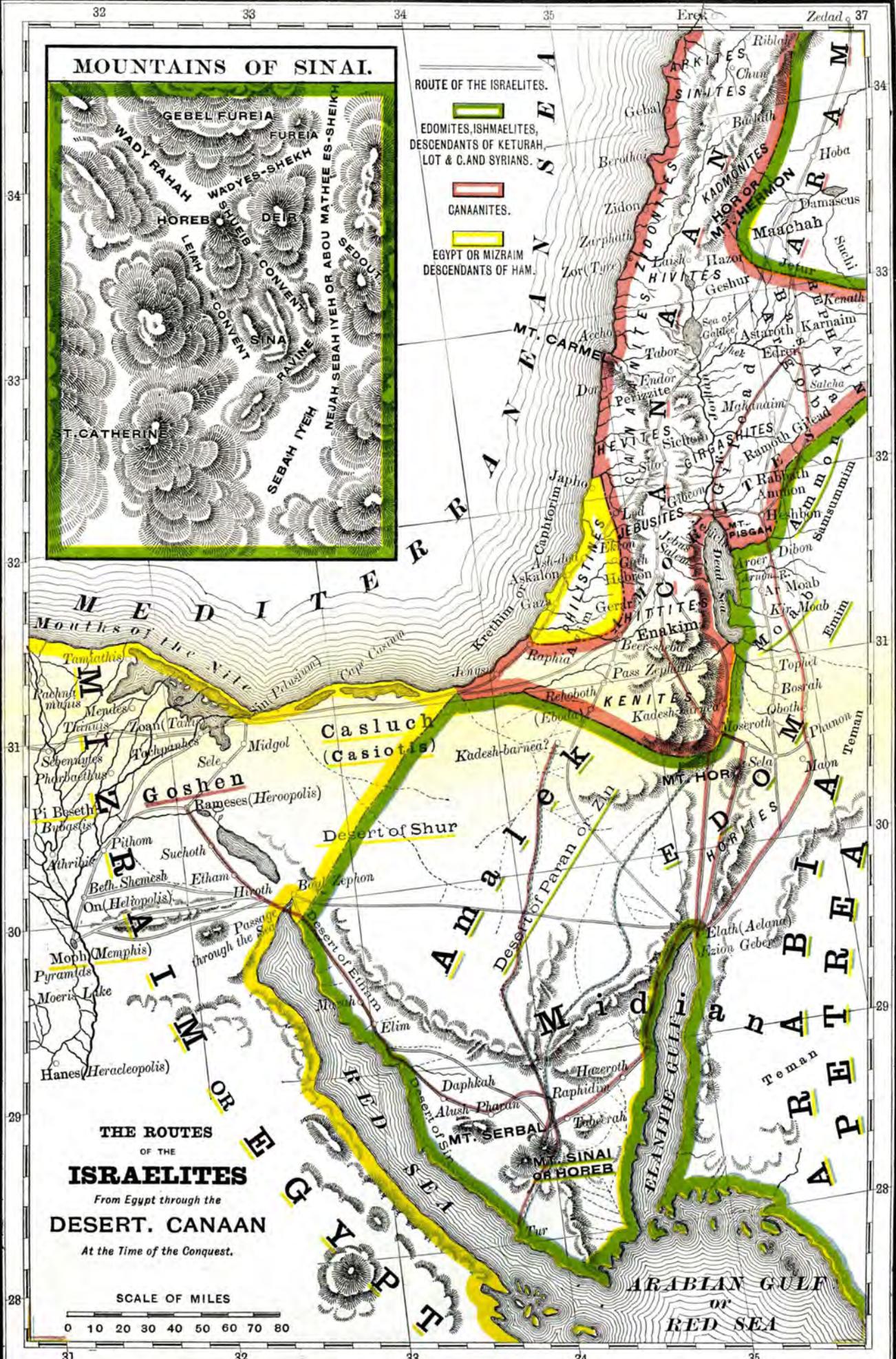
¹ Exodus viii, 28-32. ² Exodus vi, 2. ³ Exodus ix, 30.

MOUNTAINS OF SINAI.



ROUTE OF THE ISRAELITES.

- EDOMITES, ISHMAELITES, DESCENDANTS OF KETURAH, LOT & CANAN SYRIANS.
- CANAANITES.
- EGYPT OR MIZRAIM DESCENDANTS OF HAM.



THE ROUTES OF THE ISRAELITES
 From Egypt through the
DESERT. CANAAN
 At the Time of the Conquest.



me?"¹ Moses had seen God in the bush; he was getting into the habit of realizing that the meaning in things is *God*. The apostle's account of him strikes the secret and opens it. It was summed up in this: "*He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*"² It must be God's victory over Pharaoh, or it is worthless to Moses and Israel.

Even Pharaoh's servants now labor with the stubborn ruler. Compromises are offered by the throne; but to have accepted them, on the part of Moses, would have been for him to have lost what, Burke says, the statesman always must guard in any compromise—"the immediate jewel of the soul." The men of Israel would not go without their families and flocks. No irony of the king moved them, as he prated of their seeking to do evil. "Jehovah will be with you!"³ was his sneer. The visitation of locusts came. The earth was beclouded and the fields were a desolation. Formerly Israel had asked only to go away to her feast—an event which was attended with such sacrifice of rams and oxen as would have offended the devotees of Apis, Osiris, and Isis; but now, they say boldly that their cattle must go with them; and it is a journey from which a return is not mentioned any more. Still Pharaoh resisted. Moses and Aaron were ordered from his sight.

Once more Jehovah made the attack, and this time, upon the loftiest bulwark of rebellious antagonism. Supreme above all gods, in the thought of Egypt, was the sun. According to their religious ideas and devotion, Pharaoh was the Incarnate Sun-god. Heliopolis was to this deity what Athens was to Athenè of Greece. There flashed the waters of the sacred spring of healing; there, in contrast with the lonely obelisk of to-day, shadowing the tamarind and fig tree, rose the gorgeous edifice near the sacred lake and grove, its approach gleaming with yellow marble; its main gateway ornamented with a vast and brilliant disk of the sun. And now the god supreme within all the Egyptian pantheon was hidden. The whole of Egypt except Goshen was covered with darkness. Surely there is much to learn here. The very earth, life itself, is meaningless, in all history—man sees nothing and can do nothing truly, when right is unobeyed, pleading for liberty. One radiant beam of unconfessed truth has often put the idolized sun of a generation into eclipse. Then Pharaoh again summoned Moses to his throne. The earlier Lorenzo de Medici calls for his Savonarola. Stern, as was the Florentine idealist when he cried: "Restore the liberties of Florence!" Moses refused his offered compromise. As the calm and stalwart Jew

left the angered Egyptian alone, he said: "I will see thy face again no more."¹

Now that the false strength of the idolatry of Egypt had been made apparent and the faith of the Jewish population had received the needed education which these events imparted, there was but one thing likely and needful to come into the life of the Hebrews from whose dwellings in Goshen the sunlight had not vanished. That one object lesson God would now give them; it would unify them, and at the same time it would distract their foes. The event was at hand that would make even Pharaoh rejoice in Israel's departure at any cost and in any way. When, in obedience to God's command, the Hebrews had asked presents from the Egyptians, "jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment,"² they were given many things which were sure to be of value to them. But Egypt could make no such priceless contribution as came to their spiritual life and hope in the institution of the Passover feast. A new calendar was created by this fact, each year thereafter beginning with the commemoration of their birthday as a nation. Out of great travail was Israel to come forth from Egypt. To Israel, it was an hour of joy. On the tenth day of the "*month of ears,*" *Abib*,³ each family must choose its sacrifice—an unblemished male kid or lamb. Each sacrifice should be no more than a meal for a household, or, if a household were too small, then it should not be too large for the household and others properly invited to consume it. "Between the evenings"—that is, between sunset and moonrise, or starlight—the kids or lambs chosen were to be killed by the congregation. Each family was to sprinkle some of the blood "on the side posts and the upper doorposts of the houses."⁴ For this, a branch of the cleansing hyssop was to be used. Then the feast was to be consumed. Sandaled and girdled, prepared also for instant departure with staff in hand, they were to eat hastily and refuse to leave the house that night. All the flesh not eaten was to be consumed with fire. That night the Lord was to pass through the land of Egypt. In his visitation, every firstborn child and the firstborn offspring of the beasts would be smitten, save those in the houses whose lintels bore the blood mark. That feast should signify Israel's redemption from Egypt's death, by the blood of innocence. It was to foreshadow the coming sacrifice, the Christ of God who is our Passover. Every householder was as yet the only priest of his family. They were also to observe at this hour the feast of unleavened bread. Later on, through the unleavened bread, they were to look back to an

¹ Exodus x, 3.

² Hebrews xi, 27.

³ Exodus x, 10.

¹ Exodus x, 29.

² Exodus xii, 35.

³ Exodus xii, 3.

⁴ Exodus xii, 22, 23.

hour when, in haste, "they took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders."¹

The night came. Jehovah moved through Egypt, and the midnight air echoed with the cry of death. At last, Jehovah was triumphant over the gods of Egypt. In this desperate hour Moses and Aaron were sought by the king. The people of his realm had at length beseeched him, "Let them go, else we be all dead men!" "Go," cried out Pharaoh, "go and serve *Jehovah*. Take your flocks and herds, as ye have said, and begone."² At last he had acknowledged Jehovah. Then, as if his heart felt the foregleam of that bright noon, streaming from Canaan through the long years, over wandering and exile, and falling over the grave of his own firstborn who had perished that night, he added: "*And bless me also!*"³ No one can look upon the monument, now in the museum at Berlin, which is said to commemorate this child of the bereaved Egyptian monarch, without hearing in his heart the echo of that pathetic appeal, "*And bless me also!*"

In all comparative study of crowned heads, Pharaoh appears to be most like a seventeenth century Charles I. or an eighteenth century Marie Antoinette. It is as impossible not to sympathize with his sorrow and perplexity when he cries, "*And bless me also!*" as it is to withhold a generous fellow-feeling when the

finely bred English king is brought to the block, or the pride of the French palaces is carted to execution. It is also impossible, amidst even such scenes as those, to forget that the Egyptian monarch commanded weary Israel to make bricks without straw; the cavalier king annulled parliamentary government, and the haughty queen set her dainty foot upon popular right.

Egypt had lost her slaves; in the echo of that wail, they slipped from her grasp. It had been impossible for Menephtah to succeed in holding a progressive people, leagued as were the Hebrews with the progressive Jehovah. Had the ruler granted their demands, his throne would have been a toy; but perhaps such thrones are most valuable only as toys. To neglect to do this was to offend the Almighty One. Now the great exodus had begun. More than two millions of Egypt's productive human chattels had gone; but, far more wonderful than that fact alone, this multitude of slaves had been so educated by poverty and visions, so trained by sorrow and hope, that on that paschal night, as a mass penetrated, but not yet pervaded, with a conception of the supreme idea of liberty under law, they had stepped from bondage to freedom; and, rallying round the bones of Joseph, they leaped into the form of the noblest nationality of ancient times. It was the noblest, because the ideal for which it stood was fullest of creative and transforming hope.

CHAPTER VI.

FOLLOWING THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE.

SUCH a stupendous movement attracted to its multitude a crowd, made up not alone of Hebrews who joined them at point after point on their line of march, but also of peoples variously nurtured and moved by different motives. There were slaves, outcasts, and exiles, wandering shepherds, and, doubtless, here and there, came and followed a lover of liberty. Succoth furnished the great army with a halting place for the first night. Here, where the leafy booths offered them a new sort of hospitality, the world of the Orient beheld the first peaceful assemblage of so many devotees of the nobility of labor, the pricelessness of human beings; and here slept the largest army the world has ever seen, which has accomplished such a step toward freedom with hands unstained by blood. As in the next few hours they baked their unleavened bread, and the leader made his plans and purposes more complete and apparent to the elders, they were the

first representatives of the idea which has created for later days the ten dooms of every Alfred, the great remonstrance of Pym and Hampden, the declaration of independence of every Jefferson and Hancock, the emancipation proclamation of every Lincoln. Dean Stanley fitly reminds us how deeply Succoth, this "place of booths, or tabernacles," must have impressed them, inasmuch as, later on, they used this very name to designate the glad some Feast of Tabernacles. Indeed, it ought to be said here that no man more than Moses, no nation more than Hebrewdom, incarnates more truly the truth spoken by the English novelist and poet: "Our finest hope is finest memory," while, at the same time, being a witness to the truth which Emerson utters: "The contest between the Future and the Past is one between Divinity entering and Divinity departing." In his death hour, Moses begs for the "good will of him who dwelt in the bush." In the chapter of the Book of Exodus describing the events

¹ Exodus xii, 34. ² Exodus xii, 32. ³ Exodus xii, 32.

immediately succeeding the departure of Israel from Egypt, we are told that Jehovah spake of the eating of the unleavened bread, saying, "Thou shalt tell thy son: This is done because of that which Jehovah did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt."¹ In the light of such memories as these—each a matrix of personal or national hope—Israel was able to reëcho that startling and early proclamation of the equal rights of men: "One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."² Noble memory is always prophecy. But the comprehensive understanding of all that Israel had been led to undertake and all that Jehovah and his prophets had uttered was not, by any means, as yet a national possession. Therefore, the "wanderings" began, as they were to continue. Not to Canaan, by a route through Gaza, short and direct, would Jehovah lead them. They must be educated in the desert. As only by long and wearisome spiritual routes, which, indeed, often revert and cross each other, a man or a nation may reach a great truth and be able to see it, and willing devotedly to defend it, so the courage and intelligence, the faith and idealism equal to the future task of Hebrewdom in universal history had to be inspired, trained, and refined in their forty years of journeying in the wilderness.

There is no straight road for any God-inspired soul to any Canaan. Forward, then, to Etham. By taking this route, Israel was escaping the fierce Philistines, and nothing could have been more unfortunate than for the exiles to have been compelled to fight this strong people at such a moment in their march. At Etham in the edge of the wilderness, where the sand areas stretch away from the old green fields, rose before them the symbol of the guiding Jehovah. "And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."³

Just as Moses found his source of ideals and aims in the burning bush of Horeb, so Israel found a perpetual commandment and culture for the long wilderness journey in this pillar of cloud and fire. It was more to Israel than was to Greece the great Alexander's brazier, whose combustibles, lit for illumination, flamed from the top of a lofty pole, elevated at the spot where the mighty captain had his pavilion whence he directed his army. It may have been connected with some older ideas which made fire a sacred symbol; it doubtless was related to the symbolism of the burning bush. It was, as we shall see, the second in the series of God's educative emblems. By being at

once a flame at night and a cloud by day, it told of truth, righteousness, love, beauty, which lead and protect, each of which furnishes an ensign by which the devoted soul may march on from duty to duty at all times.

In this and in all uses of its meanings, we must see that, as the value of every lawgiver, like Moses, lies in his ability to get man on to the Christ, in whom we find the "law of liberty,"¹ so every symbol which has progress in it for those who follow it must contain an anticipation of that complete symbol of God, his Christ. This is God's child-garden system of education. "The law was our tutor, leading us to Christ." In that tutoring, as in the use of all symbols of truths or realities in any true system of culture, each early emblem leads into, and so foretells each that succeeds, until the consummate symbol is reached. So the burning bush is, so far as it is a symbol worthy of being obeyed at all, significant of a still more rich symbolism which at length presents the truth of God in its highest form. The highest form of truth is not a burning bush, or a pillar of cloud and flame, not even Sinai's law or a holy institution; but the highest form of truth is personal humanity. Everything in God's system of education tends toward the incarnation of God in man. At last, as the Revelation says, even "the Tabernacle of God is with men"² and the revelator, beholding a picture of complete civilization, writes: "I saw no temple therein."³ Incarnation is the highest form of reality under God. The Incarnate may say: "I and the Father are one."⁴ Jesus Christ is, therefore, the reality to which, for example, the burning bush leads by its symbolism. *He* is the one personality ever burning with love, faith, truth, holiness, yet not consumed. As much is true of the pillar of cloud and flame. It is more than a relic of fire worship, if, indeed, that enters into it at all. It is a waymark to divine humanity, earlier than the Shekinah, leading up to and into the Shekinah which, in due course, because it is higher, is still more close to the highest symbol in this divine culture. That pillar of cloud and fire afterward rested upon the Most Holy Place, and the prophet Isaiah saw it, as in perfect accord with this developing scheme, "upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion."⁵ Therefore, Saint Augustine touched the core of Christianity as a consummate stage in God's culture of humanity, after this method, when he said: "The true Shekinah is man." Thus, there is no more penetrative or sympathetic statement of the connection between local Israel and universal humanity, in this history, than the

¹ Exodus xiii, 8.

² Exodus xii, 49.

³ Exodus xiii, 21.

¹ James i, 25, or ii, 12.

² Revelation xxi, 3.

³ Revelation xxi, 22.

⁴ John x, 30 (Revised Version).

⁵ Isaiah iv, 5.

apostle's words, when he says: "All these things happened to them by way of figure."¹ Before that sacred wonder, they mused of Canaan by day, and beneath its splendor they dreamed of its milk and honey by night. Because they thus dreamed and often forgot the vision of something higher than milk and honey, they needed this kindergarten-like emblem as they had needed many other symbols of God's education before. Israel was yet "a child."²

All had gone well thus far, for water and food were in abundance, and the loneliness and peril of their situation, as in this state of contesting ignorance and intelligence they marched farther from the old scenes, and the surety of "three meals a day and a place to sleep in," had not yet fallen like a shadow upon them to oppress their hearts. Nothing in this world costs so much as liberty, save righteousness, and without righteousness there is no liberty. All this Israel had to learn in forty years—a lesson which thousands of years of efforts at civilization have as yet failed to teach the human race thoroughly. Man reverts. Safety as to food and drink and a bed to sleep in, the first of the good things of life, is an old goal to which all idealists are wont to look back longingly, in the first lonely confronting of those problems which come with every effort for true freedom. Dull compliance with any situation which guarantees these bodily comforts seems half a heroism, especially when the past, which has always furnished them, is turned into a foe. All efforts at liberty mean the enthronement of the soul above the body; and slavery had emphasized the value of the body in the life of these Hebrews; and under the fortress walls of Etham the soul's concern—freedom—appeared less sublime than when the body was stung with a slave-whip. The soul of Israel trembled on her new throne. The command came: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn back."³ Backward to "encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-Zephon!"⁴ Moses knew Israel's weakness and strength at a point like this. Enemies were everywhere, the fortress soldiery of Etham, the rulers of the South who were as yet unexcited; Pharaoh was sure to repent of his act of permission, and Moses could already hear the war-chariots of Egypt in the rear. The somewhat extemporaneous courage of Israel was not to be depended upon. The huge caravans were as yet orderless and undisciplined; and now they were murmuring,

while their petty misunderstandings and little selfishnesses were leading them at length to complaining criticism and base clamor against Moses; the gleaming chariots of Pharaoh were rolling toward them in hot pursuit. The value of liberty was vanishing. They had felt the oppression of the fact that something had compelled them to turn back. Progress comes often by apparent retreat. Then the wilderness seems a huge and fearful place of death.

For fifty miles they had journeyed to the "place where the reeds grow," and from that camp, near to the present Suez, they sent up their wail. The Egyptian army, thinking that Moses had become "entangled in the land," and that "the wilderness" had "shut them in,"¹ enraged that the evident intention of Israel was to escape from bondage, and probably relying on news from the garrison, sent its cavalry to bring back or destroy the exiles. It was a great opportunity for a force which was at that hour at its finest condition. The chivalry of Egypt, driving highly bred horses and riding in chariots which roll yet in the incised temple-tale at Karnak, had now their moment of glory. Probably the long days of mourning over the deaths of Egypt's firstborn had added to the fierceness of their attack, after having delayed it for seventy days. Ebbtide, the hour for the receding flood in the Red Sea, which was now immediately in front of Israel, came as slowly as their caravans approached. There was no other path for them, save the way through the waters. Mountains frowned from west and south; the rush of dust-covered royal cavalry mingled with the lisp of the waves on the beach. "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying: Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."² This was all that Israel had to give to the sorely perplexed and burdened commander. Never did a feeble faithlessness in the worth of freedom, or a cheap cynicism in the presence of Jehovah's invisible resources, more offensively bedeck itself in its own rags.

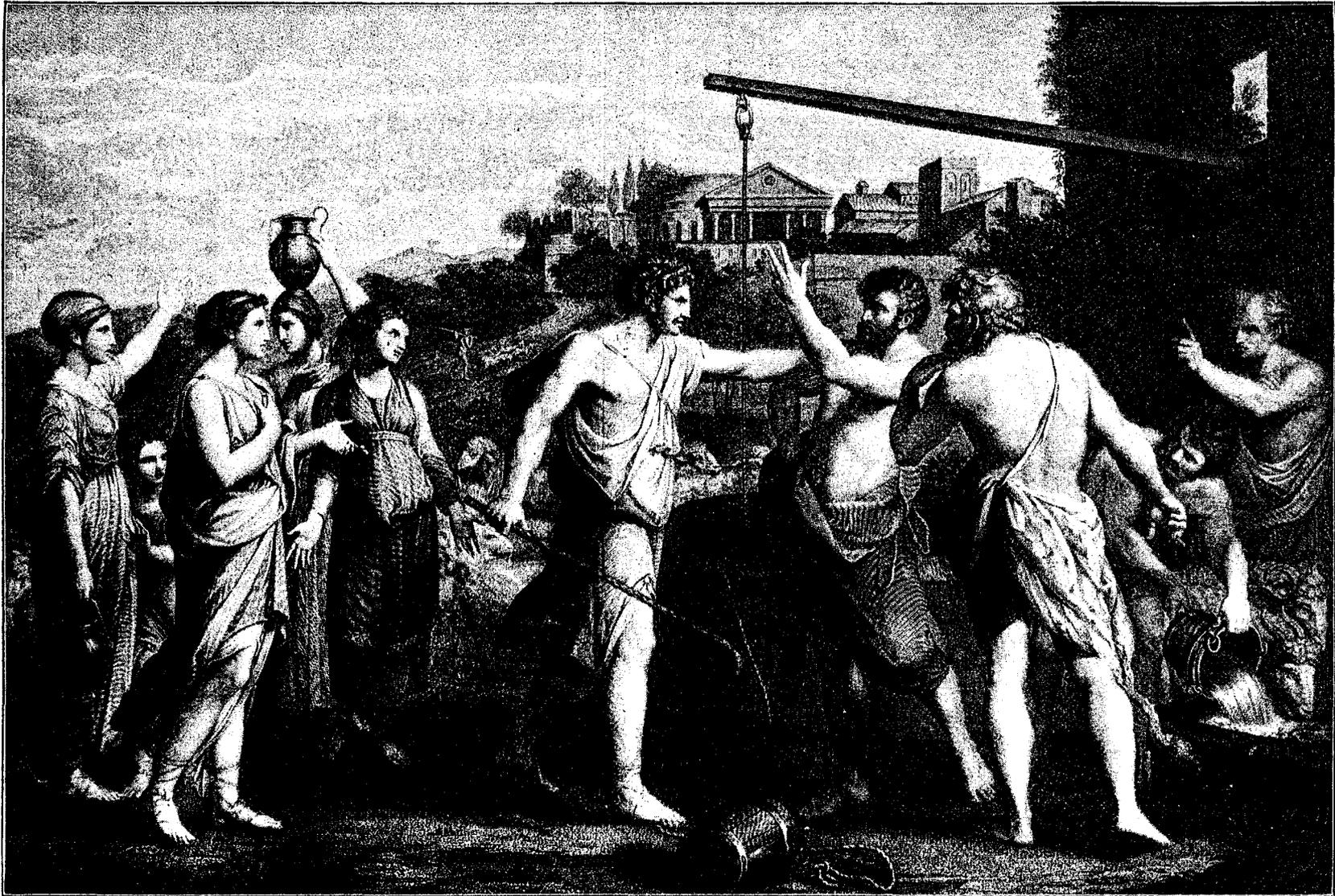
"Though love repine and reason chafe,
There came a voice without reply,
'Tis man's perdition to be safe
When for the truth he ought to die."

This voice, as yet, they were not able to hear.

¹ I. Corinthians x, 11. ² Hosea xi, 1.

³ Exodus xiv, 2. ⁴ Exodus xiv, 2.

¹ Exodus xiv, 3. ² Exodus xiv, 11, 12.



NICOLAS POUSSIN.

MOSES DEFENDING THE WOMEN.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RED SEA.

WONDERFUL as is the weakness of humanity, it is never quite so wonderful as the strength of God. As human history reveals mankind, it does not appear marvelous that "they were sore afraid,"¹ and that Egypt, which had taught them by its cities of the dead an almost fantastic belief as to the value of sepulture, should come before them as a fitter place to die in than was this desert. The hour had now come when that rod, once a serpent — the emblem of power seized for noble purposes — must be lifted up in dauntless faith. Night came, as night full of doubt and full of vision always comes when any soul or nation, led by divine influences, comes up to a circumstance apparently fatal to its progress. That night gave to the host of Israel a deeper meaning for the pillar of cloud and fire. Such times of trial to human faith in the supreme value of righteousness and freedom always disclose a fact which comes, as did the fiery cloud, between the hosts of Israel and the hosts of Egypt. That fact is Jesus Christ. This hour with Israel held a foregleam of him; and it gives an intimation of his place in the philosophy of history. His personality, his life, his ideal — these are pillars of cloud and fire in the process of history. History is largely the record of a perpetual flight of Israel out of Egypt, toward freedom. Always to Egyptlike conservatism and despotism this personal fact, Christ Jesus, is a cloud that bewilders and darkens — for unadvancing antiquity and selfishness never understands him; while, to Israel's faith in progress, even though it falters, this same fact, inextinguishable and serene, is a perpetual and kindly illumination. "It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these, so that the one came not near the other all the night."²

Israel had followed the emblem to the sea's edge. "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" said the resourceful God, who would be trusted only by action; "speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."³ Over the sea the rod was lifted up, by the calm faith of Moses. Over the path left beneath its shadow, as the waves rolled back on either hand, the solemn and wondering Hebrews marched dry-shod. Their advance, however, was not enough. It is never enough that good may conquer; evil must be extirpated. The pursuing Egyptians followed into the midst of the sea. The later

song of the Psalmist indicates that a terrific thunderstorm burst upon them. This is the account in the Book of Exodus: "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch Jehovah looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for Jehovah fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them."¹

Saint Paul, who seems to be attracted constantly to state and restate the problem and triumph of Israel, puts it all into these eloquent words: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."²

So much for Israel, and so much for Egypt. A national tragedy, almost fatal to the throne of Egypt, had at length succeeded the long and agonizing years of Israel's bondage. Retribution came, and every anguish had its compensation in the scales of Jehovah. Looked at from the point of view already taken, it does not at all detract from the present and permanent meaning to mankind of such a disaster to Egypt, which was also a victory for Jehovah and a deliverance to Israel, if any of the many explanations of the occurrence of the awful event be adopted, wholly or in part. None of them, however, appear to be entirely satisfactory. Travelers and scholars of the first rank have given the most thorough research and wide learning to this fragment of the world. From Strabo, and Josephus, and Diodorus of Sicily to Napoleon I., Niebuhr, Stanley, and Professor Palmer, every scrap of information concerning the past and present condition and location of these waters and mountains has been drawn into service, to make it less difficult for less believing minds to account for these unmatched incidents. Doubtless, the waters of the Red Sea, at that date, may have occupied a

¹ Exodus xiv, 10. ² Exodus xiv, 20. ³ Exodus xiv, 15.

¹ Exodus xiv, 24-28. ² I. Corinthians x, 2.

larger area. The ebb and flood tides have been shown to be almost obedient to the strong northeast winds. Islets that look like huge stepping stones, with narrow and deep waters between, are still seen when the wind drives the waters southward. Sandbanks and fords have been found that might have felt the trembling feet of the Hebrew exiles. Traditions tell of hours when, as Diodorus says, "the whole bay at the head of the sea was laid bare." A Greek historian of Hebrewdom speaks of the opinion of the priests of Memphis that Moses here called into service his accurate knowledge of the tides. This writer alludes also to the opposite opinion of the priests of Hierapolis, which leaves the event a miracle in which fire balls blinded the Egyptians when they essayed to follow the Hebrews. Geikie, who admirably gathers these and other opinions and facts, does well to quote the wise remark of Niebuhr: "It would be a great mistake to imagine that the passage of such a great caravan could have been effected by purely natural means." It is well to reflect that even if the event were in due course of nature, as we understand nature, God's will and action are not ruled out, and the fact is fully as significant as before. Not the extraordinary, but the ordinary processes of nature and life are those which God has chosen most often to be his ministers and his revelation.

From that hour, the throne of the Pharaohs was falling to pieces. The permanent fact which all this history contributes is that the righteous progress of man under God has met and will ever meet indubitable difficulty, Red Seas of peril that appear fatal; and in these, somehow and sometime, Jehovah executes judgment, saves the hosts of right, and brings disaster to the hosts of wrong.

Out of this peril came forth the richest national anthem in the annals of time. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel."¹

It is a saying as old as Fletcher of Saltoun: "Let me make the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes their laws." William Pitt confessed the unique value of Dibdin's sea songs in the hour when England needed something besides his genius for finance and the Iron Duke's sword. It is well-nigh impossible, in this connection and in view of the echoes of music which come to us from its use on fields of battle and in the more difficult crises of peace at later times in Hebrew history, to overstate the value of that unequaled ode of triumph which, at this glad hour, burst forth from the heart of Israel. Grand moments grandly apprehended and used by grand souls—these alone may produce grand poems. As

the Divine Comedy of Dante and the "Paradise Lost" of John Milton were the utterances of a later Puritanism, so was this magnificent song of Moses the outpouring of that earlier Puritanism which made all recent victories of the same spirit possible. It is not only the oldest triumphal ode in any literature; it is the richest deposit of gems shining upon the diadem of any young nation. It not only sounds the deeps and heights of the genius of Hebrewdom; it has furnished to her succeeding ages the noblest currents of prophecy. Psalms and battle cries, mystic foretellings and solemn anthems, have grown resonant with melody, by catching for a theme some single strain, or echoing to other times some separate chord of its harmony. It possesses the historic spirit and the poetic manner of the "Iliad" of Homer, who was as yet unborn, and the urgent faith and particular yearning of the "Ein' Feste Burg ist Unser Gott" of Martin Luther—the Moses of German song and piety. It is closer to the soul of Israel than the Marseillaise is to that of France, and its measures are as much more rich in creative power as was that revolution above the revolution of 1789. "Rule Britannia" of England and the "Heil Dir Im Siegeskranz" of Germany were not born out of any such matrix of divine energy, and they seem as patriotic lays in comparison with this trumpeted hymn of God's delivered ones. America has met two revolutions and crossed two Red Seas, without producing a soul equal to the task of so justly singing her joy and hope. The craggy elevation from which the leader of that vast choir uttered the first words is not known; the dancing maidens whose happy lips caught the refrain have been dust for thousands of years; Miriam and her choral multitude, the wave-like mass of chanting Hebrew soldiers, the solemn instruments strung with such intensity of feeling—all these have vanished; but so poetically and potently does this great lyric enshrine the life of the Jew in all time, so strenuous with involved hope for all mankind is this triumphal poem, that to-day it is repeated each sabbath in Hebrew temples, sung in Christian cathedrals, and yonder in heaven they who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Israel had taken another vast stride toward nationality. She was possessed of a national hymn, at once her declaration of independence and her song. With the utterance of its strophes, not only was the antiphony instituted in Hebrew music, but theocratic government found a surer place in universal politics. It is not to the purpose to say that it was a compilation of fragments, or that it is a collection of earlier psalms. The genius of Homer probably

¹ Exodus xv, 1.

made the "Iliad" of the ballads sung upon Grecian streets; and Taine says: "It is the Grecian Bible." It required a fiery soul to fuse these materials into such an imperishable monument of literature; and the "Iliad" is certainly not more Homeric than this ode is Mosaic. Even the negative critical spirit of Bleek allows that "a genuinely Mosaic song lies at the foundation" of the poem. The important fact is that it is the heart-beat of Israel throbbing with all the significance of the hour in which her nationality was conscious of itself.

"I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously:

The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation:
This is my God, and I will praise him;
My father's God, and I will exalt him.
The Lord is a man of war:
The Lord is his name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea:
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.
The deep cover them:
They went down into the depths like a stone.
Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power:
Thy right hand, O Lord, dasheth in pieces the enemy.
And in the greatness of thine excellency thou overthrewest them that rise up against thee:
Thou sendest forth thy wrath, it consumeth them as stubble.

And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up,
The floods stood upright as an heap;
The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.
The enemy said,
I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil:
My lust shall be satisfied upon them;
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them:
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?
Thou stretchest out thy right hand,
The earth swallowed them.
Thou in thy mercy hast led the people which thou hast redeemed:
Thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy habitation.
The peoples have heard, they tremble:
Pangs have taken hold on the inhabitants of Philistia.
Then were the dukes of Edom amazed:
The mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold upon them:
All the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away.
Terror and dread falleth upon them:
By the greatness of thine arm they are as still as a stone:
Till thy people pass over, O Lord.
Till the people pass over which thou hast purchased.
Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance,
The place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in,
The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." 1

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WILDERNESS OF SHUR—MARA AND ELIM—THE MANNA.

MOSES and Israel were now in the peninsula of Sinai: he and Israel knew Jehovah now better than ever before. Again the Hebrew and Midian—the man and his circumstances—confronted one another. With what different and larger responsibilities did the leader look again upon that apparent confusion of broken mountains, sandy plains, nestling patches of verdure, torrent paths, dwarfed and stunted trees, and the few perennial springs—the very territory in whose valleys he had tended the pasturing flocks of Jethro years before, now the training ground for the Hebrew nation.

Nations are born in the hour of some great agony, at the moment where wrong overreaches itself; they become conscious of their own individual vitality at some Red Sea. At such moments, they feel themselves possessed of their own melody which is to be fully expressed in years of national progress and achievement. This is the hour of song, of poetic vision, of transcendental faith. After this experience is passed, the finest statesmanship has always foreseen Sinai. Liberty is not a

gift vouchsafed at once, at the beginning of a life, or at the commencement of a nation's career. It is a fruit—the latest and best of time. It is an end toward which each songful declaration of independence, such as was this triumphal ode, or the American Declaration of Independence, is only an early and long stride. Between the hour of that outburst of song—which is always largely a protest and a faith—and the far-off hour when freedom is safe because freedom is true, there is no spot so sacred, because so necessary, as a Sinai where law establishes its authority. From the hour of the revelation of law, constitutionalism dates its molding and restraining operation on any people. Declarations of independence and songs of national birthtime make the atmosphere which the new commonwealth breathes. Law creates a pathway, makes the mass interdependent, and transforms what is only a mob into a government. Law is the source of precedents; and a crude

"Freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent,"

1 Exodus xv, 1-18 (Revised Version).

at last reaching toward a finer freedom in which at length is possible "the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

Every step was now a step toward Sinai. These days were as important to these wanderers as the days between the Fourth of July, 1776, and the day of the meeting of the convention which wrought out the constitution were to the American Republic. The Wilderness of Shur, into which Israel was now led from the camp of Ayun Mûsa, was truly the wilderness of "the wall." Behind them was Africa; before them were the desert and the future. A gigantic range of peaks, now known as Jebel-er-Rahah, formed the wall which, coming close to the Red Sea, continues in the greater chain of Jebel-et-Tih on the north. Standing with memories of the green fields of Egypt immediately behind them, this mass of rock, desert, and difficulty directly confronted them. Three days had passed, and the weary marchers had exhausted the supplies of water obtained at Ayun Mûsa. Following the pillar of cloud and flame, they had come to wady after wady, each a dry torrent-bed, serviceable only as offering them a way through the masses of stone, silent gravel-wastes and the few green patches which were as thirsty as the pilgrims. Again it was demonstrated that, as yet, they set no high value upon liberty. True freedom faded in minds at that moment not sufficiently cultured to comprehend or appreciate. In their complaining, one hears the footsteps of forty years which must come and go before they get to the true ideas of what liberty really is and what it is worth. God puts Canaan farther away, at every occasion in the life of a nation or a soul, when it is certain that there is no conviction that liberty is faith in the divine order and that it is worth all it costs. The Ayun Mûsa, which is now a beautiful summer resort, with its nineteen wells, seemed the last spot of the golden age which is ever behind us when we doubt God. Israel was living so as to teach all men. Every rich life, the career of every highly inspired people, in proportion as life is subject to divine enriching, or the nation is visited with divine inspirations, seems to be an oscillation between hours where some Red Sea furnishes too much water and a desert where there is too little. There was a confronting sea; here is severe thirst.

But yonder is a green spot. It is, however, at this moment, bitter. The name is Marah—"bitter."¹ And it is not remarkable that Israel was disappointed there. The fierce light of the sun beating upon the hills fell, as from a heated wall, upon their suffering caravans. At Marah, which is the Huwarah of our day, even

yet the expectant traveler is met with the natives shouting to him, as he seeks refreshing, "Bitter! Bitter!" The geography of the soul likewise changes in no important particular. Just as that soil, filled with nitre, makes the spring unfit for quenching thirst, however sweet and refreshing the water itself might be if the solution might only rid itself of that which is within it; so the circumstances out of which, or through which many a healthful impulse or ennobling emotion comes makes it bitter and worse than useless. What does God do for his Israel, in such a case? Israel always murmurs here. The soul, at such a pass, usually looks back to its old chains, where at least water was plentiful, and complains that following an ideal costs too much. Moses shared in their want and suffering; the best that is in us feels the agony as much as the worst, even if, like Moses, it has always the support which comes of a devoted love of high aims and has counted their cost. It nevertheless has to pay the expense of having an ideal. Then, as if in contrast, the less open-eyed and faithful qualities of our nature, like the children of Israel, cry out—it is all they know; it indicates the level at which they live—"What shall we drink?" Man is always asking this question at the brink of some bitter problem. So rich, however, is God's universe, and so thorough is his education of souls that somewhere near the problem itself is *something*, which, if cast into it, will make it sweet. Here is the ancient record: "Jehovah showed him a tree, which, when he had cast into the waters the waters were made sweet."¹ The Arab natives assured Lesseps that it was their practice to put barberry branches into such pools and that they made the water fit to drink. Josephus asserts that "bad water was once purified by throwing in certain split pieces of wood." Life's bitterest experiences exist to be sweetened by the use of unsuspected and medicinal facts, which also have no value until they are used in connection with difficulties.

It must be noted that hitherto, and far beyond this hour, Israel had found nothing of what our earthy political economy, with its fatal worship of statistics, calls wealth. Rich land and fortune-bearing streams do not appear. Jehovah builds the greatness of a people out of spiritual discoveries. Part of the permanent wealth of Israel lay in the bitterness of Marah and the healing barberry branches. It was realized, as such wealth is always coined, by the commanding influence of an idea; even as the rocks and thin soil of New England responded at a later day to the same Puritan spirit and made rich and heroic the New England character.

¹ Exodus xv, 23.

¹ Exodus xv, 25.

Another birth-hour for an everlasting principle, capable of being wrought into life and statesmanship, had come. The Lord "made for them a statute and an ordinance."¹ This was the ordinance: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am Jehovah, thy physician."² Here is a forelook toward Sinai and the lawgiving. That is a suggestive phrase: "all his statutes." This statute which was then given was the statute which really included all succeeding statutes. Liberty is a child of law; and the deliverance of any people *from* the diseases of a despotism is first a deliverance of that people *to* a law that orders their conduct. There is no commonwealth where it is not true that duty is as important a word as privilege, and the responsibilities of citizens are as large as their rights. This is accomplished only *by* and *through* law. Obedience of law is fundamental to freedom. "I will walk at liberty," says the Psalmist, "for I seek thy precepts."³ "There," says the sacred record, "he proved them." Moses never showed forth the divine statesmanship to better advantage. Not with prating about liberty, not with shouting about rights, but with allegiance to constitutional forms, seeking even desirable changes by constitutional methods, is any people "*proved*" worthy to take the next step Canaanward. To be "*proved*" unworthy, to fall into loud-mouthed praise of lawlessness, which is often miscalled freedom, is ultimately to contract the diseases of the Egyptians. The despotism of anarchy is the most leprous of all despotisms. In this way, among many others, God says: "I am Jehovah—Rophrek:"—*Jehovah—Physician.*⁴

Immediately before them, now, lay the green plot toward which the pillar guided their steps. It was a veritable oasis, *Elim*. Fortunate, indeed, for their education in that constructive idealism which looks ever Canaanward, as it wanders in the desert, was the fact that they came to Marah before reaching Elim. This Elim was the most important of the desert's water courses, "where were twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm trees."⁵ There "they encamped by the waters." A whole month went by, as their herds fed upon the fertile pastures. It was probably what is now Wady Gharandel. On they journeyed into the delightful Wady Taiyibeh. As was Elim, so all this route was in

beautiful contrast with bitter Marah. For a time by the Red Sea they had encamped; the tamarisks were in bloom; the cattle had been well fed, but before them their path now entered a vast sandy plain, stretching to the end of the peninsula, called the Wilderness of *Sin*. Passing out of the Murkhah, through the Wady-en-Nash, they had found sweet waters, but at the edge of the wilderness they saw only famine and death. The last remnant of Egypt's plenty was gone. Provisions had failed. Moses was equal to the crisis. Still the bush that burned with fire did not consume away. The great leader, who knew the wilderness so well, knew also Jehovah. "Would to God," they cried to Moses and Aaron, "that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."¹

"Would to God!"—this marked the level of their faith. They had even dropped the memorial name, *Jehovah*, out of their vocabulary in the violence of their complaint. Without *that* idea of God in the mind, all progress toward civilization costs more than it comes to. Some one fact must hopefully relate past, present, future, else the jostling events crash against one another, or they are so separate that courage and faith are drowned in the unknown abysses that yawn between. God had proposed to build their nationality out of the motives and inspirations contained in the new and memorial name, *Jehovah*—"I am that I am." Under that new name they were to be educated. At this crisis they had forgotten it. Surely, Canaan is far away. Egypt lay like a beautiful and vanished dream in yonder mist. This is an affair with *Jehovah*, as all human life is. Never has the *whole* congregation murmured before against *both* Moses and Aaron; now their complaining is unanimous. So does the stalwart captain understand it. Then said Jehovah to Moses, "I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they walk in my law or no."² And Moses and Aaron, true to the inspiration flowing out of the memorial name, said to all the children of Israel: "At even, then shall ye know that Jehovah hath brought you out of the land of Egypt. And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of Jehovah; for that he heareth your murmurings against Jehovah: and what are we, that ye murmur against us?"³

What a transformation is to be noted here in the soul of the chieftain; he is eloquent; he

¹ Exodus xv, 25.

² Exodus xv, 26.

³ Psalm cxix, 45.

⁴ Our Revised Version says: "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

⁵ Exodus xv, 27.

¹ Exodus xvi, 3. ² Exodus xvi, 4. ³ Exodus xvi, 6, 7.

was once conscious only of being "slow of speech."¹ Moses has found that true personality which is strongest only when it has lost its self-consciousness in Jehovah. We may almost hear Jesus of Nazareth saying: "Not I, but the Father; he doth the works."

At evening, the air was filled with enormous numbers of flying quail. They faltered and fell upon the ground, until it was alive with wings. This does not seem to have been a strange thing in Egypt. Huge migratory flights of these birds often occur, and the weary birds fall in such numbers that they are easily taken, or killed by hand. The moment of their arrival, however, was divinely opportune; but perhaps not more so than is the moment of the most apparently commonplace event. Israel's eye was not spiritually quick enough to behold God in the ordinary; the burning bush had impressed Moses alone. Surely Jehovah is not less interesting and wonderful because he is present in all history, and utters his will through all nature and natural processes. This is part of the teaching of the long exodus. Next day, "when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small, round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: It is *manna*: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which *Jehovah* hath given you to eat."²

It was natural that they said, "It is *manna*,"³ for the word *manna* means, "What is this?" Certainly the Hebrews did not think that it was only the "sugary exudation from the twigs of the tamarisk tree," though this has, as Geikie says, been called "man, or manna, from the earliest ages." "Possibly," as Ritter says, "the objection to this, that this tamarisk manna is only found for a month or two in spring," is answered by the fact that the Bible does not say that it fell every day in the year, but was, on the other hand, probably only an addition to the food that the Hebrews obtained in large quantities elsewhere. They made too much out of the event to allow us to think that it was only a "rain of manna," such as is known in the Orient. "There is," says Geikie, "an edible lichen which sometimes falls in showers several inches deep, the wind having blown it from the spots where it grew and carried it onwards." It has been suggested that both these theories have truth, inasmuch as there must have been two kinds of manna, one of which was "ground in mills or beaten in mortars," another of which would "melt in the sun." None of these, however, comport with the statement that a double quantity fell

on the sixth day; and it is hardly to be supposed that, later on, the pot containing an omer of manna would have been preserved in the sanctuary, or that the sabbath should have had its history so bound up with the double portion which does not become corrupt, if, to their thought, this was by any means an event less than miraculous.

It is more to the point, for us who have our lives to live, that we be assured of the rich teaching unto all ages contained in this story. The history of Israel is not only the history of a people and the ideas and inspirations which made them a nation, but it is also the history of the process by which, at least with one people, God reveals his will and educational method. In the attainment of genuine freedom; the only definition of liberty which endures is that which Jesus Christ gave and which the whole life of Israel proves true: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."¹ Man is made free by the truth he knows in living experience. He knows it, only by trusting it. Of the coming of truth to man, and of the use of truth on this wilderness march, this history is perennially descriptive. A man, or a nation, gets just enough truth on hand for every day's supply, and the law of truth is that, if it is not used, like the manna, it grows untrue. The most untrue souls in our world are those who are like the children of Israel who disobeyed Moses' command, and sought to hoard the manna from day to day. These overwise persons pack truth up in the warehouses of accepted opinion, to be used at some future time, when the world shall hunger for it. Truth itself becomes a lie, unless it gets into flesh and blood at once. It is thus with all generous impulses, sweet sentiments, and blessed inspirations; they are most full of blessing when they are fresh from God's hands. The greatest people is the people that trusts the truth it sees absolutely and at once. No wise economy, or shrewd hoarding of truth, ever made a nation true. All fatal corruption of public sentiment comes from a heaven-sent truth, acknowledged and yet unobeyed—the omers of manna that wiseacres are keeping, because it is too valuable to be used up at present.

Again, this whole procedure of God was a forelooking to the creation and growth of that divine humanity whose life is in Christ Jesus, for the production of which every government exists and to which what we call civilization is ministering—a humanity that lives "not by bread alone." How significant this episode of Israel's life is in the life of mankind may be but partially understood when we read the

¹ Exodus iv, 10. ² Exodus xvi, 14, 15.

³ Exodus xvi, 15.

¹ John viii, 32.

words of the Book of Deuteronomy, assuring us that this was its meaning: "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live."¹ It may be entirely understood when we go with the Son of Man into the wilderness where Christ was tempted. Here, as in the Wilderness of *Sin*, we feel the solidarity of the race: "Who is weak, and I am not weak?"² Satan has challenged the Christ of God and Man to make the stones into bread. It is a long way this side of that hour when the Hebrew exiles are gathering their manna, but Christ's victory was wrapped up in God's proving of them and humanity there. The old words come to his lips, "It is written," he says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."³ It was, indeed, a

great hour of "*proving*" for all highest human interests in all time, when Jehovah gave Israel manna, and the law of its gathering and use; and Moses said: "He will prove you, whether ye walk in his law, or no."¹ It led on to the hour when One such as was Savior came; and so heaven-sent and truth-incarnating was he, that he justly said: "Your fathers did eat manna in the Wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven."² It is not to be wondered at, that this training by symbols should afterward keep "the golden pot," with its omer of manna, in the holiest of all, close by the rod of Aaron that budded and the tables of the Covenant, beneath the shining cherubim.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE FIRST BATTLEFIELD TO SINAI.

SOON the hosts of Israel, by following through the grandeur and beauty of Wady Feiran, entered their first battlefield. They had escaped Philistines and southern princes by their obedience of Moses; now, however, on the high plain opening out before them, walled by mountains, they were to meet Amalek, who held the springs. The table-land was called Replidim. The great peaks of Sinai were lit up with all their many-colored splendors; and these gorgeous walls had long been in sight as they had led their flocks and herds, children and women, through Wady Maghara, near one of whose neighboring mountains, Dophkah, they had encamped. This spot was for ages the center of the Egyptian copper-mining region. From this place they had gone up to Alush. Here was nothing to compensate them for that weariness of body and soul which, amidst all this waste of rock and sand, had overtaken them. Perhaps here were found, in the ancient mines, some suggestions of the wealth which Egypt had drawn upon; but it was the Egypt now hopelessly lost. Again the cry, "Water! Water!" rose like a pathetic wail, and Moses heard it. Again, when they murmured, he reminded them of Jehovah. In accord with the divine command, he took the elders and the rod, which never meant so much as at that crisis, and as they approached a bare, brown rock, heated by the fierce sun, the rod was solemnly lifted up again. This time it smote the hardness of an apparently heartless circumstance; and a rivulet of water running forth was the testimony that the most

granitic fact which confronts human progress under God, has God's overflowing heart throbbing within it.

Another lesson had been taught to human faith. As the multitude behind heard the plash of waters, so gracious in their music, and they rushed with shouts to partake of its refreshing, they became the ancient representatives of the multitudes in all ages, who, without knowing of the perpetual miracle, are yet blessed with the results of obedient faith of the faithful. In whatsoever hard and bare fact to which Jehovah has ever led any nation, or man, by that pillar of cloud and flame, there lie to be revealed and to be used the hidden resources of the divine. Only a rod, like that of Moses, may open its treasure—a rod which is the emblem of power used for noble ends. That rod is a serpent when thrown on the ground, evil as Egyptian despotism; but it is a scepter of beneficent strength, when exalted by the hand of faith, gracious as God's love. Faith in the heart of a people, hardened by conservatism and unproductive as stone of any generous enthusiasm, has made a great financier the conqueror of Napoleon, by the treasure of England which flowed forth at his word. Webster said most truly of Alexander Hamilton, when the latter stood before the barren and hard poverty of the early American nationality: "He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth." Everything yields to noble ideas and loving sentiments. Even the human heart, often as hard and apparently fruitless as that rock in Horeb, pours forth its concealed

¹ Deuteronomy viii, 3.

² II. Corinthians xi, 29.

³ Matthew iv, 4.

¹ Exodus xvi, 4.

² John vi, 49-51.

wealth of hope and love at the touch of a rod embodying a worthy ideal. Still more profound is this history with its proclamation of human hope. Saint Paul, again reverting to his favorite chapter of the story of mankind for an explanation of Jesus Christ and his unique place as the central and organizing fact of history, tells us that this Horeb rock was only an emblem, that it followed them, and that they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ."¹

It was while they were drinking of the stream that Israel's rear, where all the feeble and faint and weary were huddled together, was fiercely attacked by a tribe of natives. They were probably Edomites, descendants of Esau, through his grandson, Amalek. It was a religious war—they "feared not God."² Here the descendants of Esau might have vengeance on the descendants of Jacob. Moses saw and understood. Against Jehovah, his plans and purposes, the enemy had come. Joshua was called into conspicuous service for the first time. He was commanded to fight against them with a picked band from Israel's most courageous men. Again Moses found the rod of power. That rod was to be, also, a prayer, as every true power is. Ascending the height with Aaron and Hur, he saw the battle waged, its fortune turning with the position of his rod. When the rod, once a serpent—that emblem of power seized and used for noble purposes—was uplifted, all was well for Israel; when it fell, all seemed lost. His strong arms grew weary; Aaron and Hur stayed his hands. Sundown came. The Amalekites were routed, and the Lord proclaimed the utter destruction of the foe of Israel. Another and earlier crisis had added a new line and a touch of affectionate color to the portrait of the supreme power, which portrait was making itself on the soul of Israel, when God said: "I am Jehovah that healeth thee"—*Jehovah, the Physician*. Here and now, the mental picture received a similar addition. The Amalekites had despised the flag of Israel, on which *Jehovah* was written and rewritten by every experience. Because "the hand of Amalek was upon the banner of the Lord," Moses built a monument altar, and called it "Jehovah-Nissi,"—"Jehovah, the Banner."³ So, in all ages, the evolution of the complete idea of God has come, through human experience. "Physician"—"Banner"; and all the other ideas and hopes which have been uttered by man's need, or yearning, or love, have been prophecies of Christ, who truly said, because he embodied each of them in his infinite glory: "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*"⁴

The successful battle with the Amalekites, a proud and numerous people called by Balaam "the first of the nations,"¹ doubtless tended to solidify the mass of Hebrew fugitives, and, by giving them a new trust in God and a crude self-respect, prepared them for nationality. Sinai was very near—they *must* have law and government. But before the momentous hour came to Moses, he was permitted a most interesting incident in the strenuous life he was living. "The Little Bird"—Zipporah, his wife—and the two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, had been left with Jethro, his father-in-law, in Midian. To the Wilderness where Moses "encamped at the Mount of God"² now came this priest of Midian, bringing his daughter, Zipporah, and the two sons. Jethro "rejoiced for all the goodness which Jehovah had done to Israel."³ Whatever was Zipporah's opinion of the man who had declined to have her accompany him in his severe task, Jethro sent his servant before him to Moses, who received him with oriental courtesy and affectionateness. The Midianitish priest had a profound sense of the greatness of Jehovah, and he professed it. He made burnt offerings and sacrifices, and then sat with Moses and Aaron and the elders at the sacrificial meal of fellowship. Both Moses and Jethro showed themselves men of true manhood during the whole visit. There is, however, a strange silence as to Zipporah and the sons. Moses will have an opportunity to prove his chivalry, as a husband, at a later time. But Jethro had a valuable contribution to make to the man who was marching Sinaiward.

Moses had undertaken, for the whole people, the settlement of each and every case in dispute. With this administration of justice among all the people, the judge had certainly been prepared for that next great act of statesmanship which he would be called upon to perform. He had been already a lawgiver. But what Jethro saw most clearly was this—his son-in-law and friend was "wearing away," and the delays of justice were so many, by reason of the overworked condition of their court, that the people were administering justice, or injustice, with their own hands. Never was there a more critical moment. Jethro offered his sagacious counsel, that Moses should divide these labors, appoint rulers of tens, of fifties, of hundreds, and of thousands, teach the people ordinances and laws, let the judges apply these to the cases brought before them, and, if any "great matters" made their appeal beyond the wisdom of these men, who were provided "from all the people—able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating

¹ Corinthians x, 4.

² Deuteronomy xxv, 18.

³ Exodus xvii, 15.

⁴ John xiv, 9.

¹ Numbers xxiv, 20.

² Exodus xviii, 5.

³ Exodus xviii, 9.

covetousness"¹—let these be brought to Moses, who should bring "the causes unto God."² It was an impulse Sinaiward, modestly given by what has been called the Gentile world to that Hebrewdom which was about to receive, through the loftiest of her sons, a law which is the basis and organon of the jurisprudence of the civilized world.

The modern traveler, after having examined the extended literature pertaining to this fascinating subject, and having reverently visited what is now known as Mount Serbal's gigantic peaks, set about with pinnacles, parted only by abysses, and hallowed by hoary tradition, will probably turn to the traditional Mount Sinai, equally celebrated by the legends of monks and the presence of consecrated buildings, to find a sufficiently large plain for the encampment of Israel, while they received the law. Having failed to find such a vast open space, and a brook "that descended out of the mount," such as the Bible story mentions, he will follow the feet of other scholars through valleys and over smaller ranges to Horeb, as the cliffs on the northwest of the Jebel-Musa are called, and agree with Dean Stanley as he saw "the wide yellow plain sweeping down to the very edge of the cliffs, exactly answering to the plain on which 'the people removed and stood afar off,'" that here, after following up the Wadyes-Sheik until the huge plain of El-Rahch was reached by all the host, Israel stood, and, in the neighborhood of so much grandeur and an hour of such imperial significance, "all the people that was in the camp trembled."³ In these eloquent words, Dean Stanley describes the majestic scenery about Sinai, to which they had now come: "At each successive advance, these cliffs disengaged themselves from the intervening and surrounding hills, and at last they stood out—I should rather say, the columnar mass, which they form, stood out—alone against the sky. On each side, the infinite complications of twisted and jagged mountains fell away from it. On each side the sky compassed it around as though it were alone in the wilderness. And to this great mass we approached through a wide valley, a long continuous plain, which, inclosed as it was between two precipitous mountain ranges of black and yellow granite, and having almost at its end this prodigious mountain-block, I could compare to nothing else than the immense avenue through which the approach was made to the great Egyptian temples." "The low lines of alluvial mounds at the foot of the cliff exactly answer to the 'bounds' which were to keep the people off from 'touching the mount.' The plain itself is not broken, and unevenly and

narrowly shut in, like almost all others in the range, but presents a long retiring sweep, against which the people could remove and stand afar off. The cliff, rising like a huge altar in front of the whole congregation and visible against the sky in lonely grandeur, from end to end of the whole plain, is the very image of the 'mount that might be touched' and from which the voice of God might be heard, far and wide, over the stillness of the plain below, widened at that point to its utmost extent by the confluence of all the contiguous valleys." Here one may see how Moses might have descended from the height, as the sacred narrative relates, the host of Israel unseen, yet their shouting heard before he apprehended its real cause; and here also is a brook "flowing down out of the mount."

More than four thousand five hundred feet above the sea's level, the plain is confronted by the Horeb mountains, the loftiest peak attaining an altitude nearly three thousand feet greater than this, and between this plain and that height juts out the less lofty and altar-like elevation of Ras Sufsáfch, where Moses took leave of the elders. Members of the Ordnance Survey found peaks behind this mountain, whereupon Moses, having been forty days alone with God, might have come down into the vale, heard the shouting, and been unable clearly to perceive operations in the camp. At a spring which flows here, crystalline and cool, the Bedouin tradition does not hesitate to say that Moses watered the flocks of Jethro, in those days when he was not an emancipator, but only a son-in-law of Jethro.

The imperial hour in the history of jurisprudence—the date of the revealing and the statement of those deepest and most fundamental laws which assure the success of the noble experiment of civilization, the opening moment of the era wherein justice itself became sufficiently just in human thought to be fearlessly trusted—this had almost come. As Israel drew near to it, the very approach of the revelation began to promise that specialization of Israel's life by granting to them a unique vision of God's ideal and thus imposing upon the Hebrew people a task so august and determinative in civilization that Jehovah said to them, in many ways, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."¹ This utterance was a stride toward the revelation of the ideal contained in Christianity. It was definitely to place the foundations of all civilization *in man*—not in things, not even in institutions, save as man's servants and helpers. It was also to

¹ Exodus xviii, 21.

² Exodus xviii, 19.

³ Exodus xix, 16.

¹ Exodus xix, 5.

intimate the sacredness of all humanity — "The earth is mine."¹ It was to create a fervor of patriotism, accentuating in the Jew the gift of his genius and its particular visions, as not only royal, but priestly: not alone was he to rule, but to minister; and he was to rule, not primarily by might of institution, or by grant of invaluable territory, but by the sovereignty of organizing ideas and the gift of their realm of power. So was their kingdom to be priestly — "a kingdom of priests."²

Every nation has failed of genuine kingship which has failed to exercise such priestly functions as these. In quite another manner, as characteristic of God's providence, as truly emphasizing the gift of the genius of the Greek, did Jehovah call the Greek to a royal priesthood. Hellenic kingship did not vanish at the approach of Roman strength; for the Greek had made it a true priesthood unto all men. His life's inherent ideas were at once regulations, legislations, and ministrations to the life of the race. The Greek really separated himself from the barbarians, as truly as did the Hebrew from the Gentile world; not by a protest of words against barbarism, but by the force of his ideals. Discriminations founded on any other assumption than the possession of spiritual or intellectual treasures which they held in trust, always failed with both peoples. Ideas entering tasks as distinct as are the characters of nations alone preserve national individuality. God called the Greek to be an intellectual aristocracy, as he called the Hebrew to be a spiritual aristocracy, and both did he call to minister to all humanity. In each case, the unique and precious stream flowed between firm banks of patriotic conviction. The Greek was called to be an artistic nation — his Sinai revealed the law of beauty; God called the Hebrew, as we have seen, to be "an holy nation" — his Sinai revealed the laws of righteousness. Because holiness is the highest concern of all life, Jehovah has said, not alone in that hour, but as well in all history, before and after Sinai: "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above *all* people."³ We never so truly appreciate the divine distinctions in the charac-

ter and tasks of great peoples as at such places as this in the geography of the soul. "The great truth known to Israel," says Rothe, "is that *God* — the great truths known to the Greeks is that *man* — is a moral, an ethical being; therefore, either cycle of historical development belongs essentially to the other, and that, too, because both form an essential preparation for Christianity." "What the new idea of God and the new notion of religion have done for man," says Principal Fairbairn, "we may not attempt to tell. They have changed him within and without, strengthened all his moral qualities, created in him a nobler and sterner ethical spirit, exalted his ideal of manhood, brought elements into his social and collective life that have enormously enriched his civilization. Our order is not the Greek cosmos — the beautiful but merciless harmony that man could not but admire, that yet crushed without pity the man who touched it. Our order is the moral, the reign of the living and righteous will, which never spares guilt, but is ever merciful to the guilty. Our conception of the universe, of providence, of the law that is supreme over man and his destiny, is penetrated through and through with moral ideas.

. . . Jehovah called Israel out of Egypt to serve him, and Israel's service of Jehovah has been in the noblest sense service of man." Eloquently, indeed, does Gladstone also utter this truth: "Palestine was weak and despised, always obscure, oftentimes and long trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. On the other hand, Greece, for a thousand years, repelled every invader from her shores. Fostering her strength in the keen air of freedom, she defied, and at length overthrew, the mightiest of existing empires; and when, finally, she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them, too, at the very moment of her subjugation, she herself subdued to her literature, language, arts, and manners. Palestine, in a word, had no share of the glories of our race: while they blaze on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendor. Greece had valor, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit — she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom at the best but thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone."

¹ Exodus xix, 5. ² Exodus xix, 6.

³ Exodus xix, 5.

CHAPTER X.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

NOW Israel trembled on the edge of a new era. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire. And the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."¹ For many wondrous hours, in the awe-inspiring atmosphere of the promise and command of Jehovah, the whole congregation had listened to its own echoed pledge made by its leader. "All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do."² Three days of solemn preparation had passed. Amidst all these hours of purification and sanctification, they had mused upon God's goodness. "I bare you on eagles' wings," said Jehovah, "and brought you unto myself."³ At length, having gone up to the top of the first elevation, Moses had asked Jehovah's command. It was at once a covenant and a revelation—every newly discovered truth is a covenant between God and man, exacting the performance of the higher duties which it discloses; and it is also a revelation of God's conception of man's capabilities as well as a revelation of God himself. The bounds had been sacredly observed, and not an Israelite sought to "break through to touch the mount that burned with fire."⁴ Moses had already taken the pledge of Hebrewdom up to the mysterious height. To-day, "in the sight of all the people,"⁵ Jehovah will come down again. The "thick cloud"⁶ covered the mount. Thunders shook the crags and lightnings flamed and vanished above the awful place. Jehovah called his servant, and the eyes of Israel followed him up into the cloud. But lest any Israelite might transgress beyond the bound, he was sent down again. Moses and Aaron alone might come up into the presence chamber of Jehovah. Then over the mighty host, standing as one expectant man upon the plain, the voice of Jehovah sounded forth. Even Israel, exalted by sublime events, had not been trained to endure the grandeur of such a moment. At the utterance of the "Ten Words," the proclamation of Israel's constitution, the publishing of that Jewish code each of whose words establishes a principle for the whole race, "the people reeled backward and stood afar off." "And they said unto Moses: Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God

is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off. And Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."¹

It is to be noticed that the penetrative soul of Moses was not hesitant in saying that all the sublime accompaniment to the issuing of this song-theme of civilization had not been given to inspire or foster fear in Israel's heart. It had all come, that they might learn the supreme grandeur of holiness. The organic ordinances had been spoken in the "Ten Words." Now that the foundations were laid and the constitutive principles enshrined in these commandments, the structure of civil law and judicial procedure might fitly rise upon them. As the people tremblingly had asked for the mediatorship of Moses, they made prophecy of that clearer demand which prophets and psalmists would discover in the human soul beseeching the mediatorship of the Christ of God. In this expressed desire for mediation, they were only going deeper still into the true conception of that almighty power whom they had called *Jehovah*. Indeed, the "Ten Words" were and are the complete utterance of that profound idea of God. They simply open up and restate that distinctive conception, as its behests and the hopes it enkindles reveal themselves in the life and conduct of man. They are the interpretation of the memorial name, just as the colors and tints of grasses and flowers are the loyal and logical explication of the sunlight, revealing itself in the life which it touches and influences. The memorial name is not only the soul and reason of the "Ten Words," but it involves all that vast collection of ordinances, laws, codes, procedures, precedents, prohibitions, rules, and judicial statutes which their application to human life has furnished in the flight of more than thirty centuries. In their simplest form, they appear as follows:

"I am Jehovah, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."²

TABLE I.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.
 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God
 in vain.
 Thou shalt remember the Sabbath day, to keep it
 holy.
 Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.

¹Exodus xix, 18.

²Exodus xxiv, 3 (Revised Version).

³Exodus xix, 4.

⁴Exodus xix, 21.

⁵Exodus xix, 11.

⁶Exodus xix, 16.

¹Exodus xx, 19-21.

²Exodus xx, 2.

TABLE II.

Thou shalt do no murder.
 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 Thou shalt not steal.
 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.¹

Upon these, the whole system of worship and civil economy rose, and, naturally enough, these commands are inspirational to the civilizations inspired and guided by the most progressive and constructive forces, for they are fundamental; they appeal to the depths of human possibility and to the heights of divine providence. They also created a new era. For, in these "Ten Words," closest sympathy is revealed between religion—man's attitude and action toward God—and morality—man's attitude and action toward his fellow-man.

It may be permitted here, briefly, to pause with these ideas and their new expression in the Jewish constitution. The prefatory declaration: "*I am Jehovah, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,*" is itself a statement of the fact that stable and just social organization has its genesis and birth in God. Such a background of history is an abundant and, indeed, indispensable resource and inspiration. It constantly invests a people with the presence of divine ideals—greater than they alone have been, or are; and it bids them march under the inspiration of a theory of government which summons every possibility within them into harmony with Jehovah's infinite plan. Thus this early declaration was the expression of that noblest Puritanism which has made the State one with the Church of God, in aim and achievement. Back of all human schemes or purposes, to give dignity and nobility to all their own ideals and movements, was the divine will, which, once at least, and in the nation's very birth-hour, had proven itself the soul of victory. To this will all their policies and ambitions, if they be worthy, *must* make appeal.

One by one, the five majestic commands of the first table unfold the true notion of Jehovah, and indicate the kind of worship due unto him. Monotheism had never so grandly uttered itself, as in that first command, "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*"² Jehovah must be unique and alone in Israel's life, or Israel's life would vanish; besides this, the fact abided: Only the Jehovah of their worship is the "I AM THAT I AM,"³ in the whole universe. The second word was a divine provision for the spirituality of religion; and thus it was a plea for man's higher self. It does both of these services by its attack upon idolatry. Egypt had concealed the Eternal One in a multitude

of symbols. Images of the infinite had not only failed to represent God; they had positively left the higher regions of man's thought, and aspiration, and faith without a God worthy of worship. Sense had cheated spirit in creating countless images. "*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image,*" said Jehovah; and then only had the idea of God in the word an infinite future within the mind of man.

With such a new vision of the real significance of the memorial name *Jehovah*, in human thought and life, how natural and, indeed, consequential, is the third of these "Ten Words," enforcing the duty of reverence for the all-sacred and all-supreme. "*Thou shalt not lift up the name of the Lord thy God to a vanity.*" This laid the foundation for the noble and ennobling awe in the presence of the divine, which has uplifted humanity as nothing else ever has exalted, or may exalt, man's mind from low and vulgar associations. It was not alone a command against the profanity of a curse with God's sacred name; it was an effort of Jehovah to guard humanity against the desecration of that which is sacred anywhere and at any time. It makes man's soul sacred to live with awe in the presence of that which is truly majestic and awe-inspiring. Maurice was not less a statesman than a theologian when he said: "I hold no commandment to be more permanent, or more necessary for my nation and for me, than this one." Quite as logical was the next utterance and quite as consequential is its command: "*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*" No more truly gracious does this word of God seem than when, ages later, we hear Jesus of Nazareth say: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." For this word of Jehovah, concerning his sabbaths, was to provide a mainstay for a nation of slaves, in their effort to realize the ideal of Jehovah, amidst the countless needs, and cares, and discouragements of their life. One day was set amongst the rest, to make man surer of his divine pedigree, to thrill him with divine hopes, to bring him up again out of life's commonplaces into sympathy with divine plans and make him able to look forward to his loftier self when the whole earth shall be the sabbath of the Lord God. "Rest"—that one word, spoken at that time, held infinite treasures for man; it has poured its fragrance of peace into all time. It was the bloom of this command. This law was not a whim of Jehovah; it sounded the depths of human nature and builded on their foundations. As no true civilization then was possible without the sabbath, so to-day without it no apparently strong civilization is safe. The sabbath belongs to all time, so long as man endures.

¹ Exodus xx. ² Exodus xx, 3. ³ Exodus iii, 14.

Naturally, out of all this reverence for what is essentially sacred, came the command for the revering of the foundation stones underlying family life; and the last duty unto God is thus mentioned: "*Honor thy father and thy mother.*" There is no reverence for Jehovah, or for anything that sanctifies life and exalts man, where there is no reverence for parents. This is a duty to Jehovah; for they alone stand for Jehovah in the opening life of Jehovah's human children. The family is the dearest and noblest organism in human civilization. It is the splendid distinction of Hebrewdom that, in Israel's life and in this command, progressive mankind escaped the baneful immorality of the old religions, learned the love of children, and made the household the source of a life so enduring and resilient as to leave this people unmatched in all human history.

On the second table were inscribed, in a very brief and rudimentary manner, that series of obligations constituting a code which for all time has bound religion with morality, and has taught mankind that the duties toward God are never performed except along with the duties toward man. Jehovah is behind *all* life. There is no "looking up" without "lifting up." The first of these obligations touches humanity at those crises in life when the relations of man and man produce friction, and the first impulse following opposition is to avenge a wrong done, or satisfy the demands of anger. "*Thou shalt not kill*"—this was the divine announcement of the fact that human life is always sacred. Protection for man's existence here, to work out his destiny, to fulfill his right to be and to be free on this earth—reverence for such a rich and divine gift as human life—these are all enjoined by this commandment.

How naturally, with that divine idea of the place of the household and family to which reference has already been made, proceeded the next commandment: "*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" The home had its inviolable foundations made secure in this word of Jehovah. The future of human society could not have been guaranteed otherwise. All relationships of human beings, all the precious outflow of what is best and fairest in human life, all that is truest and sweetest in human memory or hope, were made sacred, guarded by a divine utterance, in his command. Out of pure households rises the loved golden age.

Next to this must be established the sanctity of property. In an age like our own, we appreciate the statesmanship which uttered this commandment. Civil society, even after these other questions are settled by the command-

ments of Jehovah, has no future, except when this foundation is placed beneath property: "*Thou shalt not steal.*"

But there is something besides a man's possessions to be kept. Dear, indeed, to all human society is truth; and justice is the bulwark of civilized life. "*Thou shalt not bear false witness,*" said Jehovah. Public righteousness is private reverence for truth and justice. A lie is the foe of social unity. Untruth in men makes the organism of civil economy untrue. Truth in every man as to every other man makes any man's life and honor safe.

At last, the law touched the very soul of all true life and social well-being. Selfishness had made and still was making Paradise a lost Eden. Only the noblest regard for others' lives, others' possessions, others' rights, may be able to make society worthy of its hopes and existence. "*Thou shalt not covet,*" said the Jehovah of Israel. Benevolence in every citizen is the atmosphere of a safe and stable social state; greed is its poison and death. Besides this, no soul may reach its rich and full power, with the evil demon of covetousness in the bosom; and it is the mission of society to bring out all there is of a man. From murder, the most brutal, to covetousness, the least rude—the law of Jehovah swept the scale. In the law's attitude toward this last sin, it touched the heart of man's moral life: Judaism had almost reached Christianity. It forbade even the feeling that would appropriate anything of any man's goods. It struck at the very intents of the heart. It prophesied a human society which is stable and glorious, only because man's heart is right.

Thus did the significance of the new and memorial name unfold itself to the genius of Moses on the sacred mount. God was no longer a name, but a power of righteousness in man's life. Jehovah was henceforth the living foe of iniquity, the reason of universal order, the pledge of ultimate and just civilization. His people's business in the world, ever after that moment, as they moved against the dark background of contemporary religiosity and pompous superstition, was to "make for righteousness." Standing for this, Israel was the sublimest spectacle in all the world. Israel possessed the ideals for both the Church and the State. These inhered in the law which was to be

"Sovereign law, that state's collected will,
* * * * *

Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.
Smit by her sacred frown

The fiend dissension like a vapor sinks,
And e'en the all-dazzling crown

Hides his faint rays and at her bidding shrinks."

CHAPTER XI.

ISRAEL'S SIN AND THE RENEWAL OF THE CODE.

ENGRAVED, as these "Ten Words" were to be, on tables of stone, this body of law was also to be kept in the sacred ark, while into the many-sided life of Israel their regnant influence should proceed through the subordinate laws, or ordinances, founded upon them. Elsewhere, in this work, these and the suggestive illustration they have are treated more at length. But we may be permitted, here, to say that these statutes, given by the hand of Moses, were really the terms of the covenant which Jehovah made. This covenant had its inauguration in solemn sacrifice, the renewal to their minds of that passover night in Egypt, and the meal of sacrifice. Moses himself sprinkled the altar with half of the blood, read the laws and ordinances, and the people answered: "All that Jehovah hath commanded will we do, and be obedient."¹ Then the rest of the blood was sprinkled over the representatives of the tribes. Truly it was "the blood of the covenant which God hath made"² with them.

Back to the sacred mount the great leader went with Aaron, his nephews Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy tribal representatives. The glory of God now revealed itself. Where a little time before was thick darkness, it now seemed "a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness."³ "They saw God, and did eat and drink."⁴ Sending Aaron and Hur back to the people, Moses took Joshua and approached the presence chamber of Jehovah. Then, alone, the lawgiver of Israel entered the cloud that covered the mount, and there he remained for forty days. Those forty days of absence put an intense strain upon Israel's spirituality and faith. It is easy to see them looking at the altar at the foot of the mountain, remembering the covenant made with Jehovah, counting the twelve pillars, while now and then the o'erstrained eye searches the distant cloud for a glimpse of Moses. All that heathenism possessed of charm, or dignity, now swept in upon the trembling heart of Hebrewdom. In the solitude and splendor of yonder cloud, Jehovah was giving to Moses and his people two tables of stone on which the law was written by the finger of God, and there Moses was beholding the pattern of the tabernacle. Here, below, thronged the memories and enchantments of Egyptian worship; and, having lost their mediator, the defenses of their souls were eas-

ily overcome; the visions of the old idolatry ruled; God must be made visible; and so did circumstances and panic, loneliness and desire flow into one another that it seemed that a golden calf came of itself to their fancied need. Aaron shows how unconsciously he himself yielded to the pressure of the stream, when he answered Moses and said: "They gave me gold. I cast it into the fire and there came out this calf."¹

He had at first resisted. In vain had Aaron thought Israel would halt at the point where their golden ornaments were to be melted. But Israel only cried out in a riot of joy, when the form of the Egyptian god came forth: "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."² It was a fateful compromise, in which they were glad to worship Jehovah under the idolatrous Egyptian symbol. Even Aaron was willing to say of the feast which accompanied the event: "Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah."³

As Moses descended from the mount, though he held in his soul the pattern of the tabernacle, its priesthood and services and the divinely graven decalogue, all seemed lost. He would not wait to consider that it had perhaps been asking too much that a throng of Hebrew slaves, who, until recently, had blindly worshiped Apis and Mnevis, should so soon become a nation steadily enwrapt with its vision of the Invisible. Truly, the leader had himself alone been close enough to the fiery cloud to keep its meaning clear. He looked with pitiful dismay and holy wrath upon the orgies which followed the feast presented to the calf. He had come down from the solitude of Jehovah, with a hint which Jehovah gave him of their peril, to behold this shameless din of idolatrous humanity. It was an awful distance spiritually—but it is traveled by every true lawgiver and reformer—from God's presence, where the source of law and the tabernacle of hope are, to the presence and condition of that disappointing humanity which they are to rule and to redeem. Even the mind of Moses was not comprehensive enough—only the mind of Jehovah as revealed in Christ has proved to be comprehensive enough—to hold in one faith and hope both the law and the lawless. Moses hurled from his arms the two tables of stone and broke them to pieces on the earth. It was an hour for righteous indignation. He approached the detestable golden

¹ Exodus xxiv, 7.

² Exodus xxiv, 8.

³ Exodus xxiv, 10.

⁴ Exodus xxiv, 11.

¹ Exodus xxxii, 24.

² Exodus xxxii, 4.

³ Exodus xxxii, 5.

calf and "burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink of it."¹ Always do we, in returning to our idols, repeat this ancient history. The circumstances *seem* to create the calf. Our religion becomes a low feast. We make our very lust devout and it utters pious phrases. Then the ashes of our idol are cast, as these were, into the brook that flows out of Sinai. We *must* get back to Sinai. The law we break is to be reckoned with. Law itself is full of grace. Each bears his sin's consequences: we drink of the water of that brook where the ruined idols are thrown.

But more than this must the stern lawgiver and emancipator, in that stern crisis, accomplish. He called the faithful ones; the sons of Levi responded with their naked swords. Justice is to be done. Here was a trial for the tender heart; but authority has gone. Government has perished. It must be restored and the rebellion crushed. That these were done, instantly, was testified in the 3,000 dead men at the camp of Israel, and the ascent of Moses, pleading, as he made his way up Sinai again, for the pardon of Israel and Aaron. Only a great nation can slay its real foes and then forgive. Again, God had said—and this time he "waxed hot against them":² "I will make of thee a *great nation*."³ He would bind them once more to the cost of a great idea.

Israel was now in grief. Jehovah would not approach them, even for their own sakes; the glory would have consumed them. Loud lamentations were uttered and habiliments of sorrowful penitence were worn; and from Horeb even to Canaan, there were no ornaments upon them. Moses' tent was now more remote from the camp. Still salvation was at "the tent of meeting." The cloud was no longer in their midst; it was graciously in sight.

It is the story of a leader of which the soul is unworthy, an ideal in which for an hour the heart has lost its trust. Joshua was in charge of the leader's tent. At last, the pardon was granted. The old covenant was again full of vital forces and gracious influences. Once more Moses was ready to lead on; and, as though Jehovah would start him anew, with something like the encouraging impulse given aforetime at the bush that burned and was not consumed, he was placed in a crevice of the mountain of God. More and more did his penetrative mind and full heart say: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."⁴ He was where he had been when he saw that his personal victory over Pharaoh was not worth having. He knew that Pharaoh must acknowledge *Jehovah*; it must be *Jehovah's* triumph; and

Moses must now be sure that Jehovah is the soul of the advance; he knows that otherwise it is not progress at all. "I beseech thee, show me thy glory,"¹ prayed the leader. The divine answer came: "I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee; and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee."² Hidden in the cleft of the rock, Moses saw the "back parts"³ of him, just as always the goodness that comes to us is the testimony that God *is* and is gone, to leave *goodness* elsewhere. God's glory is his goodness—not his power, not his wisdom, not even his justice, not even his truth, related as these are in character; but his *goodness* is the deepest, truest reflection of Jehovah. Moses was leading to Christ, in whom "God is love."⁴

Just as, at the hour of the burning bush, *El-Shaddai, God Almighty*, became to a great soul in a crisis, *Jehovah*, "I AM THAT I AM," and as the evolution of the idea of God came nearer to that full conception and description of him contained in his Son's saying: "*Our Father which art in heaven*,"⁵ so here, at a new crisis in the faith of Moses and Israel, indeed, of mankind—a crisis quite as serious as the former—there came another forward impulse and movement toward the conception of Jesus Christ, for here the *goodness* of God was shown to be his real glory. It marks a stage in the race's theology. The test of a theology—which is man's view of the power that is supreme in the universe, the power with which, or with whom, he has to reckon—here and forever—is found in the morality, the conduct, which it inspires and establishes. Up to this later hour, the morality of Israel was not satisfactory even in such an essential point as worship; it had broken down amidst a glorious, though a trying series of events. For Israel had not yet answered to Israel's own heart the question: "O Jehovah, what is thy real glory?" Other nations before had made the *power*, or the *wisdom*, or the *justice*, or the *truth* of the Supreme One, to be its, or his, glory. No Sinai code could enforce itself in human nature, trained toward some better idea of their own life, as Israel had been, if human nature felt nothing better behind that law as authority, than *power*, or *wisdom*, or *justice*, or *truth*. Israel, through Israel's loftiest and deepest soul, had felt the influence of *goodness* in Jehovah, the covenanting God. The law alone was impotent, for there was, as yet, not enough of the Christly element—*goodness*—shining through it, to command and win loyalty. "All law," says Burke, "is *benevolence* acting by rule." That is to say, as history proves, Sinai's utterances are successful in producing morality by sympathetically attaching

¹ Exodus xxxii, 20.² Exodus xxxii, 10.³ Exodus xxxii, 10.⁴ Exodus xxxiii, 15.¹ Exodus xxxiii, 18.² Exodus xxxiii, 19.³ Exodus xxxiii, 23.⁴ I. John iv, 8.⁵ Matthew vi, 9.

the governed to the energy behind the law. Thus this whole event is a Christian triumph, before Christianity was born. The law here, in its failure, is a tutor leading to Christ—goodness embodied—Jehovah incarnate. Moses had led the race's theology and theodicy to a loftier discovery. Behind the law of Sinai was infinite *power, wisdom, justice, truth*, with what is dearer and greater, for it included them all—*goodness*. Henceforth, as Moses descended from Sinai again with the law, again written on two tables of stone, his face did shine, and the decalogue had fortunes in human nature which it had not possessed before.

It does not belong to this part of this work to speak at length of the tabernacle, whose pattern Moses saw in the Mount of God. Its very building was such an atonement as bound Israel unto Jehovah. On the first day of the second year from the date of their departure it stood in the camp. The fiery cloud abided upon it; Jehovah was near. A special class of Hebrews was, of course, necessarily set apart, at once, for the performance of the duties consequent upon this new and important procedure. Moses had been the mediator; but his face had been covered, as he spake to Israel. Now steps were taken toward that day when the veil was to be "done away in Christ."¹ The glory of Jehovah had "filled the tabernacle."² We may almost hear the triumphant saying of John: "The tabernacle of God is with men."³ The whole Book of Leviticus has been called the code of Hebrewdom; it certainly represents the most wise and profound statesmanship, along with the truest religious spirit.

¹ II. Corinthians iii, 14.

² Exodus xl, 34. ³ Revelation xxi, 3.

It was almost inevitable that even the priest should fail, at times, to illustrate this high spiritual economy. We soon find Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, attempting to offer "strange fire before Jehovah."¹ Even these of the tribe of Levi had faltered. Seven days of ceremonial at their consecration had not averted this awful event. Swift was the flame of Jehovah upon them, and Nadab and Abihu were no more. "Can it be," says Geikie, "that the prohibition of the priesthood from tasting wine, or strong drink, before entering the tabernacle, which immediately follows the mention of the catastrophe, is a hint as to its cause?"

Another sorrowful event occurred before they left Sinai. The throng had included those who were gathered in the camp of Dan. One of the women, Shelomith, had a son whose father was a man of Egypt. Grown up and a member of the camp, at this time, he blasphemed the Name, and cursed. It was a shocking profanity, and—as if forever to show us that we are not ourselves to profane Jehovah in creating *ex post facto* law without ascertaining his will, thus making our ideas only human law without a divine sanction—the people, in the absence of any ordinance on the subject, appealed to Jehovah through Moses. The answer came; the blasphemer was taken out from the camp and stoned by the congregation. To profane the supreme power which is above all life *is*, even now, treason to any government: it ultimately makes authority impossible. And, as though this were to be recognized by Israelite and foreigner alike, it was proclaimed that this punishment would come to any blasphemer.

¹ Leviticus x, 1.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CENSUS—THE WILDERNESS OF PARAN—THE SPIES.

THE annual feast of the Passover had come, and it was duly celebrated. A census of those constituting the host of Israel was taken, and the number reached 603,550. This would certainly indicate a total population of at least 2,000,000. Edersheim compares this census with that taken just before entering Canaan, as follows:

	First Census. ¹		Second Census. ²
Reuben	46,500	(Prince Elizur, "My God the Rock")	43,730
Simeon	59,300	(Prince Shelumial, "God My Salvation")	22,200
Gad	45,650	(Prince Eliasaph, "My God that Gathers")	40,500
Judah	74,600	(Prince Nahshon, "The Diviner")	76,500
Issachar	54,400	(Prince Nethaneel, "God the Giver")	64,300
Zebulun	57,400	(Prince Eliab, "My God the Father")	60,500
Ephraim	40,500	(Prince Elishama, "My God the Hearer")	32,500
Manasseh	32,200	(Prince Gamaliel, "My God the Rewarder")	52,700
Benjamin	35,400	(Prince Abidan, "My Father is Judge")	45,600
Dan	62,700	(Prince Ahiezer, "My Brother is Help")	64,400
Asher	41,500	(Prince Pagiel, either "My Fate is God" or "My Prayer-God") ..	53,400
Naphtali	53,400	(Prince Ahira, "My Brother is Friend")	45,400
	603,550		601,730

The firstborn, 22,273, were hallowed. The Levites were separately numbered, and became the helpers of Aaron in the tabernacle service. One family, the Gershomites, took charge of the tabernacle; the Merarites attended to the tent and its belongings; the contents and sanctuary vessels were looked after by the Kohathites. Moses had found a true friend in Hobab. The princes of Israel had offered rich gifts. The branched candlestick had been lit; the Levites were set apart. The twentieth day of the second month had come. The cloud of God's presence and the silver trumpets of Aaron were ready to give the command to march. The Ark was on the shoulders of the sons of Kohath.

"Arise, O Jehovah, let thine enemies be scattered!
Let them also that hate thee flee before thee."²

This song, sung ages later by Savonarola in his cell at Florence, and, later still, by Oliver Cromwell as he mounted the heights of Dunbar, poured its melody forth from the lips of Moses, and Israel was again on the march.

So great was the deposit of ideas which Jehovah had granted to Hebrewdom, and so rich were the treasures which Israel was to put in current coin, for all the social, political, and religious future of the race, that Jehovah counted upon thirty-eight years of their wandering, under his guidance, before Canaan should be theirs. So much does Jehovah depend upon the realization of ideas and aspira-

tions to make "a great nation"¹ that, when any Canaan comes in sight, it is only a rich incident: the making of the *nation* is the essential thing. At most, a large and fair country is only an opportunity to be met and used by intellectual and moral power. Thirty-eight years have a short chronicle in comparison with that which recites the conception, birth,

and culture of the power to meet that opportunity which Israel now but half possessed. They had become a nation; they had hold of the theocracy. All these years could do was but to teach them what it meant to humanity, and still means. Only thus could they truly *possess* Canaan.

They moved toward the wilderness of Paran. Three days, and the pillar halted. They were murmuring, not in ignorance, as aforetime, as at Marah and Sin: better things ought now to have come from them; and a conflagration broke out in one of the encampments. Again they cried unto Moses; again Moses cried unto Jehovah. The fire was quenched; but from its embers was lit the hateful spirit of mutiny; and now they were to pay the penalty for such associations as they had permitted with the mixed multitude which had come along. These adventurers demanded flesh to eat. They pictured the garden they had left to the hungry Hebrews. It was contagious; and the cry for flesh to eat came to the discouraged Moses. At length he said to Jehovah: "I am not able to bear all this people alone. If thou deal thus with me, kill me."³ Such men as Moses, and only such large souls, cast such heavy shadows, and have to look through them, when the sun is at their backs. Moses' mediatorship was not that of Christ. Its very breakdown, as its success, led to Christ. Necessities like these are the mother of governmental inventions. The senate of seventy, with Hur

¹ Exodus xxx; Numbers i. ² Numbers x, 35.

¹ Genesis xii, 2. ² Numbers xxvi. ³ Numbers xi, 15.

at the head, had been chosen by the people. It was a sublime step. Already the theocracy had shown itself to be the pledge of all thorough and safe democracy. But the people were crying for meat. The Edomites were on one side; the Amalekites were on the other; the Amorites were in front; behind was Sinai and—Egypt's garden of plenty. They were on a chalky plain, waterless, save for a few springs; flinty, also, and alive with scorpions and serpents. Their previous history, quoted and explained by Moses, did not feed them. In their semicircle, sat the senate of seventy; and lo, the spirit of prophecy came upon them, and upon Eldad and Medad, who had been designated, but had not been chosen. Even Joshua himself missed Jehovah's meaning, for he came to Moses with a scheme to forbid them to prophesy. Then, as a jewel which was hardened by this dreadful experience but was worth all that it cost, came the magnanimous utterance of Moses, opposing all jealousy. "Enviest thou for my sake? Would to God," said he, "that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them."¹ A really great man is never jealous. And now the bread question was settled. The quail came in flocks; and, so truly did lust become its own punishment, that Israelite and Egyptian gained a pestilence from their surfeit of food. The place was called Kibroth-Hattaavah—"Graves of Greediness."² Verily, it is a long way to any true Canaan. "He gave them their request, but he sent leanness into their soul."

Only our loved ones are able to hurt our hearts. Yet it is never far, for any Moses, from Kibroth-Hattaavah to Hazeroth—the name of Israel's next station. Probably Moses had been married a second time; and, if so, his wife, an Egyptian, was no more satisfactory to his sister Miriam than Zipporah, his first wife, had been helpful to the leader of the Hebrews. Miriam began to talk against her brother, on his wife's account, and soon Aaron joined his utterances to the abominable scandal. They had lost something of their interest in worthy themes, as persons always do when they begin to look out after the family matters of their friends and relatives. The prophetic gift had not made them humble; and a not unusual method was adopted to discredit the unique character of the person criticised. "Hath not the Lord spoken, also, by us?"³ they said. Older than Moses, of the same family, his importance they could not bear. Their action stung the modest, chivalrous soul of the man who had always avoided preëminence. They were his foes. On the other hand, he had made them all they were.

Moses was silent; but Jehovah spoke to them from the pillar of cloud: "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold; wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"¹ But more than speech, when the cloud removed, Miriam was white with leprosy. Such a spirit, in anyone's leprosy—loathsome, contagious; and, as here, Aaron, who shares it, is usually doomed, as was he to declare Miriam leprous. The only thing to do, in such cases, is to follow this example, and put Miriam out of the camp. Then love and pity worked. The great-hearted Moses interceded, and, seven days after, Miriam came back restored.

Then followed an event which marks a turning point in Hebrew history. They were in the Wilderness of Paran, *Kadesh-Barnea*. Every step of their advance has been followed by modern travelers. It was "the stronghold of the Amorites," and a little north of it begins the Negeb, or the "south country" of Palestine, which reaches nearly to "Beersheba, where the Promised Land really begins." There is even yet every witness that it was then fertile and fruitful. Out of a rough and mountainous district they had come to this series of plateaus. Every eye strained Canaanward, as they came to the wady famous from Abraham's day to ours, where they rallied the host. Moses had not yet become used to disappointment, even though he found its value through his year's stay at Sinai; and he now anticipated projecting an invasion straight through to the goal. But before giving the order to advance to Canaan, he concluded with the people to send spies from Kadesh—a picked band of chiefs from the twelve tribes. They were duly instructed and clothed with all the dignity of the hour and purpose. Every item of information as to land and water, roads and peoples, was to be obtained. The embassy started. Avoiding the warriors of Canaan, making a detour by leaving Ain Gadis to the north, entering the mountain district, Caleb and Joshua led "unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath."² Descending by Hebron, they reached the route to the Negeb; and lo, the vine-clad country was luscious with grapes. Forty days had elapsed, and they returned, laden with the enormous clusters of Eshcol. Before Israel's joy uttered all its excitement, the commissioners, who had been sent forth solely because the Israelites

¹ Numbers xi, 29.² Numbers xi, 34, 35.³ Numbers xii, 2.¹ Numbers xii, 6-8.² Numbers xiii, 22.

were not courageous enough to make the invasion in Jehovah's name, related to them a series of facts which showed Israel's lack of true valor and faith. "Only the people is strong which occupieth the land, and the cities fortified, very great, and also descendants of the Anak have we seen there"¹—this was their hesitant message to timid Hebrews. Caleb and Joshua, faithful to the idea that Jehovah is all and in all, did their utmost to stay their panic; but, so great was the general despair, that "the congregation lifted up their voice and cried"² the whole night long. It was the old pitiful unbelief that again put Canaan far away, though its edge might have been seen from yonder mountain tops. They moaned for the low securities and safeties of Egypt's slavery. Their fear of death at the hands of Canaanites made them wish they had met death under Pharaoh—so strange is the introversion of doubt. They proposed to choose another general, that they might return. Moses and Aaron could only prostrate themselves, dumb before Jehovah, almost disheartened by the din of mutiny about them. When Caleb and Joshua ventured to speak words of faith in Jehovah and his power to lead them against all foes whatsoever, Israel demanded that they should be stoned. It was a rejection of the Almighty One which outraged Jehovah's forbearance. He declared he would smite them with a pestilence; and, faithful still to his promise that "a great nation" should be made, he proposed to make it out of Moses—"a minority of one with God." Quality, not quantity, makes greatness rather than bigness. This roused the mediator, and brought out his real greatness. "The glory of Jehovah appeared in the tent of meeting to all Israel."³ Moses pleaded, and his argument before Jehovah—a prayer of eager faith, shot through and through with javelins of doubt—is an heroic appeal. It goes deep into the nature of Jehovah—the God of the covenant. It claims all the resources of goodness, which is Jehovah's glory; and it claims them for disobedient Israel. The answer was: "Jehovah will preserve the nation"; but not a man of age, save Caleb and Joshua, will be permitted to enter Canaan; and, according to the number of the days which the spies spent in searching, shall be the number of their years of wandering. The old stock must die off. A more valiant nation must grow up to enter Canaan. The other ten spies were smitten by the plague.⁴ Jehovah's judgments are not arbitrary; they coinhere with the nature of truth, and man and God. Responsible and rebellious belief *cannot* enter any Canaan. The impossibilities rise out of the nature of the mind it-

self. Doubt is a death-laden plague to all souls that have already been at Sinai and heard the law.

Now the pendulum swung from this utter faithlessness to audacious, unguided presumption. They leaped at the Amalekites and were sorely repulsed. Moses and the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah had not gone with them, in this attack. First, they had forgotten Jehovah in the faithless weakness which feared such as were the Amalekites; now they had forgotten Jehovah in their self-willed assertion of power. The result was, Canaan was theirs but yesterday; to-day it is thirty-eight years away.

Of that thirty and eight years we have but the slightest chronicle; but the events which have come to us from the hands of the historian are all determinative and character-making in the life of Israel and Moses. From Kadesh, "after many days," they moved "by the way to the Red Sea."¹ Across this great series of plains, broken with chains of hills and many wadies, the loftiest plain being about 2,000 feet above the sea, the vast procession marched, slowly learning the nature and cost of freedom. Modern travelers have found how easily this wilderness could have sustained the multitude of Israel and their flocks and herds. Water is easily obtained, reservoirs were doubtless made in the torrent-beds, and Egypt had taught Hebrewdom the practice of irrigation. Doves flew thick through the summer air; and herds of camels, goats, sheep and asses fed along the uplands and valleys. Here they would not utterly perish, although they must wait long to learn that the freedom and self-government, which, with Jehovah, is not heroic enough to overcome the Anak-children of passion and sordid ambition, and the Canaanite prejudices and hostilities which every truth encounters, *as well as* to enjoy the Eshcol clusters of blessing, is not worth having even as an unearned gift.

Two rebellions—each of which deepened the character of the loyalists of Israel and helped to exemplify the real nature of just government—occurred in the wilderness. A man was caught gathering sticks on the sabbath day. Amidst our contemporary sabbath breaking, little knowing how surely the life of man grows unsacred with the decay of such institutions, and that, in consequence, much of the anarchy of the day may be its product, we are amazed at the instant and awful punishment which came upon the offender. The law was inexorable. There it stood on the statute books of Israel. The sinner suffered the punishment of death. Perhaps soon, either by

¹ Numbers xiii, 28.

² Numbers xiv, 1.

³ Numbers xiv, 10.

⁴ Numbers xiv, 20-38.

¹ Deuteronomy i, 40.

revolution in society, or by the evolution of a true social morality, we may see that such punishment is merciful, as compared with the

slaughter of men and hope consequent upon our forgetting man's right to a day of rest and his duty to use it as God ordained.

CHAPTER XIII.

KORAH'S REBELLION—MOSES' SIN—DEATH OF MIRIAM AND AARON—BALAAM.

THE government of Israel under Moses was to meet a fresh peril. Korah, a Levite, was a full cousin of Moses. It was almost natural that he should claim priestly rights and privileges. Other firstborn Israelites made like demands. Soon, 250 like-minded men, chiefs from the tribes, joined him in conspiracy. Dothan and Abiram, and, for a while, On, who were of the tribe of Reuben (first son of Jacob), added their power to the movement against Moses and Aaron. It was hateful envy uttering its criticism, when the conspiracy spake to the leaders of Israel. They paraded their conservatism, and asked for the old ways. Moses was unshaken in his trust of Jehovah. Next day, according to his arranging, the contumacious rebels were made silent. Before the altar of Jehovah, Korah and his troop assembled, and taking their censers, made the attempt to prove before Jehovah their right to the priesthood. The censers were ready; Jehovah spoke to Moses and Aaron: "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment."¹ The magnanimous Moses could only beg in intercession. Aaron joined in the prayer. The congregation was saved; but Dothan and Abiram were swallowed up as the earth opened beneath them; Korah was destroyed; and the 250 chiefs of Israel were consumed before Jehovah's tabernacle. The entire camp had waited, in sympathy with the revolt. They cried out upon Moses and Aaron: "Ye have killed the people of Jehovah!"² Jehovah answered their disloyalty with a plague, and, as if to picture for us One who is even now our High Priest and Savior, Aaron himself, with a censer filled from the altar, ran "into the midst of the congregation"³ "and put on incense, and made atonement for the people."⁴ Nearly 15,000 had perished, but the plague was stayed.

Peace after storm! Up in the most holy place, in the ark of the covenant with Jehovah, were laid the rods of rulership. Each rod was an emblem of government, and tribal unity, and hope. Each bore the name of the prince of that people. Dawn had come after the day of death, and "behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded

almonds."¹ True priesthood is always full of unsuspected vitality; and history, like Israel, preserves Aaron's budding rod in the ark of the covenant with the pot of manna.

The weary-footed years came and went, as this pilgrim throng met the perpetually new demands of social life, compelling them to add to the statute book the laws accordant with the "Ten Words." They were thus giving fresh illustration of the vitality of those principles, as their life developed unforeseen crises in the commonweal. Thirty-seven years of wandering did nothing to create an antidote for old age, as Moses journeyed with them; and in the assertion of Jehovah that a new generation must come to enter Canaan, with Caleb and Joshua, even the great emancipator's hope was swept away. As yet, there seems to have been no realization of this. But his heart-fiber had been most cruelly worn by the people unresponsive to the call of Jehovah. They had, at length, swung round through these thirty-seven years, and again they camped in the region of Kadesh. A new generation had come; the old was nearly gone. Only five remained to talk over the memories and hopes of that first footstep taken toward freedom—Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Caleb, and Joshua. Miriam's voice had led their exultation and song for the last time. Now, with solemn pageant and general lamentation, the brothers joined the procession which bore her dust to the tomb. The cords which bound the aged lawgiver to earth were breaking; and yet it was as though Jehovah had imposed upon him a new task, to lead this younger band to Canaan. Kadesh, years ago, as we have seen, had been the place of God's judgment against Israel's unbelief; just there Israel's new faith must now begin its militant career. The belief with which we finally triumph has its birthplace where the unbelief by which we failed was smitten down.

At such places, even a Moses is in peril. The people are again thirsty; springs had vanished, and the torrent-beds were dry. The old cry of disappointment, reproach and censure came to the strained and tired leader. What could be done? Was not the rock struck at Rephidim? But Moses and Aaron are commanded this time

¹ Numbers xvi, 21.

² Numbers xvi, 41.

³ Numbers xvi, 47.

⁴ Numbers xvi, 47.

¹ Numbers xvii, 8.

to *speak*, not to *strike*—first the natural; afterward and *now*, the spiritual. The people seemed so rebellious that the temper of Moses was lost. "He spake unadvisedly with his lips"¹ to the stupid, faithless throng. In this, he showed his lack of faith in Jehovah; and more, he exemplified a strange doubt by declining to command the crag. He struck it, as aforetime, with his rod. The water came, but Moses had lost a more valuable treasure. He had struck it; and he had struck it twice. It was a defeat of Jehovah's purpose in the heart of his servant Moses. Jehovah had a right to a faith, upon the part of Moses, that had grown to perfectly trust the Infinite, in method and result. Anger with men is, at root, infidelity with God.

Canaan was far away from the noble leader: only so majestic a character could have made so vast and limitless a distance between himself and his goal. The consequence came; Moses and Aaron were excluded from entering Canaan. At length, the mediatorship of Moses has drawn toward its end, as human mediatorship must. It is with the aid of such a single dark moment of his faltering faith that we behold the grandeur of his life.

Again he proves his kingliness of soul and the fact that Jehovah uses the humanity which has once failed, as he asks the kings of Edom and Moab to allow Israel to pass through these dominions. It was the easiest and nearest way to the entrance of Palestine. Moses pleaded kinship with them and God's providence to a suffering people, but in vain. He promised, also, to use only the great roadway. Esau's children were stubborn to Jacob's descendants, and they gathered their warriors. But while the commissioners of Israel tarried, Israel moved eastward through Wady Murreh to Moserah, or Mount Hor. Here the roads opened for them. But, before they advance farther, the breaking of a still more tender cord was to prepare Moses for his own departure. Here Aaron died. The picture is pathetic and sublime. Two old men ascend the height with a young man; they are Moses and Aaron with Eleazar. Afar below them is Hebrewdom; beyond is the land of hope. Slowly and solemnly the great priest is unclothed; the sacred garments of his august office one by one are taken from Aaron, the man who is to die, and presented to Eleazar, his son and successor, who is to live. The splendid past is passing into the hands of the glorious present. At last his soul has gone to Jehovah's presence. "And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel."²

Meantime the messengers returned, and hostile Edom was upon them. The foe was so situated that Israel must retreat. A detour was made which took the Hebrew army far to the south, by Gudgodah and Jotbath. Here at a turn in the route, the Canaanitish "king of Arad, which dwelt in the South, fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners."¹ This dreadful fate rankled in the hearts of the Hebrews; and there the vow was made, to be kept in bloody history after many years, that the cities of Canaan should be utterly destroyed.

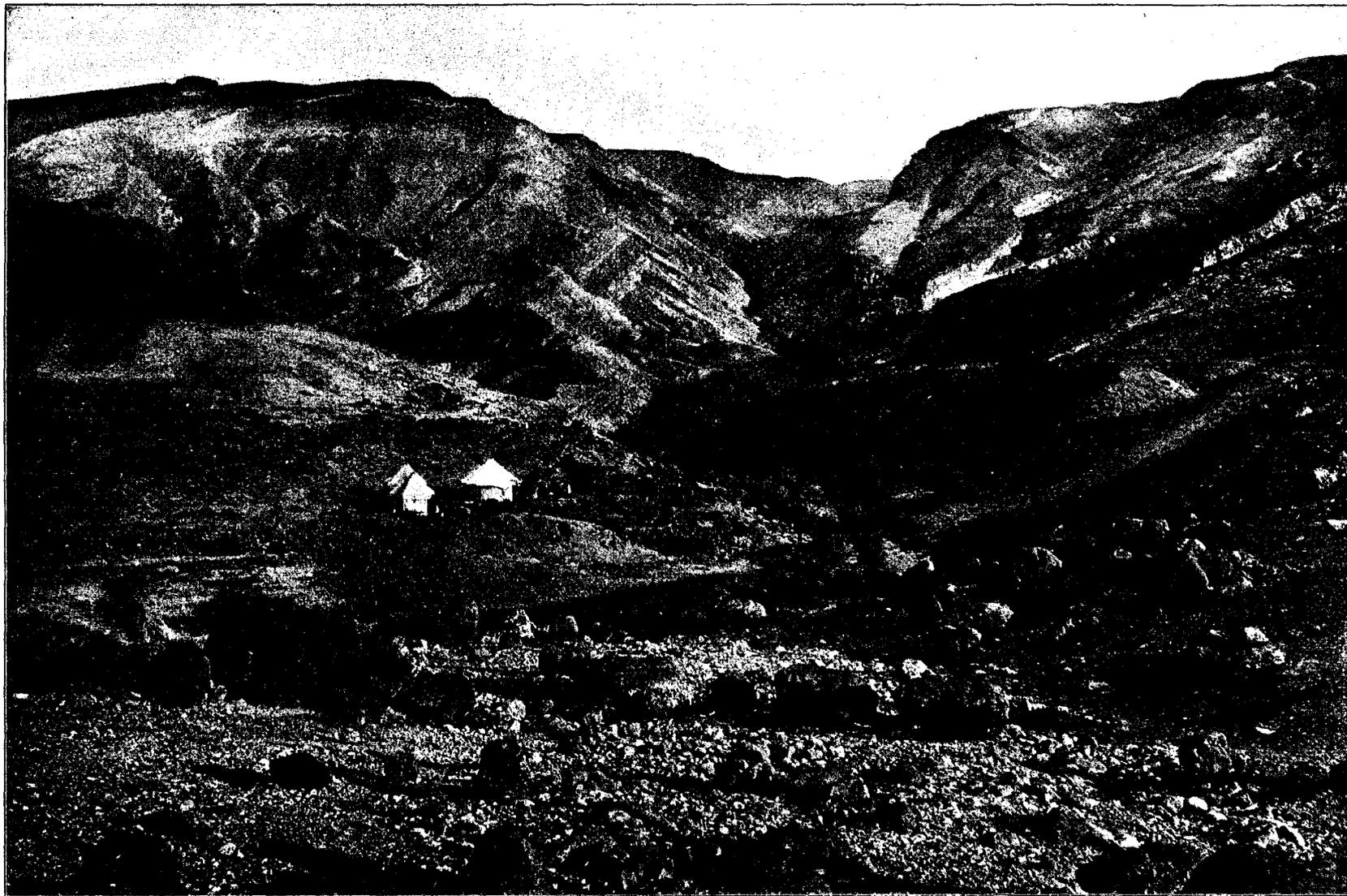
They now moved along the head of the gulf of Akaba, north of Ezion-Geber, toward Moab. It was in this region that, once again, the hosts of Hebrews knew the horrors of thirst. Again they failed to rely on Jehovah; and the bitter reproaches rose to heaven. It is a land where travelers of to-day encounter multitudes of red and fiery spotted serpents. At that hour these venomous creatures fell upon the helpless army, wounding them to death. Moses was here commanded to make a brazen serpent—perhaps more nearly copper-colored—and place it upon a pole; and Jehovah promised that whoever looked upon it should be healed. Christianity has found in this a richly suggestive prophecy of Christ—human as sin, healing quickly and perfectly, the one freely-offered remedy for sin. Surely, the seed of the woman has bruised the serpent's head, though the serpent has stung his heel.

On toward the goal the throng advanced, probably along the very track which is still the path of commerce from the city associated with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to the city associated with the prophet of Islam. Crossing Zered, a brook, they found pastures in Moab. Rejoicing in the luscious green along the banks of Arnon, they could see Engedi; and, as they advanced from well to well, they filled the ravines with echoes of their singing. As out of the triumphant feeling which swelled in Israel's breast when the Red Sea was passed, there came their national anthem: so here, in Moab, where the wells were crystal fountains, some of the finest of the Hebrew lyrics were born. Commanded to leave Moab unharmed and the descendants of Lot unhurt, they besought Moab and the land of Ammon for a peaceful passage, but in vain. The Ammonites were in no condition for war. Sihon of the Amorites had just despoiled them of a large territory. They asked safe passage of him, also in vain. From their camp at Kedemoth they were compelled to go as hostiles. Sihon was defeated. Israel was supreme over a large area between the Arnon and Jabbok, and the

¹ Psalm cvi, 33.

² Numbers xx, 29.

¹ Numbers xxi, 1.



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HILL OF THE CANAANITES.

height of Hesbon was theirs. Songs broke forth, to echo through the poetry of all time. Another invasion followed to the north. Og of Gilead and Bashan, the ruler over a rich pasture and woodland, fell before the men of Reuben, and Gad, and Manasseh, who had leagued themselves with Ammon. At last, the capital, Edrei, fell: and even Kenath—yielding to the hornets (a common plague) and Israel—succumbed with sixty fallen cities, which, one by one, made it possible for the Hebrews to claim the whole of the land east of the Jordan. The camp was pitched near the junction of the Jordan with the Dead Sea; and it appeared that a complete conquest was only a question of a short time.

At this moment, terrorized Moab employed the weird and magic arts which only such a man as Balak, "the Spoiler," might summon. The darksome art and artifices were potent, at least in the fancy of the age. A hundred incantations and imprecations have drifted down to us from that credulous and fearful time. The last energy of Moses was to be employed against this fascinating superstition and the genius of one of its masters. Balak, king of Moab, sent for Balaam, the subtlest and most acute of soothsayers. He came from the old land of Abraham. He had abundance of orthodox phraseology, and a clear title to the realm of divination. God had not, even in Balaam's section of humanity, left himself unwitnessed. He had every quality and aspect, habit and method, of a real prophet of Jehovah. He was as much an enigma to Israel as he is to the scholar of to-day. He behaved entirely and heroically faithful to Jehovah, for only what Jehovah gave him to say, would he say. He seemed, even when he would, to be unable to charm or bewilder Israel by enchantments. His life and its outflow was a mixture, like his character, of paganism and true religion. He was ready for any sacrifice to Jehovah; yet he actually sacrificed to idols and ate their feasts. He said piously enough to the messenger of Balak: "Get you into your land: for

the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you;"¹ and yet his evident desire to go bore fruit finally, for the heathen anger suggested the means of injuring the people of Jehovah. When he refused to join his forces to Balak's scheme, the Midianitish sheiks came to the latter's help. Israel was to be seduced by their obedient women. The abomination was awfully effective. It was a frightfully dark moment for Moses; for nameless iniquity through impure and shameful rites threatened again to place Canaan farther away. The ugly evil imperiled Israel's hope; time was short for the old statesman; it was the hour for the surgeon's knife, and Moses commanded the hanging of their heads before the sun. A dreadful plague came also and left 24,000 Hebrew corpses. It was stayed only by Phinehas, the high priest, a grandson of Aaron, who slew two of the sinners in their riot of evil. Midian also was humbled, all her male population being made a sacrifice. Kings and princes fell; and the most significant death of all was that of Balaam the soothsayer. Unable any longer to remain both pagan and believer, magician and servant of Jehovah, he perished with the royal house of Midian. Clear-headed and courageous indeed were the sagacity and statesmanship of the man who dealt thus with such a man and such a crisis. Yet Balaam must be called a prophet, if ever the foregleams that describe future events of supreme meaning may be said to indicate the prophetic power. As he falls, his lips tremble with the foreseen fate of Israel made captive by Assyria; and we of this nineteenth century of Christianity find him increasingly eloquent, as time moves on, saying: "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."² Any less comprehensive and self-poised soul than was Moses would have been amazed into powerlessness or dazzled into unfaithfulness; but the situation and the foe were grasped by the hand of trained power.

¹ Numbers xxii, 13.

² Numbers xxiv, 17.

CHAPTER XIV.

A GREAT CAREER CLOSING—THE CHARACTER OF MOSES.

THE Hebrew chieftain had met his last distinguished foe. These last years had deepened and exalted him; and nothing in all their flight did more to make him receptive of Jehovah's call to final judgment than that event, so dark and yet so flooded with light, which had prevented his entering Canaan, before entering heaven. Moses sinned, yet Moses was a man of genuine sainthood. Not until the experience of victory over sin and a triumph over the consequences of some special sin, like that of the Hebrew leader at the Rock of Kadesh, have come to a soul, has that soul met and found the real meaning of human life. Such men as Moses are of those who at last walk upon "the sea of glass mingled with fire."¹ Principle is so permeated with passion, passion is so clarified and crystallized by principle, that such a character is at once the most perilous and the most safe of God's creations.

The last intimation given to Moses by God that the prophet would not be permitted to enter Canaan, on account of this sin, was met by that loyalty which besought God to appoint his successor. Joshua was set apart, by Moses laying on his hands. He was to be the captain of Israel, but directed in all his larger activity by Urim and Thummim. This direction of the younger general made Moses all the more lonely and sublime. He had been on such terms with Jehovah as to speak with him face to face. His work, however, was done. Pathetic indeed is the entreaty of Moses to "see the good land."² Like many others—the greatest of the sons of men—the inspirers of progress, the workers in invention, the heralds of discoveries, the searchers for truth, the foes of evil, the lovers of righteousness—he could not have Canaan; but Pisgah—beneath whose height the landscapes stretched from memory to hope, from history to prophecy—Pisgah was his. From the summit, looking westward, he saw far away the regions about the sacred city; yonder was Bethlehem, to be known as the birthplace of Jesus; and, resting his eye on a nearer spot, he beheld the heights of Hebron. Yonder, on the south, rose Mount Hor, and from the adjacent valley came voiceful memories. Toward the east, there unfolded a boundless meadow and harvest field. On the north were the plains and mountains, Esdraelon, Gerizim, Tabor, Gilboa, to be remembered, or to be hallowed, by the prophets, singers, kings, and saints of Israel; and everywhere,

from the far-off mists hanging over Arabia to the summits of Benjamin, and from the purple line of Bozrah to the frowning bastions of Mount Seir, there was for the eye of the old warrior-statesman, who now sat on Pisgah, a vision of the land which must have suggested to him the future opportunities of the race, as Israel might lead and inspire it. His ascent had been slow. The people below had followed him, every eye straining to behold him through the tears of an orphaned nation. They had already been echoing in their hearts the wondrous song which the leader of Israel had uttered—a song which makes prophecy out of history, completing its harmony with such melodies of nature and life as 120 years of life had given to the singer. They felt the air trembling still with the farewell address of the father of his country—an address unequalled by any Washington, filled with that comprehensive statesmanship and holy hope which made Charlemagnes, Alfreds, and Washingtons possible. But now he vanished from Pisgah. He had died "at the mouth of Jehovah," or, as Hebrew story has said, "by the kiss of the Lord." "And no man knoweth the place of his burial unto this day."¹

At the edge of that unknown grave, the man of ideas, devoted to their championship and fearless in their supremacy, stands at this day to count over the names of earth's true idealists, and to find Moses' stature growing more sublime, as glittering errors fade, outgrown institutions crumble, prejudices retreat, and truth finds her throne. Hither come and camp on heroic ground the soldiers of earth, and, losing nothing of admiration for the resolute sagacity of Alexander, the sober accuracy joined with intuitive power of calculation in Cæsar, the calm contempt for foes which rose from the religious faith of Oliver Cromwell, the constant energy and unfailing readiness of Frederick the Great, the splendid audacity which throbbed from the unequalled egotism of Bonaparte, they agree that a man who, at the Red Sea, at Marah, and Horeb, having gathered a formless and untrained mass of men, to whose hands hundreds of thousands of women and children were clinging, and having transformed them into a sword to crush Egyptian despotism, created a path over deserts and mountain ranges, through the Amalekites, Edomites and Canaanites, unto the goal of his hopes, must have possessed the highest qualities of a great captain. To that unmarked

¹ Revelation xv, 2.

² Deuteronomy i, 35.

¹ Deuteronomy xxxiv, 6.

sepulcher journey the souls whose fiber has been made for freedom, and whose instinct is liberty; and, surveying the relics of empires whose law was only an arbitrary commandment, studying the chaos that hurtles on to ruin with the anarchy which eulogizes license, they consider that figure at Sinai the noblest in the history of jurisprudence and civil liberty, that mountain the tallest of earth's heights spiritually, until there were revealed the figure of One whose love is law, and that mountain, named Calvary, where equal rights and an ideal of perfect freedom began to write the state papers of Christendom. Our common manhood rears in that valley, where God buried Moses, its memorial, more enduring than brass, more white than marble, more rich than gold. He had sublime self-restraint with mighty passions. He was jealous for God, and he rebuked jealousy for himself. He was modest without losing his self-respect, humble without fearing the face of armies, or of men. He was kingly in the hours when most men are commonplace, and sympathetic with weakness when most men are irresponsive and unapproachable. His dignity was the result of that self-command which is the result of being commanded by the Almighty alone. His intellect lay so close to his conscience that his insight into moral problems was unerring, and its judgment was the voice of Jehovah. His will was so enfolded with a will diviner than his own, that it made its appeal to the Infinite Resource and rested on Omnipotence. With majestic tread, he entered on the path to spiritual discoveries; and the weight of his character and the importance of the need of constantly greater supplies from God, as he advanced, were answered by such unfoldings of the divine nature and such gifts of hitherto unrevealed truth, as furnished in-

spirations and sanctions to the laws which have guided humanity for 3,000 years. His personal disinterestedness was that which proceeds from a life fixed upon the interests of mankind and Jehovah. His patience was no unthinking, nerveless consent to the slow progress of dumb and blind events: it was the peace of power counting on a force which made every event the manifestation of God and all Hebrew history his revelation. In him were blended the poetical and the practical; indeed, in his life, so did the poetical and practical relate themselves in duty, that the dreamer was always lifting the doer to his vision and the doer was always receiving the dreamer's vision into his work.

"And now beneath the sky the watchers all,
Angels that keep the homes of Israel,
Or on high purpose wander o'er the world
Leading the Gentiles, felt a dark eclipse:
The greatest ruler among men was gone.
And from the westward sea was heard a wail,
A dirge as from the isles of Javanim,
Crying, 'Who now is left upon the earth
Like him to teach the right and smite the wrong?'
And from the East, far o'er the Syrian waste,
Came slower, sadder the answering dirge:
'No prophet like him lives or shall arise
In Israel or the world forevermore.'

"But Israel waited, looking toward the mount,
Till with the deepening eve the elders came
Saying, 'His burial is hid with God.
We stood far off and saw the angels lift
His corpse aloft until they seemed a star
That burnt itself away within the sky.'

"The people answered with mute orphaned gaze,
Looking for what had vanished evermore.
Then through the gloom without them and within
The spirit's shaping light, mysterious speech,
Invisible Will wrought clear in sculptured sound,
The thought-begotten daughter of the voice,
Thrilled on their listening sense: 'He has no tomb,
He dwells not with you dead, but lives as law.'"

BOOK V.

FROM THE PATRIARCHAL TENT TO THE PRIESTLY TABERNACLE.

BY REV. GEORGE F. PENTECOST, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

PRIMITIVE RELIGIONS.

THERE is a disposition in certain quarters, among a special class of so-called scientists and culturists, to ignore religion as being at best a superstition, and unworthy of serious consideration. This cavalier method of disposing of religion is one which really scientific and serious minds cannot accept. Religion will not down at the bidding of those who, like the fool, say in their hearts "there is no God."¹ It is true that religion cannot be weighed in a balance or measured by a foot rule. It cannot be discovered by the telescope, discerned with the microscope, analyzed in a retort, nor resolved by the use of solutions. But it does not follow, therefore, that because religion is not a matter for the investigation of material science, it does not exist as part and parcel of human history—the religious instinct being inseparable from the constitution of man.

We might just as well ignore man's consciousness as man's religion, for wherever there is consciousness there is found religion. We might as well ignore civilization as religion, for wherever there is a history of civilization open to our study and investigation, there we find religion. Nor is religion confined to the civilized races of mankind, for it is present as really among barbarous as among cultured peoples; but as the modern culturists deal more exclusively with the civilized nations of the past, we confine our remarks to that section of the human family in this inquiry.

The more deeply we look into this matter, with the abundant materials furnished for our study by the archæologist and the philologist, the more we discover that religion and civilization march together. This also we find to be true, that religion is not so much the outgrowth of civilization as that civilization and all mental culture are the outgrowth of religion. In fact, religion has been, as it still is, the great inspiration and formative motive underlying all civilization. Moreover, we find

upon closer study that racial characteristics do not account for the differences in the underlying ideas of the various religious cults of the world. On the other hand, religious ideas most likely account for the characteristic differences in races and civilizations. Any examination, therefore, into the worships of primitive times, especially into the worship characterizing those who were from the earliest days the followers of the true God, ought to be preceded by some inquiry into the nature of the cults that differentiated the apostate races from the chosen people of God. Attention is, therefore, invited to the question of religion as it existed and was developed in the families of the three sons of Noah, who practically divided the world between them, after the dispersion following the confusion of tongues at Babel.¹ It is fairly admitted by all scholars that the tenth chapter of Genesis gives us the best clue to the origin of the three great divisions of the human family among whom religion has been most perfectly developed. The families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth were the progenitors of the races with which we have most to do, and whose monuments and histories are coming more and more under our easy inspection. It is true that Genesis does not give us any account of the Chinese, Negroes, or the North and South American Indians. But we are not to suppose that that wonderful chapter was intended to give us a complete scientific account of the whole human family for the purpose of a purely scientific, ethnological, and genealogical study; but that the intention was to treat only of those families in which the main current of history is found, and for the purpose of comparison with reference to the development of the religion of the true God. It does teach us, however, that the whole human race was of one blood and one speech.² No doubt the Mongolian, the Negro, the American

¹ Genesis ix, 19, x, 32, xi, 8, 9.

² Genesis iii, 20, ix, 19, xi, 1: compare with Acts xvii, 26, 27.

¹ Psalm xiv, 1.

Indian, and some other peoples were the collateral offspring of the sons of Noah. But as the chosen people of God did not come in contact with them in the course of their religious development, they are left out of the tables as having no immediate relevancy to the matter in hand; just as the people of the land of Nod¹ are not genealogically traced in the records preserved to us, though it is intimated that they, also, were descendants of Adam who had wandered away to the east of Eden. In the final outworking of the purpose of God, however, these most distant and far-lost tribes of men are included in the covenant promise given to Abraham.² Indeed, now that the western sons of Japheth—the Indo-Germanic peoples—have largely returned to the tents of Shem,³ they are becoming the great instruments in the hands of God for carrying the covenant promise of salvation back to the original and main stock of that family—the Indo-Hindus—as also to those far-dispersed families,⁴ the Mongolians, the Negroes, the American Indians, and other scattered races, who are also being gathered in by the same agencies.

Instead of dividing the human race, for the purpose of this study, into two main streams as we are in the habit of doing with respect to the true people of God and the heathen nations, we should bear in mind rather that the race parted into three main streams—the Shemites, the Hamites, and the Japhethites. We, therefore, find three distinct types of religious development set forth to us, not only in the Bible account, but in that furnished by the historical monuments and ancient libraries now being so wonderfully opened up by the indomitable patience and labor of the archæologist and philologist.

In tracing these three families we discover geographical, linguistic, civilizing, moral, and religious tendencies which characterize them severally. It will be of interest and profit to take up each of these branches in turn and note some of their chief characteristics, especially as to their religious and moral developments. It is only by so doing that we can arrive at a clear idea of what is involved in the worship which characterized the people of God in the most primitive times, and thus fairly contrast it with the false religions with which they were surrounded and had to contend. In this way we shall perceive, in some measure, how the

same conflict between the true and false in religion, morals, and civilization is still present and progressing in our own day and generation. It requires but little investigation to follow the descendants of Ham into the southern belt of country where they developed their religion and civilization, namely, chiefly in Egypt, on the plains about Babylon and Nineveh, in Canaan, and on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean among the Phœnicians. The descendants of Japheth went northward and thence spread away toward the west over Eastern Europe, downward toward and past the Black Sea, over the Isles of Greece, and thence to Italy and northward over Germany, France, and the British Isles, even as far north as Sweden and Norway. In other words, the sons of Japheth constitute the great Indo-Germanic races of the North. The Shemites occupied a middle ground, and were for the most part confined to the peninsula of Arabia, Mesopotamia, and northward until they reached the borders of Japheth. It will be seen from this that for practical purposes we might draw three belts of color across the map of Central and Western Asia, Northern Africa and Europe, and locate the descendants of these three sons of Noah respectively in the Northern, Middle, and Southern zones.¹

Thus, the family of Ham were the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Canaanites, and Phœnicians; the family of Japheth, as we have seen, were the Indo-Germanic people, or the old and Western Aryans; the family of Shem, the Arabs proper, and later that remarkable people called out from them into separation unto Jehovah, the family of Abraham—the Hebrews, or Israelites.

The Hamites were the most advanced in civilization, the most aggressive and dominating of the three families. The Japhethites were the most numerous, migratory, and intellectually versatile. The Shemites were fewest in numbers, the most conservative, stationary and least progressive, being, in fact, almost surrounded and inclosed by their more powerful neighbors, particularly by the descendants of Ham, by whom, indeed, they were dominated in everything except religious ideas, and in this respect they only escaped extinction.

We shall take a very brief glance at the religious characteristics of these three families, and note some of their other peculiarities.

¹ Genesis iv, 16.

² Genesis xii, 2, 3.

³ Genesis ix, 27.

⁴ In Genesis unnamed.

¹ See chapter ii

CHAPTER II.

THE THREE RELIGIONS.

AS has already been intimated, the chief settlement and seat of the Hamite family and power was in Egypt, whence they evidently recrossed the eastern peninsula of Arabia very early in their history. The vast material remains of that great civilization, especially the more recent discoveries, together with the writings of the ancients so lately brought to light, enable us to get a very fair and clear idea of the Hamite religion, which is easily identified with the other branches of the family, namely, the Assyrian, the Phœnician, and the Canaanite. It is to Egypt, however, that we first go to study their peculiarities. We cannot, of course, in this limited survey go very deeply into detail, but can only sketch an outline of these important matters, so as to enable us to get clearly before us the difference between their religion and that of the chosen people.

That the Egyptians were originally monotheists seems pretty evident. Among other reasons for this conclusion I mention the fact of their god Ammon (which is said etymologically to mean the "concealed god") being their chief deity. The idea of Ammon was that of a recondite, incomprehensible divinity, remote from man, hidden, mysterious, "the proper object of profoundest reverence." Ammon was undoubtedly just the fading shadow of the true God, the tradition of whom was dying out among those apostate people. They could not comprehend him, neither could they dismiss him from their minds. They, therefore, built no temple for him, but associated him with their god Ra (or the Sun-god) calling him Ammon-Ra. From this god Ra (or the sun) the Egyptians developed their polytheistic system, with all its ramification of doctrine and cult. It is not our purpose to follow them through this labyrinth of gods, but simply to trace the principal doctrine of their religion, which is essentially a materialistic nature-worship. All the deities of the Egyptians were simply different manifestations of the great god Ra—that is, each, in his or her place, stood for some principle or attribute of material nature. As, for instance, Osiris represented the light of the lower world or the sun from the time of its sinking in the west until its rising again. The Egyptians conceived that from Ra all visible and invisible powers of nature proceeded or were developed. The essential idea in their doctrine of creation, and hence in all the development of their religious ideas, was based on the generative and con-

ceptive principles of nature. For our purpose we may set aside all the other gods, save only Osiris and Isis, who, under one name or another, were the chief objects of worship among these Hamites. These two reappear among the Babylonians, Phœnicians, and Canaanites as Bel or Baal, and Ashtoreth or Astarte, standing for the male and female principles in nature, from which all things have been produced. The great prominence given to this doctrine accounts for all the abominations connected with the worship of these gods, and against which the prophets of the Lord so bitterly inveighed. It was the introduction of this licentious and degrading worship among the children of Israel, chiefly by Jezebel, the wife of Ahab and the daughter of the high priest of the Zidonian Bel, which brought on the fearful conflict between Elijah and Ahab, and led to the overthrow, captivity, and final dispersion among the nations of the ten tribes, to be gathered no more. At a later period the Greeks borrowed these gods and accepted their doctrines, though at the first their worship was neither gross nor sensual. The worship of the generative and conceptive principle in nature the Indo-Hindus also borrowed from the Hamites. This cult was that which led to the grossest corruptions found in all the false religions, leading ultimately to the downfall of their national life and the destruction of their civilization. It was especially this Isis worship which finally corrupted and brought to the dust the splendid civilization and once beautiful and poetic religion of the Greeks. It is this same sensual worship which has degraded the otherwise comparatively pure religion of the ancient Aryans who settled in India. The trailing mark of this loathsome pair, Osiris and Isis—Baal and Astarte—is now over all the land of India, has invaded every temple and household, and utterly corrupted and debased the entire Hindu cult.

But, leaving this disgusting feature of the religion of the Hamites, let us turn to another phase of the Egyptian conception of God. Both Osiris and Isis were children of Ra; and ultimately Isis became the wife, as well as the sister, of Osiris. No wonder religion falls when such a relation is true of the gods. It was early conceived that all life proceeded from the sun: therefore he was deified. It was also observed that all products came from the soil; therefore the soil was deified. Now, the sun is Osiris, and the soil is Isis, though as the consort of Osiris she is the moon. Osiris is incarnated in the

river Nile, which, as the father of all the productiveness of Egypt, of course, was a chief object of worship among the people. Isis or the moon was incarnated in the fertile soil of Egypt and hence was worshiped as the mother of good things. The Nile overflowing the soil of Egypt became the generative principle, and the earth or soil the conceptive principle, from which conjointly all the fruits of the earth sprang forth to sustain and bless the life of man. This principle was carried into everything that had life. Later on the chief god Ra became incarnate in certain animals, especially in the bull—Apis—and then in all living creatures: and so they all became objects of worship. Indeed, all nature, whether animate or inanimate, finally became but an incarnation of god, and the ultimate philosophical cult of the Egyptians was that of gross materialistic pantheism—the father and mother of our present day agnosticism and atheistic materialism. Gradually, from worshipping life in animals (for which the bull and cow stood forth as chief representatives), it became apparent that human life was a higher manifestation of God than a mere animal life. But as it was not possible to descend by a leap to self-worship, and not consistent with the dignity of the higher classes to pay worship to the hordes of poor, down-trodden slaves, nor to their captives in war, the worship of the Egyptians was gradually restricted to the ruling classes, and finally centered in the supreme ruler or the Pharaoh who became, later, to all intents and purposes, the only god the Egyptians had. The same was true in the great Mesopotamian kingdoms, and afterward became true among the Romans, who gradually adopted the religion of Egypt. The worship of the Cæsars was the last downward step in the apostasy of classic Rome, and immediately preceded its utter downfall. In this king-worship we find the culmination of human apostasy from the true God. It was this tendency to "king-worship" which was the ground upon which God forbade the children of Israel to have a king, like the nations around them. So, when they insisted on having a king as had Babylon and Egypt, "God first gave them a king in his anger and then took him away in his wrath."¹ We can thus understand the meaning of God's word to Samuel on the occasion of the demand of Israel for a king: "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee [their judge and captain], but they have rejected me [their God and only King], that I should not reign over them."² What untold misery has come upon the human race from

this Hamite principle of caste and the deification of mere earthly rulers; and yet, even in Christian lands, this worship of kings and high-caste men, though gradually dying out, continues with us until this day!

The Egyptians believed that god was the author of evil as well as good, on the same principle that the sun in his rising made the light, and in his setting brought on the darkness. They, therefore, worshiped the rising and the setting sun under different names. And as all things were generated from god, why, then, evil as well as good was a part of god's creation and a part of himself. Hence, a great multitude of evil deities, but all representing god. Again, they sought to account for the chief tragedy of human existence—death. They early observed that the sun, which caused all life to spring out of the earth, also passed over it in the dry season and burnt all vegetation to death. The glorious Nile, the incarnation of the father of gods and of nature, the life-giving god, gradually lost itself in the sea. The Nile died away into the Mediterranean. The fruits died off the earth. Man died, and was no more. Therefore, there must be a god to represent this phase of nature, and that god was Typhon. The corresponding god among the Mesopotamian kingdoms was Adar Malik, or "King Adar," or, again, as in the Scriptures, "Adrammelech."¹ Among the Canaanites this awful god is known and familiar to us under the name Moloch, a variation of Malik.² The dreadful and abominable rite which chiefly characterized the worship of this god was the offering up of little children to him by casting them alive into the fiery furnace which burned in the midst of the hideous idol. This god also appears in the Tarsus Hercules, in the Indian "Siva, the destroyer," and in the popular Indian goddess, Kali. But in connection with death in nature there was observed the perpetual coming to life again, as in the fertile soil the field which burned to death by the sun in the dry season, revived again by the overflowing of the Nile. The Nile that ran out and lost itself in the Mediterranean came to life again by the rising of the vapors from the sea, which, returning in rain and snow, fed the sources of the Nile and in turn brought again its life-giving waters to the thirsty land. The fabled Phoenix, which burned itself to death and then revived again out of its own ashes, is a symbol of this principle of death and life in the gods. Strange that the gods of a people should be forever dying and coming to life again!

These, then, are the chief points of the

¹ Hosea xiii, 11. ² I. Samuel viii, 7.

¹ II. Kings xvii, 31. ² Leviticus xviii, 21. xx, 2; I. Kings xi, 7; II. Kings xxiii, 10; Jeremiah xxxii, 35; Amos v, 26; compare with Acts vii, 45.

religious cult of the Hamite family. Resolved into more simple language, we should say that it was the worship of material nature. A gross and grotesque pantheism in connection with a monistic polytheism—that is, the worship of one god under many forms and images, each one of the various gods having all the attributes of the others, the sum of all being the essence of the one God whom they could not abstractly grasp and who was too remote and dreamy for them to approach.

The Japhethites, as already noted, are the great Indo-Germanic people, of whom we are the descendants. This family went originally to the far north. We have comparatively few historical records or monuments of their early religion—that is, of the religious ideas developed by them after having been broken off from their brethren at the time of the dispersion from Babel. Yet we are not altogether without traditional knowledge of their cult, as it is preserved to us in the noble Sanskrit records—the Vedas. The Japhethites seem to have been a superior race of people, versatile, idealistic, poetic, and simple-minded. They increased with great rapidity, and according to their genius began early to emigrate and spread themselves abroad over the face of the earth northward and westward. The early tradition of their religion is preserved by that branch of the family which passed down from Northern and Central Asia through the Khyber pass into the Punjab about the time Abraham was called out from the land of Ur of the Chaldees. They were a fair-faced people originally, and of a roaming and restless disposition. The flower of this race is seen in the settlers of Greece, where a later development of their religious idea is noted. Among the German and Northern peoples is seen the heroic qualities of their family. Of their early religious idea—for, like the Hamites, they seem in their dispersion to have lost the traditional revelation of God as handed down to them by Noah—the Vedas gives us some account. Their chief and supreme god was Varuna or the god of light. They did not associate this supreme being with the sun, or even directly with the sunlight, but he was that original light that streams from behind all things and fills all the creation with its glory. The sun may have been thought of in later times as the burning eye of the Light-god, just as the rushing wind, roaring over their mountains, sighing through the trees, or gently fanning the cheek, was his breath. They were essentially a poetic people. All their worship and thought about God was light, airy, imaginative, poetic. Associated with Varuna were a number of minor deities or attendants, which were in effect only names for the attributes and characteristics of the Light-

god, Varuna. They were not idolaters, and had no temples. They worshiped not the light of the sun, the moon, or the stars, but that primitive light which was before and different from either of these. This conception seems to have been a lingering remembrance of the earliest revelation contained in Genesis.¹

By and by, according to a very natural tendency of the human mind and heart when it loses touch with the true God, materialistic ideas began to manifest themselves among the old Aryans, and they thought of earthly fire as the most fitting symbol of Varuna—Agni. Yet it was not the material fire that they thought so much of as it was the glow of the fire, the warmth of it, its beneficent powers exerted in cookery, etc. The Aryans were never properly materialistic, but rather always idealistic and poetic. To fire—Agni—they presently added another earthly symbol of the "Intelligent Friend and Benefactor of Man," namely, Soma, a mildly intoxicating drink, distilled from the soma plant. Now, as it was not fire, but Agni, the spirit of fire, that was worshiped, so it was not Soma the intoxicant, but rather that mysterious something which exhilarated and made them "happy." The early Aryans, as we have said, were not idolaters; they had, at first, neither priest nor temple. Their worship was domestic and private. Theirs was the poetic habit of dreaming about the mysterious powers of nature as being the sign of the presence of Varuna, who made the universe; who sighed in the winds; who burned in the sun by day and glowed in the planets by night; who caused the rain to fall and the rivers to rush along; whose garments were visible in the shadows as they fitted hither and yonder. They not only thought more of the invisible forces than of visible phenomena, but they soon began, like true poets as they were, to attribute moral characteristics to these forces. Then they began to give them names, and these names, being of both the masculine and the feminine order, began to suggest the characteristics of the masculine and feminine in the gods. With them, however, it was never sex, but the other characteristics such as strength and gentleness. The old Aryans were entirely free from the grossly sensual ideas of the Hamites. It is true that, in later times, after their descent into India, they soon came into contact with the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Hamites, from whom they borrowed their ideas of caste, the grosser ideas of sexuality in the gods, and, indeed, all the debasing features which have entered into the originally pure and beautiful nature-worship of our Japhethic fathers' religion.

¹ Genesis i, 3.

There are very distinct traces of high moral teaching among these primitive Aryans. Truth, purity, and hospitality, were virtues inculcated. There are evidences of a deep sense of personal sin and transgression which led them to seek Varuna for mercy. Later, we find various ideas of sacrifice, offered to Varuna through Agni, or the hearth fire, or a fire built out in front of the house. Sometimes it was the fruit of the field, the fruit of the cow; sometimes it was life, as the goat, the buffalo, and finally the horse. Where they got their idea of mediation through sacrifice is not clear, beyond many concealed suggestions that it must have been the remaining memory of a yet more primitive revelation. A close study even of the grossest forms of later Hinduism shows many a trace of the primitive revelation and history, of which we have not space to write more fully. A study of the characteristics of the primitive worship of our Aryan fathers can but leave on our minds a feeling of its original simplicity and beauty, nor can we help believing that there were many worshipers of the true God, though they knew him not—children worshipping in the dark, feeling after God, if haply they might find him; and who shall say that many did not find him, who is ever seeking such to worship him—that is, truly spiritual men?

Passing from the older branch of the Aryan family, or the Japhethites, we see in their Greek descendants all the beautiful and splendid characteristics of the family genius breaking forth into most perfect flower. In Zeus we have the great god of light and the father of all the gods. In their idealism and poetry we see all the characteristics of their fathers. The religion of the Greeks was essentially a worship of the unseen forces of nature—not of its phenomena. Originally there was no grossness in it; much less was there any of the coarse materialism of the Egyptians. To them, god was not in the visible phenomena, but in the mysterious and eternal invisible powers lying behind all of phenomena. We must look for their religion as it is embodied chiefly in the glorious sculptures in which the people recognized their gods—not the material marble, but the form into which it had been sculptured—Beauty, Grace and Strength, and in the beautiful myths in which these characteristics are set forth; in their poetry, tragic and otherwise, in which the ideal and not the material is seen and recognized. Like their Aryan ancestors, it is always the invisible, and mysterious, and beautiful that they see and worship. Not the water of the rushing torrent, but the force and motion of it. Not the water of the murmuring brook, but the gentleness of its motion, and the music which it makes rippling over its

pebbly bed. Not the light of the morning, but the dawn of the day. Not the night, but the mystery of the creeping shadows. Not the wind or the zephyr, but the noise of the wind and the whisper and kiss of the zephyr. Even after the Egyptians and the Phœnicians had made a great impact upon these Aryan Greeks, who borrowed from them their Hamite gods, it was not the grosser conceptions. For instance, in Aphrodite, we scarcely, at the beginning, see anything of Isis, or the sexual idea of womanhood and the conceptive principle of nature, but only the grace and beauty of the female form and the gentleness and charm of the female character.

These same characteristics—I mean the ideal and poetical—may be seen in the sterner conceptions of the German and Norseman. Originally, it was never with them the materialistic and gross, but the idealistic and the poetic. With them the powers of nature rather than nature are worshiped, and all these idealized and set forth in most charming myths, legends, and fairy stories. The nymphs of the woods and waters, of the darkness and the shadows, and all the delightful fairy stories these poetic people gave birth to and incorporated with their religion. It is true that there are some awfully stern and terrible aspects of God in Thor and Woden, but none of the gross and bestial traits of the gods of Egypt and Babylon, of Phœnicia and Canaan.

The Greeks were finally corrupted, first in their religious ideas by contact with Egypt and Phœnicia, and later on in morals and life, and so fell from their high estate into the mire and filth of Hamitism. Even so did Israel fall from her high estate into the arms of Baal and Astarte. The Greek god Zeus is, undoubtedly, of Aryan, or primitive Indo-Germanic origin, but later corruptions, borrowed from the Egyptians, degraded this immortal god to a human or mortal being, subject to birth and death—a mere nature-god. This remark is also true of others of the Greek deities of the first rank.

Considering the whole Greek conception of religion and worship, we find that in primitive times it was not only infinitely purer and higher than the Egyptian, but that it carried with it all the characteristics of the genius of the Aryan family. Idealism, poetry, art, intellectuality of the higher sort, and even spirituality. We may say that the fundamental religious ideas of the Greeks found expression in their art, their poetry, their philosophy, their love of the true, the beautiful, and the good: but their evil communications with the Egyptians and the Phœnicians corrupted their morals as well as their civilization, and ultimately led to their downfall. Considered from their own point of view, we see all the proper characteristics of

the Indo-European religion. A most careful student of this matter remarks of the Greek : He "is a most decided idealist, in direct contrast to the blank materialism of more recent times [the final result of Egyptian ideas early communicated through contact with their religious conception of the gods]. In mountain, grotto, river, waves, and the like, the material part interests him not at all; in his sight it entirely fades away. What does concern him, what interests and affects him, is the grace, the clearness, and the movement of the fountain, the unchanging might of the river, the shady darkness of the grove, the luxuriant moisture of the meadow, the play of color on the waves of the ocean—in short, it is these, and other similar spiritual qualities, as it were, which react upon his soul. These he does not regard as qualities belonging to the body, but he feels them to be manifestations of life, forms of divine activity; and these divine energies at once become to him divine figures and divine persons. In Helios, the Greek did not worship the sun, but the god who causes the sun to rise and bestows upon men the benefits of light. In Zeus he did not worship the heavens, but the high, ethical, divine personality that gained by lot the heavens in ether and clouds. Among the Greeks, in the bloom of Indo-European mythology, there was preserved, and at the same time developed in a peculiar manner, precisely that ideal and ethical character which we ascribe to the Indo-European genius in general."

It is a pleasure to turn from this review of the religion of the Hamites and Japhethites, in the former of which families all is so gross and bestial, and in the latter all so vague and unreal, though to a certain extent pure and ennobling, to consider the fundamental idea of the Shemites, from whom sprang the Hebrew nation, and to whom, in an especial manner, pertained the covenants and promises of God. The Shemites, as we have seen, were mainly settled in Upper Arabia and Mesopotamia. They were almost entirely dominated by the Hamites, as far as their civilization and material condition were concerned; but there is every reason to believe that they kept and maintained in comparative purity their traditional religious and moral life. At least there is no evidence that they were idolaters or polytheists, except when

apostatized to the Hamites. For a record of the religious cult of this family of the human race, we must depend almost exclusively upon the Bible, the most ancient and authentic record of primitive times. The name Shem is significant, as, indeed, are also the names of Ham and Japheth. Ham, meaning "hot," and probably pointing to human passions which so largely characterized the religion of his descendants. Japheth, meaning "enlargement," points to that vast Indo-European population which sprang from him, coupled with the activity of temperament which was so characteristic of his family. Shem signifies "name," and probably points to that "Name" above all names, which from the first was the object of his contemplation.

The Hamites were dwellers in cities and great and mighty builders, and were devoted to the arts and sciences. They were great astronomers and mathematicians. They cultivated the soil and increased its productiveness. The Japhethites, originally nomadic, became travelers, soldiers, artists and poets, philosophers and civilizers, rather as culturists than materialists. We need only to contrast the architecture of the Egyptians with that of the Greeks to see the vast and essential difference between the civilization developed by the one religious idea and that of the other. The one is earthly and heavy; the other is heavenly and light. The one is from beneath, the other from above. The Shemites were never city builders. They were not even agriculturists. They were nomadic—shepherds and herdsmen—perhaps in some cases merchants, traveling from one part of the world to another. They lived in tents, not in houses—in the open fields, and not in towns and cities. Their temple was the open heavens—their god was an invisible NAME, whom they adored and worshiped in spirit, without even an attempt to embody or identify him with any visible phenomena. He was the creator, but never the creature. He was over all, above all, and blessed. The three cults were as follows: Hamites, materialists; Japhethites, idealists; Shemites, spiritualists. Their religious ideas were derived, probably, as follows: Hamites, from observation—material science; Japhethites, from speculation—philosophical culture; Shemites, from inspiration—revelation.

CHAPTER III.

WORSHIP IN PRIMITIVE TIMES.

THERE can be hardly a doubt that the first and happy pair whom God created and placed in the Garden of Eden worshiped him there for the brief period of their primeval innocence; though no specific account is given us. That they knew the "voice of the Lord" and that he was in the habit of "walking with them in the Garden in the cool of the day, and talking with them,"¹ we most assuredly gather from the Scriptures. How God appeared to them we do not know, but most likely as he did in later times in some form as of the "Angel of the Lord," of whose first appearance we read in Genesis xvi, where he came and spoke words of comfort and cheer to poor, outcast Hagar.² All such appearances were but the foreshadowings of the final incarnation of God among men in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What the manner of this primeval worship was, we have no means of knowing; but it was, most likely, adoration and the sweet communion of simplicity; for sin had not yet entered in, and there was no need of sacrifice or any kind of propitiation, no confession of sin, and probably not even prayer, for the Lord God was ever present. But after sin entered in, and man had awakened to the full consciousness of his moral nature and all its terrible responsibilities, there came in a new form of worship. In his abounding mercy God did not cut man off on account of his sin, but proceeded at once to reclaim him. In this act of grace we have the first glimpse of the inauguration of sacrifice as a means of approach to God, and as underlying all subsequent worship. To the guilty pair God spoke words of hope and encouragement, taking their part as against the serpent who beguiled them, and promising that in due time there should arise from among their descendants one who should bruise the head of the serpent³ and so deliver them, and bring them back to God in reconciliation and peace. At this time we are told that God made them "coats of skins, and clothed them."⁴ Up to this time death had not entered into the world. But, in order to clothe the sinful pair with coats of skins, some animal or animals had to be slain, and from them the skins were taken. There can be no doubt that the animals thus slain were used in sacrifice, and their skins taken for clothing—not only in the physical sense, but also in a

deeper spiritual and moral sense. The sacrifice thus offered was undoubtedly the first great type of the sacrifice of Christ, that "seed of the woman," before promised, and the skin-clothing representing that righteousness of Christ which is still our only covering. Isaiah beautifully sings of this divine clothing, in connection with the great promise of the coming Messiah: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."¹ Later on in the story of man, in his relation to God, as a religious being, we find Cain and Abel approaching God to worship him, each with an offering. Cain bringing his offering from the fruits of the earth, while Abel brought his sacrifice from the flock.² Of these two offerings and offerers, one was accepted and the other was rejected. Abel's offering was accepted because it was offered in faith³—that is, in obedience to directions which God had given, and in confidence that he would be accepted through his obedience or faith in the matter of the offering. That there was at least, on Abel's part, confession of sin, praise, and prayer we must assume from what we know of the nature of worship, as developed later on, all which had connection with these earliest acts of faith and worship. We know, further, that about this time there occurred a schism in the human family, the one part worshiping God according to the rule of faith, the other part apostatizing from God according to the unbelief and pride of Cain. In the days of the third son of Adam (that is, the third whose genealogy is given) we read: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord," or more literally, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord."⁴ This reminds us of what is said of the early disciples of Christ: "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."⁵ At that time, when men first began to call themselves by the name of the Lord, they certainly, also, with this confession of faith called upon his name in confession and prayer, and no doubt in adoration and praise. At any rate, there was evidently a very definite habit of worship, in which apparently the worshippers acknowledged

¹ Genesis iii, 8, 9. ² See Genesis xviii, 1, 2, 13, 17-21; Joshua v, 13-15; Judges xiii, 3, 18.

³ Genesis iii, 15. ⁴ Genesis iii, 21.

¹ Isaiah lxi, 10; compare Philippians iii, 8, 9; Revelation xix, 8.

² Genesis iv, 4, 5.

³ Hebrews xi, 4.

⁴ Genesis iv, 26.

⁵ Acts xi, 26.

their sins, and cast themselves upon God for his mercy. This worship continued in a lessening number of people during the antediluvian period until apparently very few were left. Among these were Enoch "who walked with God,"¹ and obtained "this witness that he pleased God."² Noah also walked with God, having "found grace with him."³ All this implies worship—that is, communication with God in respect of man's needs, moral and spiritual. And this is true worship! That Noah was familiar with, and habituated to, sacrificial worship is plain from the fact that the first thing he did after coming out of the ark with his household was to build an altar unto the Lord, and "took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."⁴ Surely, it is impossible not to conclude that such acts of worship were even continued during the time of their imprisonment in the ark. At least, if the sacrifices were not continued while in the ark, worship was. That Noah called upon the name of the Lord, and ordered what we would call "family worship" with his household day by day, we cannot but think.

After the great spiritual rebellion in the family of Ham, which culminated in the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues by the Lord, and the subsequent scattering of the people, there seems to have been a great general apostasy. The Japhethites seem to have migrated toward the north, the Hamites westward and southward, settling in Egypt; while the Shemites took to the plains of Mesopotamia and Upper Arabia. In course of time, the Hamites largely flowed back upon the Shemites, and the two families became to a certain extent mixed, the Hamites largely dominating the children of Shem. In the opening chapter of this book, we have already seen in detail something of this race movement. The Shemites were much corrupted by the gross idolatry of the Hamites, which they gradually adopted, together with their civilization; so that we see that even Terah, the father of Abraham, had become an idolater. How long an interval of time had elapsed between the overthrow of the conspiracy at Babel and the call of Abraham, we have no certain means of knowing. It must have been a much longer period of time than we are wont to think from the simple and fragmentary character of Bible history, which does not pretend to give us complete history, but only so much of it as is necessary for the purpose of setting forth God's revelation to us. In any case, we are safe in saying, that, though Ham and his descendants had completely apostatized from

God and given themselves up to gross and carnal "nature-worship," and Japheth and his descendants (though at the time of Abraham they had not yet fallen into the materialism and bestiality of Ham) had, in a large measure, lost the earlier and more spiritual tradition of God, and had begun only through a very fine and poetic idealism to seek God, "if haply they might feel after him, and find him" again, there were those in the family of Shem who had preserved the tradition of God as he was known before the flood, and by their father, the son of Noah. These few, no doubt, preserved a true and spiritual worship of God, holding to the unity and spirituality of his being, and worshiping him as the Creator of the world and the Preserver of men; as the One against whom sin is committed, and from whom forgiveness must come. There is reason to believe, from the most recent discoveries, that in the great and splendid city of Ur of the Chaldees, from whence Abraham came, though wholly given over to the Hamite worship, traditions of the creation, the flood, the confusion of tongues at Babel were still retained, and especially is it noteworthy that at least one ordinance of God was somehow preserved and still held sacred out of the ruin of revelation, namely, the sanctification of the Sabbath day. "Other sacred usages, originally of divine origin, but sadly corrupted in Abraham's day, also survived. The summits of all the mighty towers and temples, with which the country abounded, had their altars, on which sacrifices were offered to their gods." Their gods, indeed, were mere creatures of their imagination or the powers of nature which they had personified; but their sacrifices were the corrupted and degenerated remains of a once pure and spiritual worship, offered to the true and only Jehovah. Whatever of pure and spiritual conception of God remained at this age of the world was preserved by the descendants of Shem. Abraham, though reared amidst all these splendid and sensuous idolatries, seems to have been one who still retained in comparative, if not in absolute purity, a faith in one only and true God, and he refused to bow down to and worship the false gods of the heathen people around him. The traditions of Abraham's struggles with his idolatrous neighbors, and even of his conflict with his father, as preserved by the Jews, are full of interest, but we have not the space to allow of their rehearsal. Abraham did preserve his soul in purity, as the lily does its beauty though resting in the pools of blackest water. Abraham was, perhaps, the last of his race to whom the knowledge of God remained in anything like purity and simplicity. It is probable, therefore, that God called him out from

¹ Genesis v, 22.² Hebrews xi, 5.³ Genesis vi, 8, 9.⁴ Genesis viii, 20, 21.

among the heathen of Ur, as he did Lot out of Sodom, that with him there might be a new beginning of worship in the knowledge of God. It is almost certain that the exodus of Abraham and his kindred was about contemporary with the founding of Babylon — in other words, just before the enormous populations of these parts had slid down hopelessly into the utter darkness and degradation of the Hamitic worship.

We do not lose sight of the fact, however, that in the land toward which Abraham migrated, and in which he had an actual home, God still had his witnesses — or at least one witness. For in this land, and just after he had returned from the pursuit and victory over the confederate kings from whom he rescued his nephew, Lot, and other chief citizens of Sodom, and recovered all the spoil taken from the city, Abraham met with that strange and mysterious personality, Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God.¹ In Melchizedek Abraham met with one who was even in advance of him in knowledge, and above him in spiritual relation. Here, also, we get a glimpse of some other external elements in primitive worship. The king of Salem brought forth bread and wine, which, without question, were used, as we say, eucharistically, or in any case spiritually; and here, also, we find Abraham giving to Melchizedek tithes of all he possessed. The account is very meager, but it helps us to understand something of the fundamentals of primitive worship. Who this Melchizedek was, it is difficult to say. Whether a solitary priest of God in those dark and apostate regions, or whether he was an early manifestation of our Lord Jesus, come down to meet with and instruct Abraham, who had been chosen as the progenitor of a new race of believing men, we do not know. I am inclined to think he was a supernatural being — even Jehovah himself — appearing to Abraham to teach him the way of life and godliness; and the more so that, up to this time, we have no suggestion of any priesthood among the Semitic people.

Before the time of meeting with Melchizedek, we find Abraham building altars at several places on his line of march and journeyings.² What was offered upon these altars we do not know, as no account is given. Doubtless, a lamb from the flock, as being in accordance with the early traditions; or, at most, some birds or beasts from among the "clean" creatures. That the offering was an act of worship, and was accompanied by words spoken by the worshiper there is no doubt; for we read that on Abraham's return from Egypt, whither he had gone down on account of the famine, he

returned to the place where he had first set up an altar, and "there he called on the name of the Lord." It will be no stretch of the imagination to supply the simple service that took place at that altar where Abraham tarried on his way up out of Egypt. In the days of Seth, the third from Adam, we have seen that men "began to call upon the name of the Lord." They must have had the very same warrant then that the psalmist had, centuries later, when he declared of the Lord that he "is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them."¹ We can fancy Abraham reverently drawing near to the altar on which he had placed his offering, either standing or kneeling, with face upturned toward heaven and saying: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord."²

In this land of Canaan, where Abraham was sojourning, and where he subsequently remained after Isaac had been given to him, the Hamites, in their idolatrous worship, mingled the blood of their own children in the sacrifices to their false gods, especially to Moloch. Abraham was familiar with the rite of human sacrifice as practiced by the heathen, both in Canaan and in the city of Ur from whence he had been called out. Once and for all God tried his faith in this matter, and stayed his hand as it was uplifted to slay his son, and said unto him: "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."³ This was God's way of at once trying the faith of Abraham, and forever putting away from him and his descendants the awful crime of human sacrifice, and at the same time, by the combined offering of Isaac and the final slaying of the ram, we have a prophecy of the coming great Sacrifice which Christ, through the eternal Spirit, made of himself, when he offered himself a sacrifice for sin to God. The sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob followed in the footsteps of their father in their manner of worship.

Before attempting any summary of the elements which entered into the primitive worship of those who knew the true God, it is necessary that we include in our data the simple story of the worship practiced by the patriarch Job.

¹ Genesis xiv, 18-20.

² Genesis xii, 7, xiii, 4, 18.

¹ Psalm cxlv, 18, 19.

² Psalm cxvi, 16, 17.

³ Genesis xxii, 10-13.

We read that at that time, say, about midway between Abraham and Moses, it was the custom of "the sons of God to present themselves before the Lord."¹ This may have been some solemn annual feast, at which all the pious people of the countryside gathered to worship. But what is more interesting still is the fact that Job himself was in the habit of connecting with his worship a solemn sacrifice for sin. It was the custom in those days and in that country to celebrate with feasting and mirth the birthdays of the children of a family. Job had a large family of seven sons and three daughters. On the recurring birthdays of these sons, they in turn would all assemble to celebrate them with eating and drinking wine. There is every reason to believe that these children of Job were piously brought up, and worshipful children. Job did not join them in their feasting, as either being too old, or as having no particular taste for such mirthfulness, though he was not unwilling that his children should have a happy and joyous time. He was not afraid of their going to any length of deliberate sinfulness, but he was afraid that, in the midst of their merriment, they might "curse God"—that is, forget or "renounce God"—by falling into that overconfidence of youth and under the power of the present. He, therefore, after the round of feasting was over, "sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."² "No more lovely scene of simple faith and religious peace has ever been conceived than that which the historian discovers to us in these five verses." This lets us into two facts. That the sacrifices offered in these primitive times were in part expiatory in their nature, and were offered, not by a specially appointed priest but either by the individual worshiper on his own behalf, or by the father, as priest of his own household there. Religion with the Semites was not a national and state affair. It was no elaborate cult for priests and temples, with all the ritual of a priesthood attached, but a simple approach to God by the individual, or at most by a father in behalf of his family. This simplicity obtained among the early people of God until the time of the Exodus, when they were taken up out of Egypt and in the Wilderness organized into a nation

with a national religion to be observed formally and continuously until the great Antitype—the Eternal Son of God—should come and take up into himself all these sensuous and visible ceremonials by fulfilling them.

We may now very well gather together in a few sentences what we have learned of the most primitive worship:

1. A belief in one only and true God whom they worshiped as the Creator and Preserver of men.

2. An acknowledgment of human sin and transgression, on account of which appeal for forgiveness must be made to God.

3. A belief that with God there was mercy and forgiveness for sinful men.

4. That in order to obtain the divine forgiveness, sin must be confessed and a sacrifice offered in the blood of some animal, by which the demerit of sin was expressed in the death of the sacrifice, and acceptance of the sacrifice acknowledged by the rising smoke from the altar.

5. That the worship of God also included the expression of glad thanksgiving to him for all the common mercies of life.

6. The character of God as holy and just, as the Overseer of his people, was clearly recognized; and that he was also a living Redeemer who would, in full time, take up and avenge our wrongs and vindicate his righteousness in his dealings with us.

7. That he is a being infinitely near to us, though also infinitely separated and apart from us; yet so cognizant of all our affairs, so tender and regardful of, so absolutely incapable of doing us any wrong or of allowing any wrong to be done to us that is permanent, that, "though he should seem to slay us, or in fact should do so, as far as this life is concerned, we may still trust him, and that without being able to understand or fathom his ways."

8. That two worlds are ours, one in which we now live and one into which we shall come after the life that now is has been lived out.

9. The very existence of God transcendent to us, and yet to whom we are bound as the subject of love and worship, is the absolute ground of our faith in a life to come. We, indeed, see this more clearly than did the early worshipers of God, yet they also did discern it and rejoiced in it. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" and not of the present living inhabitants of this earth, but of those living ones who were once dead, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹ Job i, 6. ² Job i, 5.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STORY OF JOB.

BY common consent of all critics the Book of Job, if not the very oldest, is the finest poem in the world. Both Gibbon, the historian, and Carlyle, that master of criticism in literary matters, agree that in all the literature of the world there is no work with which it can be compared, its excellency in every direction is so preëminent. And yet it is a book that is not generally read, even by Bible readers; perhaps because the argument is sometimes difficult to follow; perhaps because few have come to understand that, though written in proverbial form, its argument is sustained with perfect continuity from beginning to end. It ought to be read through, if not at a single sitting, at least with a careful remembrance of what has gone before, if the reading is to be broken, or taken up at intervals.

That Job was a real person it seems to me there ought not to be any reasonable doubt. Like Abraham, he is altogether too human to be an invention, too much like ourselves, especially in his weaknesses, to be a myth. It would be difficult to understand how Ezekiel could have referred to him in connection with Noah and Daniel, two undoubted historical characters, if he had not been known as a historical personage; or how James could have referred to him as the greatest example of patience, if there had been any suspicion that he was a mere fiction.¹ Nevertheless, there are some able critics who maintain that the whole book—characters and all—is a purely fictitious work, designed to serve the purpose of teaching, much like our Lord's parables. But we must remember that the best canon for the settlement of all such questions is that one which assumes that the obvious impression which Scripture makes upon the common mind is the true one. If we should follow all the mazes of modern criticism as to the historical truth of the various books of the Bible, their genuineness, authenticity, dates, etc., we should be absolutely landed in confusion worse confounded in respect to almost every separate book in the Bible. I do not say that, should it be proved that this sublime book is a pure work of fiction, a parabolic drama worked out for the purpose of setting before us in this concrete way the most difficult problems of life, such a fact would in any way invalidate the book as a part of the teaching which God has given us for our learning and comfort, but only there is no proof that such is the case. The story itself may be either a literal history in all its details, or it

may be a dramatized history, based on substantial facts, much as Shakespeare has dramatized the personal histories of some of the English kings. In either case, the story is equally valuable. I am inclined strongly to the opinion, after doing my best through many years of study, that the story is a true and literal one, preserved by the good providence of God and handed down to us from those long-ago centuries in which Job lived, first by oral tradition, and subsequently written by some unknown author whose genius was directed by the inspiring and guiding Spirit of God, much in the same way, as to mode, as the Homeric tales have been preserved to us, first by oral tradition, and later by some great poet who edited and then wrote them down. It is quite possible that, in editing the story of Job and his friends, the editor has taken a lawful literary license in the construction and movement of this great life drama.

Assuming, then, the reality of the characters set forth in the book, we are still left much in the dark as to the exact locality of Uz, the dwelling place of our great patriarch. The topographical references, as well as allusions, to the various natural phenomena throughout the poem cannot be taken as a certain guide. It is most likely that Job was an Arab prince, a Semite who never lost the knowledge of the true God, and who held fast by the primitive revelation handed down by Noah, not always without loss or additions, but in the main sufficiently pure to save those who heeded it from idolatry and polytheism. The whole book goes to show that not only Job, but his friends, had a most exalted and pure conception of God as the transcendent Creator and Moral Governor of the world, as well as the Preserver of men. The land of Uz, it would seem from many Scriptural references, was to the east of Palestine, and north of Edom, and bordering on the western confines of Chaldea. Job himself was no doubt a patriarch of that middle era to which Abraham belonged—certainly he lived long before Moses. The great longevity to which he attained—an hundred and forty years¹—the mention of only one kind of money,² and the fact that only the three most ancient musical instruments are mentioned,³ all point to the fact that Job lived in a very early age after the dispersion of the three families of Noah from the plains of Babel. He lived,

¹ Job xliii, 16.

² Job xliii, 11; compare Genesis xxxiii, 19.

³ Job xxi, 12, xxx, 31; compare Genesis iv, 21, xxxvi, 27.

¹ Ezekiel xiv, 14; James v, 11.

therefore, in an age long before Moses had written the law, or instituted the Hebrew worship. The absence of all reference to any former Scripture, to Jerusalem, to the Law, or to any ceremonial observance known to the Hebrews, is sufficient evidence of this fact. Moreover, there is in all Job's utterances a continual undertone and outcry for a revelation of God, which seems never to have been given up to the time Jehovah spoke toward the close of the book. The piety and worship of Job was either the result of the highest type of natural religion — not nature-worship — or the result, as we have said, of a knowledge of God obtained from the primitive revelation handed down by Noah. The latter supposition is the more probable. In no other religion than that of the Semites do we find anything like such pure and exalted ideas of God. That Job knew something of the law of righteousness and the meaning of sacrifice, in connection with worship on account of sin, is another evidence of the comparative purity of his conception of God. The Noachian traditions must have been still comparatively fresh in Job's time; and if he lived contemporarily with or immediately after Abraham, it is not improbable that some of the knowledge vouchsafed to Abraham was imparted to Job and to those men who, like him — his three friends, and doubtless many others who lived in the same times — were the worshipers of the true God. The book in its present form was most probably written in the Solomonic age — that is, the history preserved for us in the book belonged to an age about sixteen centuries before Christ, whereas the poem itself was composed something like 700 or 800 years before the advent of our Lord.

To give a perfect analysis of the book — or rather, we should say, this sublime drama — would require more space than is at our disposal, though I regard it as one of the most important books in the Bible. Yet we must be content with the merest outline of this story of human suffering and struggle after God. Let it be first understood that there is in this book no mere philosophical conception of God. God is known either from an original revelation of himself, or from a moral and spiritual apprehension of him through the religious nature. Job is essentially a religious, not simply a moral book. In it we find religion pure and simple — that is, it has to do with the relations existing between God and man, the human and the divine. It is a highly individualized statement of religion; for while there is an occasional reference to other persons, and even to man in general — indeed, "there is," as Carlyle says, a "noble universality" about it — it has to do solely with the question of God's dealings with this one man Job, as a man known to him and

in whom he has the deepest interest. So, on the other hand, God was to him a God personally and individually related to him — his Daysman, his Kinsman, his Redeemer — upon whom he passionately laid a personal claim for help and deliverance out of his miseries, especially out of the miseries arising from the tormenting mental and spiritual problems which were rioting in his soul, while he was groping about in impenetrable darkness. The movement of the great religious inquiry is, indeed, from beneath upward — that is, Job starts from himself and his own misfortunes and seeks to reach upward to God. He is constantly interpreting God by his experiences, rather than interpreting his experience by God. A more lofty phase of religion comes later on when God fully reveals himself to Job and comforts him with a fuller and diviner knowledge of the truth than he had before.

The book is divided into three parts: The Prologue, the Argument, and the Postlude. The first and the last are in prose, while the body of the book is in the most classic poetry — a poetry which the late Mr. Froude said "will one day be seen towering up alone, far above all the poetry of the world." The argument is in three cycles, conducted between Job and his three friends, each friend appearing in each of the cycles except the last, in which one of them retires. In general, we may be content with saying that the argument turns on the relation of affliction to the sins of those afflicted, and on the use of suffering as an instrument for the sanctification and discipline of the righteous, without regard to any particular sin committed by the afflicted one, but rather with regard to the inherent sinfulness of the nature of man, and with reference to his future and higher standing and communion with God. It has been called the book of individual discipline for the learning of self. It has sometimes been allegorized and dealt with as a parable of man, as such, in relation to sin and God. An acute student of this school of interpreters gives us this point of view: (*a*) Job the righteous man (Adam) before his trial; (*b*) Job (Adam) under trial; (*c*) Job's (Adam's) fall or failure under trial; (*d*) the failure of Experience, Tradition, and Law, the three points of view of the three friends, taken in their argument with Job to humble Job (the natural man) and bring him to a confession of not only sin but sinfulness before God; (*e*) Job's (man's) self-righteousness; (*f*) Job (man) under revelation; (*g*) Job (man) under God's direct and personal teaching; (*h*) Job (man) under conviction and thoroughly penitent; (*i*) Job (penitent man) forgiven; and (*j*) Job restored and glorified. This is suggestive but fanciful, and certainly detracts from the sublimer teachings of the book.

I. THE CRUX. The whole meaning of the Book of Job turns upon the historical incident set forth in the prologue. Here we find God pointing Job out to Satan (who had come up with the sons of God) as "a perfect and an upright man," and "one that feared God and eschewed evil." To this eulogium of Job Satan made reply: "Doth Job serve God for naught?" That is, this "accuser of the brethren" at once denied the genuineness of Job's piety, and grounded it in selfishness. He served God because it was profitable for him to do so. His piety was, Satan insinuated, of a purely commercial character. This insinuation God rejected and allowed Satan to put the matter to test. Then follows the terrible loss of property and of all Job's children. A perfect hurricane of trouble this! Yet Job sinned not, but held fast his integrity; instead of being tempted by his afflictions to renounce God, he nobly bowed to the storm and answered, with his mantle rent and his face on the ground in an attitude of worship: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."¹ Again Satan appeared before God, and the integrity of Job was pointed out, notwithstanding the terrible and unmerited afflictions which had been permitted to fall upon him. To this Satan made reply, turning even Job's piety into an account against him: "Skin for skin; yea all that a man hath will he give for his life." That is, Job is a selfish man, indifferent to the loss of children, caring only for himself. As long as he keep his own skin whole and his life to himself he will do very well; "but put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face."² The Lord delivered him a second time into the hand of Satan to do his worst, short of taking his life, which would have been fatal to the trial. Satan did his worst, smiting him with boils from head to feet. The disease was probably the most loathsome form of leprosy known as elephantiasis. We read that it was a burning and wasting fever in his flesh, and that it struck in even to his bones. It banished him from his house and family, and drove him to one of the huge ash-heaps common in oriental countries. There he became a byword and a reproach to everyone—even the little children mocked him. To his wife, who taunted him, he replied with sublime meekness: "What! Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." This, then, is the question to be tried to a conclusion: Is religion, where it really exists, a matter of selfishness, dependent upon any measure of profit or reward? When

a soul is truly related to God, will the integrity of that relation stand in spite of all trials which the man may have to undergo? The service of God is not without reward, but it is not for reward. "Godliness is profitable for the life that now is and that which is to come," but truly religious men are not religious for the sake of the profit; they will gladly suffer the loss of all things and "count them but dung," if only they may win God and Christ and be found in him, not having their own righteousness but the righteousness, communion, and companionship of God.

The other great matter growing out of this trial of Job is one that naturally follows, namely, that true religion has its strength in that old and often repeated declaration: "The just shall live by faith." According to the accepted theology of Job and his friends, profitability was closely associated with piety. God was conceived of as holy and just, dealing with men solely on principles of retributive justice. The good would be rewarded with all manner of temporal blessings, and the wicked would be followed in this life with disaster and overthrow, so that righteousness and wickedness alike were rewarded and punished in this life. This was a "sight" theology; and it was on this basis that Satan framed his attack upon Job. It was the overthrow of this theology which brought Job into his deepest darkness, threw him into the most profound distress of mind, and tormented him most, leading him almost to blaspheme God and charge him with injustice in allowing such suffering to come upon him without any just cause for it. For in the madness of Job's bitter complaint, frantic with trouble, he charges God with injustice, not only toward him but toward man in general, if a righteous man, such as he confessedly should be and consciously was, was allowed to suffer as he was suffering, and especially if God took no notice of it, nor came to his relief. He also craves at the same time vindication from the false accusation under which he was compelled to lie by reason of the charges of his three friends. In fact, Job, in this time of mental disturbance and spiritual darkness, accuses God of injustice in two different ways; first, that he was unjust in his dealings with men, in respect of suffering, where there was no direct reason for it, as in his case—for he knew that he had committed no special iniquity and knew that his conscience was good in God's sight—and, secondly, that it was of no advantage for a man to be righteous since evil followed the righteous even as the wicked man. In this he came near justifying Satan's taunt, that religious men served God for profit and not out of pure devotion. The remarkable thing is that in all this mael-

¹ Job i, 20, 21.

² Job ii, 5.

strom of temptation, under these frightful trials and mental distress, Job never renounced God. Even when he charged him with injustice in a moment of passion, he fell at his feet in the next sentence, and cried out: "O not that, my God! I do not know, I do not understand! In any case, whatever be the truth, and however deep be the darkness; however sorely thou mayest afflict me, it seems as without a cause; yea, though thou slay me, yet will I trust thee."¹ This, then, is the answer to Satan. The true man serves God not with sight, or because it is profitable, and because he understands all his dealings with him, but because he believes God and trusts him, without profit, without present blessedness, without understanding. "The just shall live by faith."

2. **JOB'S TEMPTATIONS.** The temptations or trials of Job were, as above intimated, three-fold. (a) The sudden downcoming of the storm which swept away at one stroke all his wealth and robbed him of all his children. A greater calamity, at first thought, it would seem impossible for any man to suffer. Such a tornado of trouble coming, as it were, like a bolt out of a clear blue sky, was enough to lift the best of men off his feet. Looked at from the point of view of a man who, like Job, "feared God and eschewed evil," whose whole life was one continuous act of devotion, it is not surprising that even the astute Satan concluded that religion would not survive such a shock. It is never once intimated that Job ever thought that Satan had a hand in these calamities. His religious belief did not give to Satan such sovereign power as would make it possible for him to do such a thing without divine permission. Thus from the start Job attributed the stroke to God's own hand. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." So neither could Job know nor understand that God was trying him under challenge, only that his gold might be refined and the true glory of religious faith and character be brought more clearly to light. Had he known what was (so to speak) going on behind the scenes, the trial might have been painful for the moment, but it would not have moved him, more especially could he have seen what God had in reserve for him as disclosed finally in the epilogue of the story. But it is not given to us to know all things, especially God's "whys and wherefores." It is the part and office of faith for us to trust God without knowing what his counsels are.

(b) Job's second trial was when Satan put forth his hand to afflict his body. How grievous this affliction was, we have already noted.

Not only in itself, but coming upon the back of the other trial, it was worse than if it had stood alone. The first might have been an inscrutable providence that faith might, with comparative ease, have overcome as being exceptional. Then Job might have pointed to his spared family, his own health, and been comforted with the natural and kindly sympathy of his friends, while by his industry and wisdom he could have repaired his losses. But, coming as a second stroke, it seemed all too convincing that it was mysteriously from God and had in it some retributive meaning. Especially would this be the interpretation of Job's friends and neighbors. It was this, in fact, that turned against Job his neighbors, who had once been in the constant habit of honoring him—the young men and the old men, and especially the children and his many servants. Now they all look upon him as one whom God had forsaken and punished as for some unknown crime. This, indeed, was hard to bear. Even his wife refused to recognize him any longer; and he was left alone in his misery, scraping himself with a potsherd as he sat all day, and lay all night long, on the huge village ash heap, the refuse ground of all the community, bemoaning himself in the midst of this impenetrable affliction, the chiefest element in his grief being that he could not understand God. In fact, there is in this situation the undertone of that awful cry that, in after centuries, burst from the lips of the Son of God: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

(c) The third affliction and trial was the completion of the one that has just been described. From a distance there came three eminent, wise, and pious men, all of Job's own class and all his close friends. They had heard of Job's first great trial, but as it was merely a matter affecting his property and his own immediate family, they had refrained from intruding on his trouble. Later on, perhaps after the lapse of some months, or even a year, as is most probable, this second stroke, under which Job's body was so terribly afflicted, was reported to them. They then began to talk the matter over. They were truly sympathetic and deeply troubled. According to the accepted theology of that day, they at once concluded that these things were the judgment of God in retributive justice upon Job for some grievous sins—some dark and hidden hypocrisy it may be—and they set out to "comfort him"; while at the same time they would gratify their curiosity. Perhaps something worse prompted them to study the fall of this great and good man, whose fame was throughout all the land. It does not seem charitable to suppose that any other motive than that of sympathy brought

¹ Job xiii, 15.

them to "comfort" Job; yet it is not altogether contrary to human nature that there was in them some curiosity to see how Job took these things, and what he would say for himself, and how this greatest man among them all would bear himself under circumstances which had reduced him to poverty, stripped him of his children, branded his body with a loathsome disease, and driven him an outcast from his kind. A great philosopher has said that there is that vein of depravity in every man that causes a little secret satisfaction in the misfortunes of even one's best friend, especially if that friend be a little above us in rank and reputation. It is to be hoped that this is not universally true, yet it is to be feared that it is so far true that it behooves the best of men to guard themselves against the movement in their hearts of so subtle and devilish a meanness. It is certain that these three men, whatever their motive in coming to Job, turned out to be "miserable comforters." Their sympathy turned into reproof; their reproof into dark insinuations of wrongdoing; their insinuation into the bitterest and most unjust accusations, for "they spoke all manner of evil against him, falsely." Assuming to be the champions of God's justice, they thought it necessary to heap reproach upon Job in order to justify their theories of God's dealings. Failing of any proof of crime on Job's part which would explain his terrible sufferings, and being met from first to last with the most explicit denial on Job's part of any iniquity in him, they were compelled to fall back on their "theory," and, rather than yield a point there, they finally charged Job with being a desperate hypocrite, so hardened that, even under the mighty hand of God, he adhered to his falsehood and refused to confess his sins. Their anger at Job was no doubt heightened by the fact that, masters as they were in argument, and learned as they were in the theology of the day, Job out-argued them and overmastered them all through. A more splendid debate than that between Job and his friends is not on record in the annals of man. It is a debate the reading and study of which would enrich any debater.

3. THE ACCEPTED THEOLOGY. In order to understand the whole argument, and to follow Job through this third and most terrible of his temptations, we must first get a clear idea of the accepted theology of that day among those who, like Job and his friends, were worshipers of the one only and true God. It was a theology based upon the traditional primitive revelation of God which had become more or less dim and corrupted—the speculations of honest hearts reasoning from their own religious nature and spiritual aspirations, and from the

observation of the course of things in the world, especially with reference to what seemed to them to be the moral government of the universe. This latter source was derived largely from the relative progress and end of good and bad men. Summed up, the theology of their day was this: That God was a God of exact and unvarying justice; that he rewarded good men with prosperity and earthly favor, while bad men received in this life the just recompense for their wickedness in suffering and misfortune; that all God's dealings were in fact retributive. The problem under discussion, Job being the personal and concrete embodiment of it, was, "human suffering in connection with God's moral government." Here was a man who had heretofore been greatly blessed and prospered. He had the reputation of being "just and upright," which was based not only upon what was obvious in the life of Job, but upon the fact that he was so largely prosperous. But now this man, hitherto so famous for his righteousness and his great favor with God, was suddenly stripped of his prosperity, hurled down from his high pinnacle, bereft of his children, and given over to most loathsome bodily affliction. There could be but one conclusion: Job's afflictions were retributive punishments from the hand of a just God who never failed to prosper the upright and to afflict the wicked. Job, therefore, must after all be a bad man, and this was the explanation of the matter. The arguments of the three friends were based upon these premises, and may be reduced to this formula:

God is just who taketh vengeance.

He afflicts those with whom he is angry.

He is only angry with wicked men.

He has grievously afflicted Job.

Therefore,

He must be angry with Job.

Job must be a wicked man.

On these strings of reasoning the three friends played continually. They brought their several arguments from three sources. The first of the three, Eliphaz the Temanite, argues from observation in support of the propositions above. "Remember, I pray thee, whoever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."¹ Then comes Bildad the Shuhite, with the same argument. God is just. He does not pervert justice. Your children have been swept away because of wickedness; and your other misfortunes are to be explained on the same ground. Better acknowledge your sin, and then God will "awake for thee and make the habitation of thy righteousness

¹ Job iv, 7, 8.

prosperous." He enforces this argument by an appeal to tradition. "Inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers. . . . Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their hearts?"¹ Then comes Zophar the Naamathite, and takes up much the same argument, only he appeals to the law: "Know, therefore, that God exacteth from thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."² Job met all these arguments as best he could, only he always stoutly denied that there was any wickedness in his life with which to explain his afflictions on the theory of retributive justice. He was bewildered with the mystery of God's dealings with him, for he held the same theology as his friends. It was this confusion of reason in respect to the God whom he loved and worshiped, and who seemed to be contradicting himself and acting unjustly by Job, that gave him the bitterest suffering.

4. **JOB'S DILEMMA.** Job was, indeed, in a dreadful dilemma. He knew and held fast to the truth that God was just. He knew that he was not a bad man; that the wickedness attributed to him by his friends was a false accusation. He had a good conscience toward God, and he could no more deny his good conscience than he could the justice of God. He could not, therefore, reconcile God's dealings with him according to the theory which he also held, that God only afflicted retributively. He must even give up his belief in the integrity of God's justice or deny the conscious integrity of his own life. It seems never to have occurred to him that his and their theory of the moral government of God might be wrong, and that affliction did not always imply God's anger and the wickedness of the afflicted one. To do either the one or the other was to plunge himself into moral anarchy. All through the contention Job upheld these two facts, nor could he see his way out of the terrible dilemmas they, with his suffering, made for him. "God is just; I am not wicked; and yet I am afflicted, and in so grievous a manner and so clearly from heaven that I cannot lay it to any hand but God's." He will not say God is unjust; he will not admit that he is wicked because he knows to the contrary. Yet he is afflicted. Here are his afflictions standing between the justice of God and his own righteousness. How to explain this mystery was the problem. In vain he called upon God, but got no answer. In vain, he sought God for an explanation, but God was afar off and he could not find him. To lose faith either in God or his own integrity was alike maddening to him; and out of this madness Job uttered many rash, almost

blasphemous, things. He at times seemed on the point of justifying the Devil by "cursing God." In his misery he turned to his friends, but they only heaped reproach upon him. From them he turned to God only to be met with silence. Thus the wretched man, confused in mind, torn and distracted in heart, first fled from God to man for sympathy, and then back again from the hard and manifest ignorance and dogmatism of men who would logically make him a transgressor, when he knew, as a matter of fact, he was not, to God, passionately calling upon him to rise up out of his silence and come near from his distance and vindicate both his own action in afflicting him without a cause and, at the same time, vindicate his (Job's) own righteousness from the foul and scandalous aspersions of his three friends. He vainly longed to die. He almost gave up the whole matter to take refuge in the wild anarchy of thought which seemed to surround him, and yet he so profoundly believed in God that, though God should slay him, even if his integrity and the mystery of his dealings were never discovered, he would still trust in him. In the celebrated nineteenth chapter we find him crouching at the feet of his friends, who were so bitterly wronging him, passionately affirming his faith in a divine Redeemer who would in the end vindicate him; if not in this world then in another. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Here we have a dawning of that better hope and clearer understanding, which has come so fully to us, of life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel. Job saw it only "as in a glass, darkly," and in his deepest extremity it comforted him. His friends maddened him by their arguments, the fallacy of which he could not utterly expose but which at the same time he felt. They were justifying God, even as Job would and did justify him; only their defense of God made it necessary for them to accuse Job of having committed heinous sins, of which he knew he had never been guilty. But why had God so afflicted him? why did he not explain the ground on which these afflictions were administered? why did he not answer his cry for light? why did he not vindicate him before these false accusers? why did he keep at a distance from him, in the hour of his bitterest trouble and need? These were the elements in the confusion that filled Job's soul.

5. **JOB'S ARGUMENT AND FAITH.** Through thirty chapters the battle raged between Job and his "miserable comforters," between his bewildered soul and the darkness in which God was hiding himself. Job often broke off from arguing with his friends, as if in his deeper agony he had totally forgotten them, and flung himself at God's feet and cried out in the bit-

¹ Job viii, 8, 10.

² Job xi, 6.

terness of his heart for God. His soul thirsted for God—yea, for the living God—but he could not find him. Throughout the whole argument the three friends contended for their dogmatic creed—that rewards and punishments were meted out in this world—that sin brought with it in this life its terrible consequences, and that virtue was sure to be vindicated in a corresponding compensation of blessing. Because Job was so sorely afflicted, they argued over and over again, he must be a great sinner, guilty of some unparalleled wickedness which he was concealing from their knowledge. It is true, they could point to no sin of which he was guilty, but they argued there must be sin or there could not be such affliction, God being just. To admit that such affliction could be found in a good man's life would argue the injustice of God—a proposition which neither Job nor his friends would admit. The difference between Job's position and theirs was that, while Job stoutly upheld the absolute justice of God, he as stoutly denied iniquity in his life and maintained his own integrity. These two positions, with his unparalleled afflictions between, seemed inconsistent with each other. The friends seized on this inconsistency and assailed Job with arguments drawn from a commonly held theology, and reinforced those arguments, as we have seen, from observation, tradition, and law. Job, on the other hand, still maintaining his integrity, admitted that in the present case God was, for some inexplicable reason, his "adversary," but not, he contended, from any wickedness in him. The friends replied that such a position was insulting to God and blasphemous in Job, and that his stubbornness in maintaining his integrity was only an aggravation of his sin. In the course of the argument, which must have lasted over many days, we notice that the friends intrench themselves more and more behind dogma, steadily lose their calmness, and grow bitter, unjust, and vindictive toward Job. Foiled in their efforts to convince Job of sin and bring him to their views of the matter, they assail him cruelly, and seem more intent at last on maintaining their creed than on justifying God. This is ever the case with mere dogmatists. On the other hand, Job, still overwhelmed with his afflictions, utterly unable to comprehend them, confident of his integrity (which is the only thing he absolutely knows), and equally confident of the ultimate justice of God, draws nearer and nearer to God; continues his appeals to him for vindication and to justification of his own dealings with him. This is one of the most remarkable features in Job's argument. He has such an uncompromising conviction of the justice of God that he appeals to God, against God, in respect of the wrongs

done to him. In all his arguments and outcries his face is steadily toward God and his appeal directed to God. He turns his back, with considerable contempt and disgust, upon his "miserable comforters," and will listen to no one else, argue no longer, and look nowhere else but to God for vindication. This is sublime faith, even though there be in it, apparently, a kind of impertinent irreverence. "My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears to God."¹ He is very bold in his argument. "Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand."² "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation; for an hypocrite shall not come before him."³ A conscious sinner would not dare approach into God's presence with such an argument; but Job longs for nothing so much as for the privilege of facing God and requiring of him an explanation and justification of his ways with him. If God be just and he be innocent, then God must vindicate him. This he constantly argues, entreats, and demands.

Another thing is apparent in the course of the whole argument, and that is, that Job is gradually changing his theological views, and reaching conclusions from the premises of his own suffering, which were not in his creed at the beginning. He is no longer sure that suffering is the necessary consequence of sinning. How could he hold fast by that old view while he was still conscious that there was no iniquity in him and that God was still and always perfectly just—that is, no such iniquity as that attributed to him by his friends and inferred from his sufferings? Then, again, he is beginning to perceive that the sphere of God's providence, the working of his ways, are wider than his own individual case, and are not limited to this world. He suggests that God let him die and hide him in the grave (sheol) until he be ready to vindicate him and bring forth his righteousness. He promises to rest quietly in that middle world, until God's time shall come, and then at his first call he will respond to the summons.⁴ God has more than one world in which to make his ways plain, his promises good, and his unfailing justice manifest. The new and open vision of a future life, and the arbitration of human affairs beyond the confines of this life, rises to its culminating point in the nineteenth chapter (before referred to) where he bursts out with that magnificent declaration of his new creed: "I know that my Redeemer [my Kinsman and Avenger] liveth; . . . and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall

¹ Job xvi, 20.

² Job x, 7.

³ Job xiii, 15-17.

⁴ Job xiv, 13-17.

I see God." Job had reached that state both of body and mind when he despaired of the recovery of one, and the peace of the other, in an earthly vindication, and so longed for death, but not as once he had done in bitterness, wishing he had never been born, or that death might annihilate him. He now wished that he might die and get into the presence of that Redeemer whom he was sure would vindicate him. He had nothing more to live for. His body was being eaten to the bone with the foul and leprous sores which covered him; his friends had turned from him; he was the object of their bitter injustice; his wife had forsaken him; and he had become the object of universal loathing and foulest suspicions. Not only was he charged with unknown and fancied crimes, but because he maintained integrity he was pronounced a monumental hypocrite and even a blasphemer, since he appealed to God for vindication, and charged the Almighty with visiting these afflictions upon him without due cause. He was rapidly growing quiet with the increasing conviction that in another world he would be fully vindicated. He had lost all hope for this one. From the end of the first colloquy Job discerns a faint ray of hope in the possibility of an immortality of future life, in which things which seem most wrong will turn out to have been most right. If a tree die it may live again. That is, a new tree will shoot up out of the old roots at the scent of water;¹ so it may be with a man. At the end of the second colloquy this hope of immortality rises into full-orbed splendor, for there he sees and confesses that Redeemer whom he knows to be alive, and whom he shall see out of his mortal flesh, and who will both vindicate him from the false accusations of his friends and avenge him of the wrongs he has suffered.

In the twenty-second chapter, the second one in the last colloquy, we see the Temanite throwing his last spear, firing his last arrow. He makes one more attack, and then, like a cuttle-fish, retires amid a cloud of accusation which he throws over Job. In vain had his friends sought to convict Job of crime, or point out even one sin against righteousness which Job had committed. Yet their theory of sin and punishment required that sin be found in Job. "According to our theory you ought to be a sinner. We cannot change our theory. Therefore, you are a sinner. And since your afflictions are unparalleled, you must be an unparalleled sinner." Thus they reasoned; thus, practically, Eliphaz spoke. They had been unable to pierce Job's armor of integrity by all the arts of argument and cunning insinuation; therefore, the last desperate charge of the

Temanite. Without a scrap of evidence, he opens his batteries and charges Job with every heinous sin, every namable iniquity of which the worst wretch could be guilty; and then calls upon him to repent of these crimes which he had not committed, turn to God and confess his sins, and takes upon himself to promise that God will forgive him, and if he return to righteousness, will restore to him prosperity. Here the Temanite uses a bribe, the very argument the devil has used, when disputing before God the sincerity of Job's righteousness.¹ Job answers, indeed, but he does not attempt to rebut these arguments, or further refute the calumnies of his friends. He has practically turned away from man. The whole argument has been more than threshed out; and he is more and more disposed to turn the whole matter over to God for solution. From the beginning, Job, like a child to its mother, creeps closer and closer to God—to the hand that chastises. Friendless in this world, weary of life, overwhelmed with afflictions which seem to him to have come upon him without cause, distressed beyond measure because he cannot reconcile God's dealings with him with what he ever firmly believes to be his unchanging character—his goodness and justice—he yet longs for God and lays himself at his feet, and casts all his care and trouble upon him. He is not afraid of God, though he cannot understand his ways. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

We now reach the conclusion of this magnificent historic poem. The controversy between Job and his friends came to a natural end, both for the reason that they had exhausted every argument they could think of, and failed to move Job from his stubborn double position. "I have not sinned; and God is just." Job was quite sure of his own integrity, and thoroughly loyal to his conscience. He was also absolutely sure of God's integrity. His anguish was between these two positions. The friends were sure of their theory and, therefore, could do naught else than infer Job's guilt. The difference between their position and Job's was that Job certainly knew his integrity, while they only inferred his guilt. Throughout the whole course of the debate the friends grew more haughty, hard, bitter, and unfeeling toward Job, while he grew steadily more quiet, gentle, and trustful. Zophar, the most narrow-minded of the three friends, dropped out of the debate altogether, and Eliphaz, the wisest and ablest of the three, resorted at last, with an utter loss of temper, to those open and despicable charges against Job of which we have spoken and for which he had

¹ Job xiv, 7.

¹ Job xxii, 23-30.

not the slightest proof. It never occurred to him that his theory of God and his dealings with men might be altogether wrong. On the other hand, Job, starting with the same theology as that held by his friends, yet knowing that, in his case, the theory did not hold good, steadily drew nearer to God, accusing him at times of injustice, even pitting his own righteousness against God's dealings, and passionately calling on God to vindicate himself, thus venturing even to judge God; yet all the time flinging himself on God, and proclaiming his entire justice, although he could not understand it. There is, in spite of these outbreaks of passion, a sublime reverence in his attitude toward God. His own sufferings at times seemed much less to him than his trouble about God. His afflictions were not so much a reproach to him as to God, for they laid God seemingly under a charge of injustice from which Job could not, except by a blind faith, vindicate him. This conflict drove Job to suspect the correctness of his theology—the theology of the time, which both he and his friends held. He came to suspect that God had other modes of procedure than those upon which all their theories were based. Thus, afflictions not only broadened his mind and enlarged his heart, but also broadened his theology.

We now come to a new act in the drama. Elihu appears, and takes part in the controversy. He was a younger man than either of the four, and had, during the controversy, kept silence, through that modesty which characterizes the youth of the oriental countries. It seems that during the long debate between Job and his friends, a large company of wise and thoughtful men had gathered about the disputants, deeply interested in the arguments advanced by them in respect of the profound questions under discussion. To these as well as to Job does Elihu address his arguments. There is this peculiarity about Elihu's address, apart from its great eloquence and its calm philosophical and discriminating character: he practically tells us that he is speaking not only his own convictions on the matter, but practically the truths as he had received them from the Spirit of God. The inspiration he claims for them is of that sort which is suggested by the psalmist when he tells us that the "secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." It is impossible not to be struck with the sincerity and candid fairness of Elihu in his discourses—his anxiety not to wound Job but to convince him and lead him to God in a way at once humble and uplifting. His kindness of manner and sincere solicitude for Job are in striking contrast with the hardness and unbending bitterness of the three friends. That Elihu contributes very materially to the wealth of

the poem, and advances and enlarges the whole character of it, there is absolutely no doubt. We can but summarize his teaching.

He opened his discourse with an apology for his youth, but denies that wisdom must necessarily be confined to age; and maintains by implication that true wisdom comes from the Spirit of God and, therefore, may come to a young man even as to one of maturer years, especially if it has been sought in connection with a godly walk with God. He at once condemns Job for his over-assertion of sinlessness, and for his rash and hasty judgment of God and his ways. He condemns the friends because, with all their fierce argumentation, they had failed utterly to answer Job. Then, turning to Job, he points out that he had erred greatly in many of his assertions in regard to God's dealing with men and with himself. Job had complained not only that God had deserted him, and so, by implication, men in general when they were in trouble, but that he did not in any way communicate with man. To this Elihu replies that God does speak to man. By dreams, afflictions, experience, and even by messengers, "angels" or teachers, such as he himself was—that is, by prophets, holy men moved to speak by the Holy Ghost. And here he intimates that it is not true that God's afflictions are always in anger; indeed, he maintains that they are always in love; that, even when they are sent on account of sins done, the purpose of God is still one of love and for salvation and not for destruction.

He refutes Job's charge against God that he is indifferent to the moral conduct of men, and maintains that he is always and exactly just; that he has no motive for being otherwise than just. He had made man of his own free will; he had maintained him in life and supplied him with breath. Why should God have done this if he had not loved man for himself. Moreover, man's sins cannot hurt God, nor can his virtues enrich him. God has nothing either to revenge himself for or to reward man for. Nevertheless, he is pleased with man's virtue, and grieves over his vice, but this more for man's sake than for his own. Besides all this, it is still true (although Job had denied it), that a man's virtue does in the long run bring him happiness, while his vice does in the long run bring him to misery. It is, therefore, profitable to be godly, and it is disastrous to follow after wickedness. God does strike down the wicked and he does vindicate the righteous. Not to administer the moral government of the universe on principles of absolute justice would be to bring about a state of anarchy that would end in the destruction of all worlds—moral as well as physical. If he sends afflictions upon the righteous, they are not punitive but corrective. He

is always just, kind, and redemptive in his dealings with men, and especially so with those men who are following after righteousness. Afflictions are to teach and purge men. Where there is no open sin, as there was not in Job's case, there was yet latent sin, or sin of nature, and perhaps unconscious and unintentional sins. These have to be brought to light and purged away. Afflictions are God's ministers for this work; in kindness and not in wrath he discovers man to himself. God delivers men out of affliction by affliction. Afflictions are the means of revelation both of the man to himself and of God; for they at once move man to self-examination and at the same time drive him to God for inquiry and comfort. Moreover, if afflictions deprive us of the coarser and more outside comforts and blessings of life, they reveal to us and develop in us a finer and purer joy which, but for afflictions, would have remained unknown, and for which we would have had no capacity. Elihu also utterly denies Job's charge against God that he does not hear prayer, will not answer man's cry, and hides himself. If God does not answer the cry of man at once, it is far more likely that man has asked amiss, in passion or anger, or out of a mere impulse springing from immediate suffering or discomfort, or even out of pride, than that God has kept silence through indifference. Man is a greater being than a brute or a bird. If God hears the cry of the raven, the lowing of the cattle, and the roar of the young lion, it is because they know no better than to cry when they are hungry and thirsty; but man knows more than this, and to demand that God shall deliver him out of every situation of discomfort at the very moment is to put himself on the level with beasts and birds. Again, God hears and delays to answer because to answer immediately in many cases would be to condemn man instead of saving him. Suppose he had appeared at once in answer to Job's furious and passionate challenge for vindication; he would have had to expose the many imperfections of which Job was unconscious, and present him in a character which would have been worse to bear than the slanderous inferences put upon him by his friends. Moreover, to have delivered him immediately from his afflictions would have been to deprive him of their ministry. God's great power is of his heart rather than of his arm. "He is mighty by strength of heart." Therefore, the truth is, that all God does is done from a motive of love. He is always just, and kind, and redemptive. "He exalteth by his power." That is, he uses his power to exalt, not to destroy men. If it ever turns out the other way, it is because men willfully sin against light and the power of love, choosing to keep in with sin which always destroys,

rather than to be led in the ways of righteousness which always exalt and save. Elihu closes his discourses with a description of a magnificent storm which looks so threatening and destructive, but which, upon the whole, is beneficent, and brings out the whole earth in brighter beauty afterward—"The clear shining after rain," and the golden glory of the light after the storm has passed. So it shall be with the man who emerges out of a storm of afflictions. We cannot understand all of the mysteries of nature; so neither can we understand all of the mysteries of the workings of God's moral and providential government. But we can understand enough to know that the one is as beneficent as the other. Therefore, let us wait and trust on. "The just shall live by faith;" and he that putteth his trust in God shall never be confounded, but "kept in perfect peace."

After Elihu's discourse God speaks to Job out of the tempest. The discourse explains no mysteries, solves no problems. But that God should speak to him at all is the one thing that humbles Job and makes him ashamed. It is not argument or philosophical unfolding of theological discourse that convinces the spirit of man, either by humbling or exalting him; it is the spiritual vision of God, in the light of which we get a true vision of ourselves. When Job saw God and heard him speak to him, then he fell on his face and cried out: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." If we had the vision of God, we should have the same estimate of ourselves. After this God forgives Job his sins, and restores to him his prosperity and position. Moreover, he rebukes his censorious and unjust friends, and commands them to seek the benefits of Job's intercession, the offering of an atonement for them.

The lessons to be derived from the Book of Job, useful for all ages, are so many that it is impossible to enumerate them all or the half of them; but a few may not be amiss:

1. A refutation of the idea suggested by Satan that there is no pure righteousness in the world; that all religion is selfish; that man only serves God for gain.
2. A refutation of the implication by Satan that God is incapable of awakening pure and true love in the heart of man. Therefore, the trials which Job underwent to demonstrate the falseness of Satan's accusation, both of God and man respectively.
3. That true religion is the fruit of faith and not of sight. That a really righteous man serves God not because he understands all his ways, but because he believes in him and trusts in him, even though he should slay him.

That the heart goes out to God and loves him, not for things received at his hand but for himself.

4. That God's afflictions are never purely punitive. That, on the other hand, they are corrective, and for the purpose of education and discipline.

5. That, in the long run, it is profitable to the soul, as well as to the material interests of men, to live righteous lives; and disastrous to live wickedly.

6. That, in the meantime, the wicked often seem to be prospered, while the righteous are forsaken; nevertheless, God will vindicate the righteous and overthrow the wicked. If full and exact justice is not seen altogether in this world, everything will be righted in the next, which is the necessary complement to this one.

7. That morality or human righteousness is not enough to satisfy the spiritual and ethical nature of man. He needs God, and will never be satisfied till he "come before him."

8. That the pursuit of righteousness will not in itself lead a man to a true and full knowledge of God. Revelation is necessary to complete our knowledge.

9. Our knowledge of God comes to us in three ways. By meditation and philosophical inquiry; by observation or the study of nature and man; and by revelation, which is a communication to man, out and down from God to us by his Spirit, sometimes directly through dreams, or through deep convictions which amount to certainties; by experience as in afflictions; and by holy men as they are taught by the Spirit.

10. That God is not indifferent to our suffering or need when he does not immediately answer our prayers.

11. That he uses his great power for salvation and not destruction.

12. That the greatness of his power is in his love and not in his mere might.

13. That God is always just, kind, and redemptive, in his ways with us, always seeking our highest good. That to win us to himself to share with him the fullness and the glory of his eternal being is the design and the end of our creation, preservation, and all his providences.

14. That God has two worlds in which to make good all his purposes and promises. What we miss in this one, we shall find in the other.

15. That out of every evil God brings some good; and that he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restraineth.

16. That Satan is finally defeated and drops out of the drama of our lives—is simply lost sight of and ignored.

17. That God takes account of our sins, and that while we may not be conscious of sins we are nevertheless surely sinful.

18. That it is only a spiritual vision of God that will enable us to see ourselves as we are.

19. That it is our duty and ought to be our privilege to "wait patiently on the Lord," whose thoughts for us are never evil, but always good, and who will surely bring our true and right desires to pass.

20. The inviolability of conscience. We must stand by our own conscience; but not against God, who is greater than our conscience; also remembering that the work of the conscience is to a large degree dependent upon our knowledge both of God and ourselves. Conscience cannot, therefore, be the final arbiter of moral questions.

21. In all our difficulties and afflictions, the only safe way is to keep our faces toward God and argue everything out with him as it were face to face.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRANSITION TO CEREMONIAL.

FROM Abraham to Moses may be called the middle period of the Hebrew development. In Abraham's day there was no formal priesthood and no elaborate ritual. He was, as we have already seen, the priest of his own family. The ceremonial consisted in a simple sacrifice in connection with which sin was confessed and atonement for sin was typified. There is little doubt but that Abraham, who is said to have "seen Christ's day," had some comprehension of the great atonement, though he could not have fully understood it. The tragic act in which he offered up his only son Isaac—that son who came to him out of

the course of nature, and in fulfillment of the promise of the Almighty (the miracle-working God), and for whom a substitute was provided at the last moment—must have suggested to him something wonderful in connection with Christ (whose "day he saw"); even as the saving of Isaac, by the interposition of God after the knife was lifted to slay him and he was to his father as already dead, was to him as a resurrection from the dead.¹

The same simple forms of worship which characterized the house of Abraham and Job,

¹ Hebrews xi, 19.

of consecration) which he offered unto the Lord. His conversion was celebrated by a kind of communion service, for "Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God."¹ These and similar acts of worship were maintained during this early part of the Wilderness sojourn.

The Pillar of the Cloud, the visible symbol of God's presence, was always present in the camp, but no revelation touching ritual service had, up to this time, been given. Jethro persuaded Moses of the wisdom of organizing the children of Israel into a civil community, over which "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness," were to rule, and especially to judge between them in respect of mutual rights under the commandments and statutes of the Lord as they had been revealed to Moses up to that time.² We see in all this the beginnings of national life, and the increasing and pressing necessity for some more permanent and comprehensive religious ritual. Here, then, at the foot of Sinai, they camped, after the victory over Amalek and the civil arrangements above

spoken of had been made. The Lord began to speak to Moses definitely and in detail respecting his purposes concerning Israel, and gave to him there in the mountain, in outline at least, the civil and ceremonial laws of the new commonwealth. The characteristic features of this revelation were: (1) The graciousness of all God's purposes, and (2) The symbolic character of the revelation and ritual.¹ The familiar twentieth chapter contains a record of the "Ten Words," or, as we know them more familiarly, the Ten Commandments, and the beginning of the symbolism contained in the altar to be thereafter used in worship.² The following chapters contain a great variety of laws and regulations for the future government of Israel.³ From the twenty-fifth to the thirty-first, inclusive, we have minute and detailed instructions for the building of the tabernacle, with all its furniture; also directions for the setting apart of Aaron and his sons for the priesthood, with a description of their clothing, including the wonderful Urim and Thummim, and the nature of the service they should render.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAW AND THE TABERNACLE.

THESE remarkable Words or Commandments were thrice given. Once to Moses orally, and twice again to Moses written or engraved on tables, or rather tablets, of stone.³ This first pair of tablets were broken by Moses on his descent from the mountain, in his indignation at the people's apostasy in the matter of the golden calf.⁴ The breaking of these tables of the Law would indicate that the people had now come under a broken law, and were henceforth living under a covenant broken on their part, though not annulled; which would involve them in the constant necessity of grace ministered, not through broken law, but through sacrifice and intercession. The tables were renewed and again given to Moses, in connection with a most glorious revelation of the person and grace of Jehovah.⁵ The rest of the Book of Exodus is taken up with a detailed account of the construction of the tabernacle, and the institution of a priesthood "according to the pattern which Moses had received in the mount."

Of these wonderful Ten Words it is impossible for us to speak adequately. They are the most outstanding statement of righteousness the world has ever had. The centuries which

have passed since, with all their advance of knowledge and culture, have never been able to improve or amend them, either by way of addition or subtraction. These words were most wonderfully summed up by our Lord himself in one of his answers to a scribe who questioned him concerning them: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely, this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."⁴ To account for this compendium of righteousness and religion apart from revelation is a hopeless task for any who may undertake it. Could it have originated with Moses in the Wilderness? This would be to ascribe to him an ethical genius and an intellectual mastery beyond that which is human, and as much out of the sequence of human nature as is the explanation of their origin contained in the book. Moses certainly did not learn these Words from the priests of Egypt, for they had no conception of such a law of righteousness, and

¹ Exodus xviii, 12.

² Exodus xviii, 21, 22.

³ Exodus xx, 2-17, xxxi, 18, xxxii, 16.

⁴ Exodus xxxii, 19.

⁵ Exodus xxxiv, 4-9.

¹ Exodus xix, 4-6, 18, 19, with Galatians iv, 24.

² Exodus xx, 24-26.

³ Exodus xxi-xxiv.

⁴ Mark xii, 29-31.

especially had they no conception of God or of religion, whose first word is love. They imply that the God who gives such a command must himself be the God of Love; and that all religion must be its expression. Behold! here, indeed, is a revelation worthy of the highest conception of God and religion. These words were spoken to Moses by God, and are forevermore, as they have been all down the ages, the pillar and ground of religious truth. They do not, indeed, contain the whole truth of God. They have been called a transcript of the divine mind; but that is not an accurate statement. There is much more in the mind of God than is revealed in these Ten Words. "For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The Ten Words, then, are more properly defined as being the transcript of the divine mind as to what man ought to be. They are the standard of righteousness, and so become the revealer of sin in man when he measures himself by them, "for by the law is the knowledge of sin."¹ Farther on we shall see how even this law, so perfect and so inexorable in its demand of righteousness, becomes the very foundation and life of that mercy of God which is freely administered to sinful man from off the mercy seat. For when the law is met by the great atonement it will be seen that God is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins."²

The law was engraved on two tables, or tablets of stone. This is usually taken as symbolic of the fact that religion or righteousness has to do with both heaven and earth, with God and man. The number of the commandments, ten, is not without significance, as throughout the Bible, as is still true in all oriental countries, the number *ten* symbolized perfection or completeness. There is also significance in the division of the commandments into two sets of five each. Five being a symbol of imperfection shows that to keep either table to the exclusion of the other would be ethically imperfect. "The Lord thy God," and "thy neighbor as thyself" must be considered together. The division of the ten commandments into two sets of five each is the common way of looking at them. Five were engraved on either of the two tablets, the first five referring to God, and the second five referring to obligations from man to man. The fifth commandment, which enjoins obedience from children to their parents, has by many been supposed to belong more properly to the group which enjoins obligation upon man to his fellow man, but to the Jewish mind obedience to parents was an act of piety rather than the discharge of mutual obligation. It, therefore, takes its place with

the four preceding commandments having reference to piety. A disobedient child, either son or daughter, could in no case be considered a pious person, even in respect of the claims of God. It ought also to be observed that all the commandments, with the possible exception of the fourth, which refers to the sabbath, are grounded not on an arbitrary will of God but in the very moral constitution of man. The worship prescribed toward God conforms with the religious instincts of man; so does the piety due to parents, so do all the obligations toward our neighbor conform to our own inherent sense of right. Even the rest prescribed upon the seventh day is found to be in harmony with the best moral, spiritual, and physical conditions of life, though, in the nature of the case, the sabbath observance is not so obviously a duty as are the others. Whether we look up to the heavens or abroad upon the earth, whether we consider our duty to God or our obligations to our fellow men, we cannot possibly get on religiously, ethically, or even civilly, without the law given on Sinai. If we consider this law as the work of man, how bold was that man who assumed to utter a law at once worthy of God and comprehensive of all the rights of man! And yet how perfect is this law, in both these respects! Who will add to it and who will take from it, by pointing out deficiencies or superfluities?

Hitherto the children of Israel had worshiped under the blue sky. Their temple comprehended all space. Now God, having given them his law, by which their relations to him and to their neighbors are clearly defined, calls upon them to build him a tabernacle in which he may dwell among them. "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen," etc., "And let them make me a Sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."¹ This command for a Sanctuary in which the Ark of the Covenant was to dwell, and over which the glory of God was to rest, was, as has been said, "the passing symbol of an eternal truth." That is, God has come down to dwell amongst us; he has "mixed himself up with us and our sins for our salvation." In other words, the central truth symbolized by the tabernacle in which God dwelt, and whose glory lived concealed in its Most Holy Place, is that of the incarnation. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and

¹ Romans iii. 20.² I. John i, 9.¹ Exodus xxv, 2-4, 8.

truth."¹ If any have the thought that the change from worshipping God under the whole canopy of heaven, with the stars for lamps and the sun for the glory of it, to a comparatively small, though exquisitely constructed, tent, was a movement in the direction of limitation rather than of progress and enlargement, let them consider for a moment the utter impossibility of our comprehending God without limitation and the necessity of his coming nigh unto us and limiting himself, that we might know him and draw nigh to him. The incarnation of God in Christ was a limitation, and yet it was an advance in revelation and a great unfolding of the final purpose of God in our creation. Was the world ever able to know God without the limitations of the incarnation, as it has done since that great and transcendent event? Limitation is not always a contraction or a loss. We can conceive of unlimited license of thought and action; and we can conceive of a liberty of action controlled by certain limitations which is infinitely more adapted to our advancement than the unbridled license. For who does not recognize the superiority of liberty over license?

The outward history of the tabernacle begins with Exodus xxv. It was finished in about nine months, and the first formal act of worship in connection with it was on the first day of the second year of the Exodus from Egypt.² When it was finished and set up on that first day of the first month of the second year of the Exodus, the cloud that had accompanied them all through their journeyings covered the tent of the congregation and "the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle"—that is, the Most Holy Place.³ For a minute description of the tabernacle, its furniture and service, we must refer the reader to the chapters in Exodus from the twenty-fifth onward to the close of the book. It was henceforth to be the meeting place between God and the people. The whole camp of Israel was now arranged in due order around this holy tent,⁴ God dwelling "in the midst of them," unseen, indeed, and yet in a true and mysterious sense visibly present with them. When the cloud which rested upon the tabernacle moved, then all the camp struck their tents, the tabernacle was taken down, all its parts covered and all Israel followed the cloud until it stopped, and then the camp was reformed with the tabernacle again in their midst. Thus for forty years the children of Israel wandered in the Wilderness, God in the midst of them even in their wanderings and sins.

The following brief outline of the whole structure, and its contents, must suffice for the

want of more space. The reader, with these hints, will be able to follow the subject farther by a direct study of the Scriptures.

I. OF THE TABERNACLE ITSELF. Its dimensions were thirty cubits in length, by ten in height, and ten in width. Reckoning a cubit at eighteen inches, we have the dimensions as follows for length, breadth, and height, 45 by 15 by 15 feet. The Holy of Holies, in which were the Ark and the mercy seat (where the glory of God dwelt), occupied the western end of the tabernacle and was one-third of the whole—that is, it was a square room, without other light than the glory of God. The whole tabernacle was surrounded by a great court of which mention will be made farther on. It was constructed with sockets, boards, pillars, veils, and coverings. The boards were placed on end resting in sockets of brass which were buried—or partly buried—in the ground. These boards, of shittim wood, constituted the framework of the structure, being closely joined and held together by bars of wood passing through rings, two rows of which were at the top and two at the bottom. The upright boards were kept in place by cords, or, as we would say, guy ropes. The entrance to the tabernacle was from the west, which was supplied with six pillars, instead of being inclosed solidly by boards as on the two sides and eastern end. This framework was covered with four coverings. The first one—that is, the one first laid over—was made of linen, in which was wrought with the needle blue, and purple, and scarlet threads. Besides this, it had representations of the cherubim wrought or embroidered on it, probably with thread of gold. The next covering over this was made of goats' hair. The next, again, was made of rams' skins dyed red. The outer covering was made of badger skins—probably seal skins.¹ The tabernacle was divided on the inside into two chambers. The Most Holy Place, in the western end, was ten cubits square, and the height being also ten cubits, made it a perfect cube—fifteen feet each way (taking the cubit to be eighteen inches). The Holy Place was a room twice the size of the Most Holy Place; that is, twenty cubits long from east to west, by fifteen cubits wide from north to south; or, in our measurement, thirty by fifteen feet, and fifteen feet in height. The Holy Place was divided from the Most Holy Place by a beautiful veil or curtain which was never passed, except once a year, by the high priest on the day of atonement. This Holy Place was again divided from the outer court by a curtain hung over the pillars at the west end of the tabernacle, and was the sanctuary where the daily

¹ John i, 14.

² Exodus xl, 17.

³ Exodus xl, 34-38.

⁴ Numbers ii, 2.

¹ For details see Exodus xxvi.

services of the tabernacle were discharged. The whole tabernacle was a beautiful, and, in every part, and in all its furniture and service, a significant type of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹ In the fullness of time, God was manifested in the flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory. Jesus, in his ministry and death, fulfilled all the typical prophecies of him contained in the tabernacle and its service. At the time of our Lord's crucifixion, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom and the Holy of Holies exposed to view, revealing the fact that henceforth God and the mercy seat were not there. But it is said that he "hath consecrated for us a new and living way." "Into the heavens he has entered with his own blood."

THE HOLY OF HOLIES. This has been already briefly described. In this Most Holy Place God commanded the "Ark of the testimony" was to be set, and the veil drawn. The ark of the testimony was an oblong chest in which the two tables of stone were placed, with a pot containing manna, and the rod of Aaron that budded. The cover of this chest was overlaid with pure gold, and of the same precious material two cherubim—one on either end—were beaten out and placed. This golden lid was called the "mercy seat," and on this mercy seat, when the tabernacle was at rest, the glory of the Lord rested. Here he dwelt. And from this propitiatory, he communed with the people through the high priest, who entered "once every year" with the blood of atonement, and with the golden censer.² The thoughtful student can easily see the significance of all this. The tables of stone in the ark of the testimony show us how all God's dealings with us are founded upon his everlasting law of righteousness. The pot of manna tells of his providential care for us, as a part of his goodness. The rod of Aaron that budded teaches us that priesthood is not an indifferent matter, but fundamental to the whole plan of salvation, and may neither be usurped nor dispensed with. The mercy seat points us directly to Christ, "who is our mercy seat," or propitiation.³ The whole clearly points to the plan of salvation as fully wrought out for us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Since the law was broken as soon as it was given, it is evident that with and under that alone we could expect nothing but death. But with the mercy seat over and upon the law, and bound together in the same covenant ark, we understand how God can "still be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."⁴ The first ten chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews

is devoted to the exposition of this tabernacle service and its significance. We earnestly commend our readers to a careful study of this most wonderful epistle, in connection with this account of the tabernacle and the service therewith connected, as set forth in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. No Christian can afford to live and not give time and prayerful study to these books of the Bible.

THE HOLY PLACE. As we have already indicated, this was the eastern and largest room in the tabernacle. In this room was ordered to be placed the golden table for the "shewbread," with the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense. (a) *The bread*.¹ Twelve loaves were placed fresh upon the table every sabbath, and the old bread eaten only by the priests in the Holy Place. We know what this bread typifies. Jesus is the bread of life, and as, under the New Testament dispensation, all the Lord's people are priests, having access by his blood, it tells us that there is now unbroken communion between God and his people through our Lord Jesus Christ. (b) *The golden candlestick*. This was a beautiful lamp-stand, having one central stem with six branches, three on either side. It was made of pure gold, containing a talent of that precious metal, and worth in our money more than \$25,000. A lamp of olive oil was placed on each branch, as well as on the central stem. It was the duty of the high priest to trim and fill these lamps every morning, and they burned continually day and night, and furnished the only light in the Holy Place—none being admitted from the outer world.² Here we have Jesus set before us again as our Light, the "true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."³ (c) *The altar of incense*. This was the third article of furniture in the Holy Place, also made of gold. On this altar was burned continually, with fire taken from the brazen altar outside the tabernacle first kindled from heaven, sweet spices which rose heavenward, filling the whole place with a sweet smell.⁴ The high priest commenced the morning and evening worship by offering incense upon this altar. The time of offering incense was the time of public prayer,⁵ and the burning of incense was the type of prayer. David used it as such.⁶ John speaks of this service, linking it with "the prayers of the saints."⁷ No doubt there is also a deep significance in this service, as relating to the prayers of our Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf.

¹ For particulars concerning the table of shewbread, see Exodus xxv, 23-30, xxvi, 35; Leviticus ii, 13, xxi, 6, 8, 17, 21, 22, xxiv, 5, 7-9.

² Exodus xxv, 31-39, xxvii, 20-21, xxx, 7-8.

³ John i, 9, viii, 12, ix, 5. ⁴ Exodus xxx, 1-8.

⁵ Luke i, 10. ⁶ Psalm cxli, 2.

⁷ Revelation v, 8, viii, 3, 4.

¹ John i, 14; Matthew xxvii, 51; Hebrews x, 20.

² Exodus xxv, 10-22; Hebrews ix, x; I. Peter i, 12.

³ Romans iii, 25; I. John ii, 2. ⁴ Romans iii, 20-26.

Indeed, our prayers can only ascend to God as odors of sweet incense, when they go up through him, and with his prayers for us, "who ever liveth to make intercession."

THE COURT. Round about the tabernacle there was a court or open space, inclosed by a curtain of linen, or possibly open work, suspended from sixty pillars, which were placed in sockets and held in place by cords attached to the capitals of the pillars and made secure by tent-pins made of brass, driven into the ground on either side. This court was one hundred cubits by fifty, or one hundred and fifty feet long by seventy-five feet in width.¹ A curtain of superior needlework was suspended from the pillars in front of the court, corresponding with the door to the tabernacle. Within this court was placed: (a) *The altar of burnt offering*—not immediately before the door, but in line with the door; for between this altar and the door was the "brazen laver."² This altar was made of wood, covered with plates of brass, having hooks (called horns) at each corner, probably to denote strength. They were sometimes used for securing victims, previous to sacrificing them.³ It was "to make reconciliation upon"—that is, between God and his offending people. It fittingly sets forth to us the work of our Lord on the cross.⁴

This altar was the central point of service in connection with the tabernacle. More importance is attached to it than to any other. It was "*the altar*" preëminently. No one could pass into the tabernacle except he first passed this altar. It stood guard, as it were, not only over the tabernacle, but especially over the Most Holy Place.⁵ It was the place of transference of the guilt of the people from themselves to their offerings, while the virtue and excellence of the offerings were imputed to them. We turn from this brazen altar to Christ himself, "who is his only altar," and sing with our hymnist:

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine;
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou did'st bear
While hanging on the cursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there.

(b) *The laver of brass.* This was placed between the altar and the tabernacle.⁶ In this laver the priests were to wash their hands and feet before going into the tabernacle—thus denoting the necessity of holiness in worship-

ing, and especially in the service of God. The neglect of this duty was visited with the penalty of death. The spiritual significance of this is further seen, no doubt, in the cleansing work of the Holy Ghost in connection with the sacrificial work of Christ.¹ Not only must we partake of the righteousness of Christ through his voluntary sacrifice for us, but we must be born again and sanctified by the work of the Holy Ghost, before we may either worship or serve God in the tabernacle, much less draw near and commune with him from off the mercy seat.

THE ANOINTING OIL. Having erected the tabernacle, placed its furniture, built the court, and set therein the altar and laver, the next thing in order was to take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that was therein, the altar and all its vessels, the brazen laver, and its foot. All was to be holy unto the Lord, and, therefore, everything was hallowed by the oil. This oil was a peculiar compound.² It was very precious, and very sweet in its perfume; it was made by a recipe handed down from God himself, was forbidden to be compounded or used except for the sole purpose of holy anointing oil for the tabernacle and the priests, and a portion of it was laid up before the ark of the testimony. This undoubtedly sets forth to us, in type, the Holy Spirit and his work. Here we see how the blood of the offerings and the oil for anointing went, as it were, hand in hand, just as in the present dispensation, the work of Christ for atonement and the work of the Holy Ghost for sanctification and endowment with power must go together. Jesus, when he entered upon his public ministry, was anointed by the Holy Ghost, and wrought all his work in that Great Power. "He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows," and God gave him the Spirit "without measure." So, also, are we sharers in this anointing, and without it we are not, and cannot be, his true disciples or servants.³ Thus we see how all things are consecrated by the Spirit of God—not only the priests, but all the instruments of service. We are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and are made to drink into that one Spirit.

LESSONS FROM THE WHOLE. We have seen how the tabernacle was built, from the central Most Holy Place to the curtain hanging over the gate of the court. Let us now return by the way. God has builded and furnished his house, and we may learn how to come into his presence and live. First, we stand at the court

¹Exodus xxvii, 9, 18.

²Exodus xxx, 18.

³Exodus xxvii, 1-8; Leviticus viii, 15.

⁴Colossians i, 20, 22.

⁵Exodus xxix, 37; Matthew xxiii, 19.

⁶Exodus xxx, 18-21.

¹Ephesians v, 23-27; Titus iii, 5, 6.

²Exodus xxx, 23-38.

³Hebrews i, 9; John iii, 34, xx, 22; Acts ii, 4, 38; Romans viii; Ephesians i, 13, ii, 18-22, iii, 5-16, iv, 3, 4, 30, vi, 17.

gate. That is the door by which we must enter. There we are met by a priest, who holds it aside for us. That door and that priest is Christ; by him we may enter in, and without him there is no way to the Father.¹ Next we stand by the brazen altar, and there our offering is made and we are reconciled to God. That Altar and the Offering thereon is Christ, who is Altar, Priest, and Sacrifice to us. Then we pass on to the Brazen Laver: there we are sanctified, "for without holiness no man can see the Lord." That Laver is the Holy Ghost taking the things of Christ, and showing them to us; and "shedding on us abundantly the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost by Jesus Christ." Then we are admitted into the Holy Place, where prayer

and communion are carried on through the priest, in the light of the Golden Candlestick, we eating the shewbread, and burning the incense of prayer upon the golden altar. At last we come to the Holiest of All. Thank God! the veil that hitherto has separated us from the very presence and glory of God has been, once for all, "rent asunder" from the top to the bottom, and we may come "boldly into his presence," "with full assurance of faith," and have "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," and with the blessed Holy Spirit. Under the law it was death to enter that Holy of Holies. Now that the veil is rent asunder and the way into the Holiest of All opened to us, it is death if we do not enter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRIESTHOOD.¹

AT the same time that instructions were given for the building and furnishing of the tabernacle, minute directions were also given for the setting apart, through ordination and consecration, of certain men for the priesthood. The elaborate ritual in connection with the tabernacle would require the services of specially trained and educated men.

The history of the Hebrew priesthood is very interesting. We have seen that in primitive times the priesthood was not confined to any caste or official position. The father was the priest of the family, and this function descended with the birthright. Abraham and Job were both priests in their own families, and so it was and had been among the people who knew God in the pre-Abrahamic days. The contact of the Hebrews with the Egyptian priesthood no doubt greatly influenced them in the acceptance of an order of priests who should minister for them in the holy offices, and mediate for them with God. Joseph was married to a priest's daughter in Egypt, and Moses was educated and trained by the Egyptian priests. That he was perfectly familiar with their dress, clothing and all that appertained to their service, there is no doubt. Possibly in the inauguration of the Hebrew priesthood not a few suggestions were borrowed, as without doubt the same was done in the matter of the construction and furnishing of the tabernacle; but, at the same time, there are such radical differences observed that we are certain that many of the vile and superstitious practices and customs of the Egyptians were protested against—as, for instance, the Hebrew priests were so clothed and so served that their

nakedness should not be apparent to the worshipers who claimed their service.² Many of the rites of the Egyptians in the exposition of their nature worship were very obscene; whereas Moses was careful that the utmost purity and chastity should characterize all that pertained to the worship of God. The fundamental doctrine inculcated in the Hebrew worship was the holiness of God.

The twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Exodus and the eighth chapter of Leviticus contain the main particulars of the call and consecration of the Aaronic priesthood. "And take thou unto thee Aaron, thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."³ Aaron was the high priest, as was subsequently shown, while his four sons were associated with him. The high priesthood descended with the birthright. In the mean time, the sons of the high priest seemed to have exercised all the functions of their father except that of entering into the Holiest of All on the annual day of atonement.

The functions of the priest were essentially those of a mediator between the congregation and God. Very early in the history of religion the sense of sin suggested to worshipers—no doubt the suggestion was a remnant of a primitive revelation—the need of someone to intercede and mediate for them with God. Job did so for his children when he offered sacrifices for them in case they had sinned through carelessness or forgetfulness.⁴ The priest went

¹ John xiv, 6.

² Exodus xxvii-xxix; Leviticus viii. ³ Exodus xx, 26; xxviii, 42. ⁴ Job i, 5.

with the sacrifice to God, on behalf of those for whom he mediated. In the Hebrew ritual, as will be seen when we come to examine the various offerings, the priest was at once the representative of the offerers and their mediator with God. This is particularly seen in connection with the great annual atonement when the priest went into the Holiest of All to appear in the presence of God for the people, and receive for them the forgiveness of their sins.¹ It was the business of the priests, and particularly of the associated priests, to meet the people at the gate of the tabernacle and receive their offerings for sacrifice, hear their confessions, and make their offerings for them. It was also their business to meet the people and transact any business for them where questions of wrong and trespass occurred between man and man. Later on, their functions took on an ethical character. They were the teachers of the people, particularly of the children; in fact, the office of prophet was not altogether disassociated from theirs, especially in the earlier days of the priesthood, before the order of prophets arose.

The ceremonies in connection with their selection, qualification, and consecration, were very minute and circumstantial, all having a symbolical and instructive significance in respect of the Holiness of God, the exceeding sinfulness of men, and the necessity of being made clean from all sin before coming into God's presence. We can only point out some of the more marked characteristics of these ceremonials, leaving the reader to follow up the study in the Bible itself.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus gives us a detailed description of the high priest's robes and his clothing, as also the less complete clothing of the associate priests. There were eight pieces in the dress of the high priest. The breeches of linen to hide his nakedness;² the inner coat, or linen shirt or tunic; the linen girdle; the robe of the ephod; the ephod; the breastplate and shoulder pieces; the bonnet or turban; and the golden mitre. The ephod was the chief article of this clothing. It was woven of gold, blue, purple, and fine-twined linen, the whole beautifully embroidered.³ It was made of two pieces joined at the shoulders, and thus hung down on the back and over the breast of the high priest. This was emphatically the "garment of salvation" to set forth our Lord's perfect righteousness, and the "robe of righteousness," in which his people are clothed "for his sake." On the shoulders where the ephod was joined were fastened two onyx stones, on either of which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes

of Israel; on the front of the ephod there was the beautiful breastplate, composed of four rows of precious stones—three in each row. On each of these stones there was engraved the name of one of the tribes. These were hung by a curious and ingenious device upon the ephod. The shoulder pieces were called, or said to be for, "a memorial of Israel," to be borne on the shoulders of Aaron before the Lord. The breastplate, with its twelve glorious and shining stones, lay upon Aaron's breast and was called the "breastplate of judgment." Nothing could be more symbolically beautiful than the position and meaning of these stones. The high priest represents our Lord Jesus Christ, the true and Only Living High Priest, who always stands in presence of God for us. On his shoulders he bears up his people, even as the government is upon his shoulders.¹ He takes the responsibility of bearing us always before the Lord. He is our strength to bear us up. On his breast, as it were over and in his heart, he carries us always for judgment or justification—a justification which rests upon his love for us, who gave himself a sacrifice for our sins. The preciousness and the ever-shining qualities of these stones, resting upon the shoulders and upon the heart of the high priest, showed to Israel the place God had given them by grace. This is our true standing with God in Christ. Most precious is the saying of Peter that all who believe have a like honor with Christ in God's sight. The nearer and more the light is shed upon precious stones, the more the precious stones shine and glisten. So the nearer we come to God in Christ the more precious are we seen to be and the more beautiful in Christ. It is for us to apprehend all this by faith.² Then there was the *Urim and the Thummim*. "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually."³ Various passages of Scripture teach us that the object and use of the Urim and Thummim was to get the judgment of the Lord upon various matters which affected the details of Israel's walk and life. It was an instrument for the revelation or communication of the will of God to Israel, or to any individual who appealed to it upon any matter upon which they wished divine guidance.⁴ It would seem from this that the high priest not only carried the judgment of the people before the Lord on his heart always, but

¹ Isaiah ix, 6.

² Exodus xxviii, 9-29.

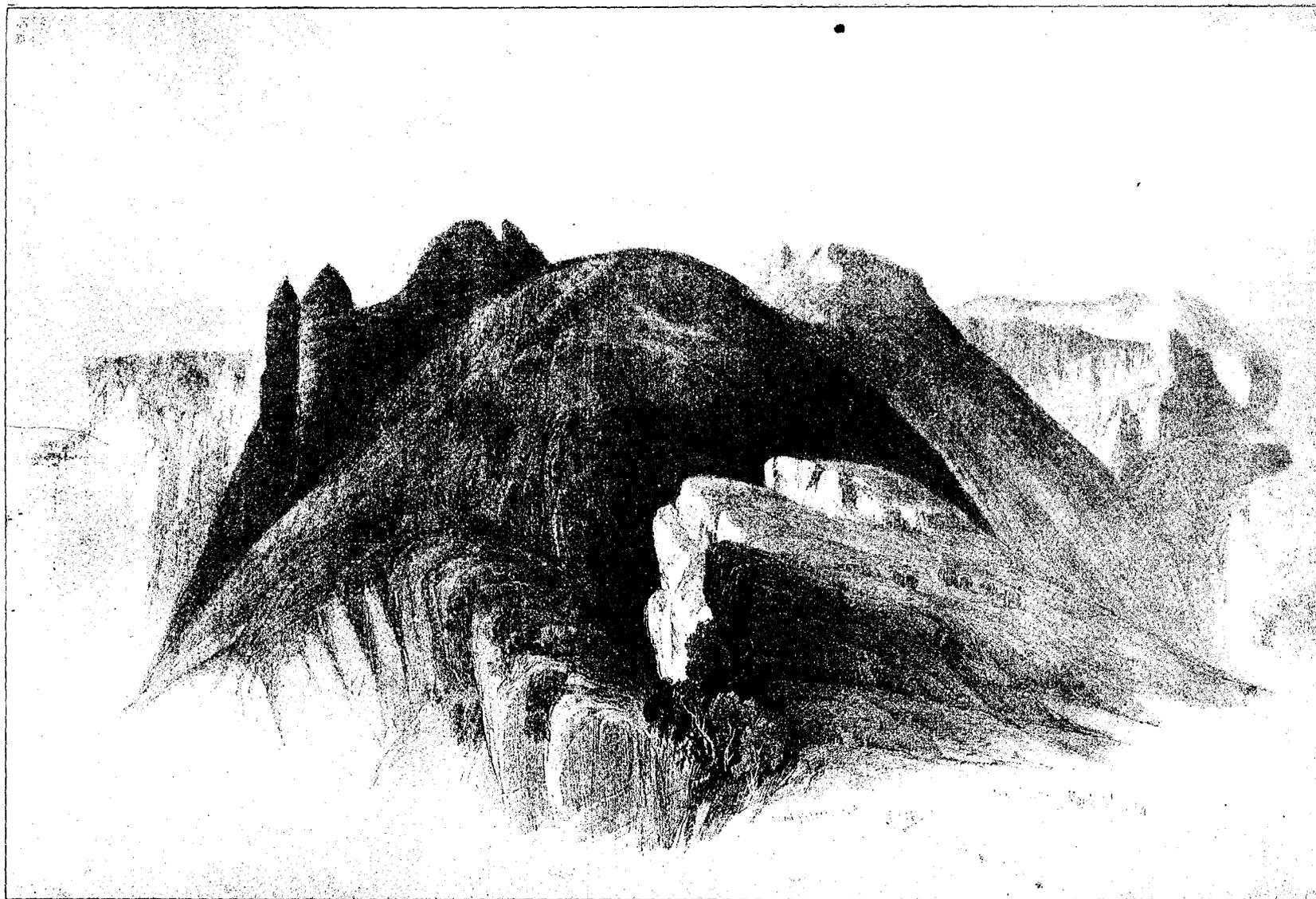
³ Exodus xxviii, 30

⁴ Numbers xxvii, 21; Deuteronomy xxxiii, 8-10; I Samuel xxviii, 6; Ezra ii, 63, etc.

¹ Compare Leviticus xvi with Hebrews ix, x.

² Exodus xxviii, 42.

³ Exodus xxviii, 6.



DAVID ROBERTS.

MOUNT HOR, FROM CLIFFS ENCIRCLING PETRA.

brought the judgment of the Lord from the Lord to the people. Jesus not only justifies us by bearing us in his own righteousness before God, but he reveals the will of God to us in respect of our walk. The Holy Spirit does for us who walk in the spirit what the Urim and Thummim did for Israel of old. Over all this was placed or worn the "the robe of the ephod, all of blue," upon the hem of which were embroidered pomegranates, and between every two pomegranates there was hung a golden bell, which went tinkling as the high priest walked in and out before the Lord.¹ The pomegranates and the bells alternated with each other, and are emblems of testimony and fruit. Even so ought we to walk and live before the Lord, both going out and coming in, bearing in our lives "the fruits of the spirit," and giving forth the testimony of our lips—that is, as Jesus was both seen and heard, so, also, ought we to sound forth his testimony and show forth the fruit of his life and his virtues. Next we have the plate of pure gold placed in the front of the high priest's mitre or turban, on which is engraved "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." "It shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord."² The high priest was always before the Lord, and the people in him were always accepted. He stood for them. So are we always represented and always accepted before the Lord in our Great High Priest.

The clothing of the other priests, Aaron's sons, is set forth in verses 40 to 43—coats, girdles, and bonnets, and breeches of fine linen, all for glory and beauty. The clothing of the ordinary priest was like the clothing of the high priest, who alone had the ephod, and what pertained to that wonderful garment besides. The whole clothing, as I have said, is the garment of selection which sets forth the merit and work of our Lord for us, and which we put on when we put him on by faith.

We pass now to the consideration of the consecration of the priests, recorded in the twenty-ninth chapter of Exodus and the eighth chapter of Leviticus. "And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them to minister unto me in the priest's office."³ Before looking at two or three particulars in connection with the consecration of the priests in this chapter, I may remark that it was necessary that every man, even of the family of Aaron, who ministered in the priest's office should be "without blemish"—that is, a perfect man physically. Since the high priest represents our Lord Jesus Christ and the priests the Church, they must in the first instance stand for perfection, both as regards our Lord,

who was a perfect man in every respect, and the Church which in Christ shares his perfection and is destined actually to be presented finally "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." We are, therefore, told that no one might come nigh to God in the priest's office to offer anything unto God who had any sort of physical blemish, or was in any wise deformed.² This is most interesting and instructive, and certainly points to the essential perfection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Priest of his people, who, in the fullness of time was to take up and fulfill in his own person, once for all, these significant types. For the same reason the priests, though they might marry, could marry only a virgin of Israel; no profane or divorced woman could be the wife of a priest. So strict was the rule of personal and ceremonial purity that if a sister of a priest should be or become unchaste it disqualified the priest.

Having duly examined them as to physical perfection, Moses proceeded to consecrate his brother and his sons, beginning by providing a young bullock and two rams, without blemish; some unleavened bread and cakes tempered with oil, and wafers of wheaten flour, unleavened and anointed with oil. These latter were placed in a basket and brought, with the bullock and the rams, to the door of the tabernacle with the priests. Here the priests were divested of their common clothing or old clothes, and washed with water. Then they were clothed with the special garments provided for them, those for the high priest and those for his sons and associates. The high priest in the meantime, having been clothed, was anointed with oil. This was the sign and mark of his preëminence, even as Christ was anointed with oil above his fellows. Then followed the ceremony of slaying the bullock for a sin offering, touching the horns of the altar with the blood and pouring out the residue at the bottom of the altar and burning the carcass outside the camp.³ The priests, under this law, of course, being men and types of Christ, must need be purged of sin before they could take the place of the Sinless Priest to offer for the sinful people. After the sin offering, there followed the sacrifice of two rams. The one was for a burnt offering, which set forth that the priest was wholly consecrated to God in all his service.⁴ The other ram was slain and offered as "a ram of consecration."⁵ The blood of this ram was taken and a portion of it applied to the right ear, and to the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right

¹ Exodus xxviii, 31-35.

² Exodus xxviii, 36-38.

³ Exodus xxix, 1.

¹ Ephesians v, 25-27.

² Leviticus xxi, 16-23.

³ Exodus xxix, 10-14.

⁴ Exodus xxix, 15-18.

⁵ Exodus xxix, 22.

foot, thus especially consecrating every part of the priest to the service of God. If the ear is consecrated to hear the word of God, the hand to do the will of God in all holy service, and the foot to maintain a holy walk, then, indeed, is the salvation of man come. After this, a portion of the blood, with the anointing oil, was taken and sprinkled alike upon both Aaron and his sons, thus showing their redemption, consecration, and sanctification. The atonement and the Holy Spirit thus being signified in connection with these ceremonies, then followed the offering of the meat offerings and the peace offerings, and instructions for the daily offering of atonement upon the altar, and the daily sacrifice of the two lambs as a continual burnt offering during the year. I have omitted to give very close attention to details here in respect of these offerings in

connection with the consecration of the priests, because later on the whole subject of the offerings will come before us for consideration as they are set forth in the Book of Leviticus, which is the book of redemption.

The consecration of the priests having been accomplished, the Lord graciously concluded his instructions with this great promise: "There I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister unto me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God."¹

CHAPTER VIII.

STRANGE FIRE.

ONE of the most solemn and awful events in connection with the inauguration of the ceremonial worship of the Hebrew people is recorded in Leviticus.¹ After the consecration of himself and his sons, Aaron proceeded to offer upon the altar the burnt offering, the meat offering, the peace offering, and the sin offering, on behalf of the people.² Then, the offerings having been waved before the Lord, Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle and came out again and "blessed the people." Then befell a glorious wonder. "The glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which, when all the people saw they shouted, and fell on their faces."³ The glory of the Lord—what was it? Let it be remembered that the mysterious pillar of cloud which followed the children of Israel always dwelt or hung over the tabernacle, or else stood beside it. At night it became like a lambent flame of fire. This cloud was the sign of God's presence. The glory of the Lord was manifested when this cloud became red and fiery—when it glowed with supernatural fire—as in later times the glory of the Lord answered by the Urim and Thummim. When everything was complete, and the new ceremonial was about to be inaugurated, the cloud took on its fiery glory, which signified the Lord's pleasure with it all. Whilst they were beholding, lo! a flame of fire leaped from that Shekinah glory and fell upon the burnt offering

lying upon the altar and consumed it. That is, the fire which consumed the first burnt offering, offered according to the divinely directed and instituted ceremonial, *was kindled from heaven*. Thenceforth that supernatural fire burned upon the altar; no other fire than that must thereafter be used in the ceremonial worship of God. "Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon," that is, incense kindled with "strange fire," "which the Lord commanded them not."² Now, it seems that some time after the solemn inauguration of worship, Nadab and Abihu, two of the sons of Aaron, "took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not."³ No sooner had they thus disobeyed the Lord and desecrated the holy service by "strange fire," than a flame of supernatural fire burst out from the cloudy pillar and consumed these sacrilegious priests upon the spot. "And there went out fire from before the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake saying, I will be sanctified⁴ in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."⁵ Aaron held his peace before this awful visitation upon his sons, who had presumed to disobey the Lord and approach him with "strange fire"—that is common, natural fire—instead of kindling their censers with the supernatural

¹ Leviticus x, 1-7.

² Leviticus ix.

³ Leviticus ix, 6, 23, 24.

¹ Exodus xxix, 43-46.

² Exodus xxx, 9; Leviticus x, 1, xvi, 12; Numbers xvi, 18, 46.

³ Leviticus x, 1.

⁴ Exodus xix, 22.

⁵ Leviticus x, 2, 3.

fire which the Lord had kindled upon the altar, and which he required should be used in all the worship of the tabernacle. The dead bodies of these two offending priests were carried outside of the camp and buried. Aaron was not permitted so much as to uncover his head or show any sign of mourning, under pain of being himself consumed.

The question naturally arises as to the significance of this supernatural fire, the strange fire, and the awful punishment which befell the two priests. It seems to me that the explanation and profound typical significance are not far to seek, and that there is a very great and important lesson in it for our own day. Let us, therefore, seek the explanation.

1. There are those who maintain that Moses borrowed his ceremonials from Egypt; that the tabernacle, and the priesthood, and the offerings were all patterned after Egyptian models. Without discussing this question here, let it be admitted for the moment that there was a similarity, more or less extensive, in the outward forms used in the ceremonials of Israel and those used by the Egyptian priesthood. For that very reason the Hebrew ceremonial and ritual service was, from the very beginning, distinguished by the addition of a *supernatural element*. That supernatural element was the "fire out from before the Lord," which "consumed upon the altar the fat of the burnt offering." It was this supernatural element in the Hebrew worship which distinguished it, not only from the Egyptian worship but from all other cults of the world. It was the offering of worship (the burning of the censers with the incense before the Lord) with "strange" or natural "fire"—fire of their own, or of human kindling—which constituted the grave offense on the part of Nadab and Abihu. In fact, this offering of "strange fire" was the denial of the whole difference between the natural and the supernatural in the service of God. All men are religious, and religious service of some sort or another is common to all people. God has given to us a supernatural revelation of himself and of his will concerning us, by the Spirit of God, and he requires from us a worship which shall be supernaturally directed and energized by the Holy Spirit. To make the application of this whole matter level to our Christian time, we may say that the whole, or almost the whole, difference between the religion of Christ and all the other religions of the world is this: The Christian religion is a supernatural religion—supernatural in its Scriptures; supernatural in the manifestation of God in Christ—in incarnation; supernatural in the atonement and resurrection; supernatural in the gift of the Holy Spirit; supernatural in the new creation,

or regeneration, of all true believers; and supernatural in that, without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, nothing can be done acceptable with God. The Gospel cannot be effectually preached, except with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; the Christian can neither pray, nor maintain a Christian walk, nor do any acceptable Christian work except he be energized by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, there are those who say it does not matter what you believe or how you serve God, if only you be sincere. The natural reason and the religious energy of the flesh (the strange fire) are just as good, as revelation, as the Holy Spirit (the fire sent from God) with which to perform our worship and service. Nadab and Abihu were the progenitors of a merely carnal worship under divinely revealed forms. They had the form of godliness but not the power. They said to themselves, What difference will it make whether our censers be kindled with fire from off the altar or by natural fire? The incense will burn just as well, and smell just as sweet, and the smoke of it will rise as high, if kindled with natural fire, as if it were burnt with the God-given fire from off the altar. So men say to-day who deny the supernatural in religion. A good work done without the Holy Spirit is just as good as a good work done by the Holy Spirit. That is, the energy of the flesh in religion is just as good as the power of the Spirit. To follow the example of a human Christ is just as good as to believe in and follow a supernatural Christ. Indeed, it is the controversy between rationalism under a hundred forms and revealed religion, which is foreshadowed here in these long-ago times when God would be sanctified in this matter.

2. Fire has always been the sign of God's presence and the symbol of his energy among men. As far back as the time of Cain and Abel this controversy between strict obedience to God and the will worship of man was settled by fire. God commanded a certain kind of sacrifice. Abel obeyed God and brought an offering from the flock. Cain also worshiped the Lord, but he brought a "strange" offering—that is, from the earth, an offering of fruits. Why was it not just as good as Abel's lamb? Did he not offer it to the Lord, and was he not as devout as Abel? What difference did it make whether one offered a lamb or a handful of fruit? God answered by fire and accepted Abel's offering. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."¹ How did the Lord signify his respect or acceptance of Abel's offering? Exactly as he did when he

¹ Genesis iv, 3-5.

sent fire out from before him and kindled the burnt offering before the tabernacle, at the time of the inauguration of the Hebrew ritual. That this burning with fire from heaven was the sign of God's presence and acceptance is so well known to every Bible student that a simple reference to a few cases will suffice. Here are a few fit and sample illustrations of this great truth: "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion; remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice."¹ When Gideon doubted whether the young man who stood by him with a commission from God to deliver Israel was the Angel of the Lord, the test was made by supernatural fire. "And the Angel of God said unto him, Take flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the Angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the Angel of the Lord departed out of his sight."² The same thing happened substantially with Manoah and the angel, in respect to the communication from heaven about the birth of Samson.³ The test by fire in case of the controversy between Elijah and the priests of Baal, as to who was the Lord, is so well known that I need only refer to it. "The God that answereth by fire let him be God."⁴ We know the result of this appeal. God answered by fire, and for the time at least the priests of Baal were overthrown and Israel recovered to their loyalty to Jehovah. The case of David's offering, also, on the threshing floor of Ornan, strongly supports the fact that supernatural fire was the constant test of the presence of God and God's acceptance of man's offering and service. "And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him by fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering."⁵ I mention one other case which confirms the view that supernatural fire from heaven was the one great feature in the ritual of the Hebrews that distinguished and differentiated it from that of any other cult in the world. We have seen God manifesting himself in fire in the Garden of Eden, by the "flaming sword"; in accepting the sacrifice of Abel, by consuming it with fire from heaven; in the Burning Bush, out of which he manifested and declared himself to Moses as the

God of Incarnation and Grace;¹ in kindling the first altar fire in connection with the inauguration of the ritual in Israel; in connection with his appearance as the Angel of the Lord to Gideon and Manoah; in the conflict between Elijah and the priests of Baal; in connection with David's celebrated offering on the threshing floor of Ornan; and now, at last, we come to the dedication of the great and glorious Temple of Solomon, which took the place in Israel of the tabernacle, after her national life was fixed and consolidated. When Solomon had finished his dedicatory prayer and offered the house and all its furniture and appointments to Jehovah, and besought his continued mercy upon Israel, Jehovah gave him answer by fire from heaven. "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house."²

That this supernatural fire refers symbolically to the supernatural element in Christianity—namely, the Holy Spirit—there seems not the least doubt. In Malachi's prophecy it was declared that the Messiah should come as a refiner's fire.³ When John the Baptist proclaimed the appearance of Jesus he declared that he would baptize the people with the Holy Ghost and with *fire*. We know that on the day of Pentecost the apostles and believers gathered in that upper room were all so baptized with the Holy Ghost, his invisible presence being testified by the appearance of tongues of *fire*. Fire is the especial symbol of energy and enthusiasm. It is with this divine energy that God has accomplished his great work of redemption. By it (the Holy Spirit) Christ was incarnated, offered himself up a sacrifice for our sins and was raised again from the dead. He now carries on his work from heaven with the same energy or power with which he did his mighty works while on earth. By it he regenerates and sanctifies his people; by it he breathes power upon and into his people, enabling them to preach the Gospel and finish his work upon the earth. By it Christians are enabled to pray, to walk and to work for God; and without this heavenly fire, the Holy Ghost, it is all in vain that we seek to worship him.

The symbolism of "strange fire" is, of course, what we have already hinted at—the denial of the supernatural, the quenching of the Holy Spirit, and the substitution of natural energy in the worship and work of God for the supernatural Spirit. It was for this that Nadab and Abihu were so summarily punished; it is for the same offense under the wide and blessed dispensation of the spirit that death comes so

¹ Psalm xx, 1-3. Literally, see margin: "turn to ashes" or burn up the fat of thy burnt offering.

² Judges vi, 20, 21.

³ Judges xiii, 18-21.

⁴ I. Kings xviii, 24.

⁵ I. Chronicles xxi, 26.

¹ Exodus iii.

² II. Chronicles vii, 1.

³ Malachi iii, 1, 2.

often and so terribly to our churches. It is true, that God does not now consume men who deny the supernatural and substitute natural energy for the Spirit's power, as he did those offending, disobedient, and presumptuous priests at the beginning, but he does leave them dead while they seem to live. Hence, we have dead men in the pulpit, dead teachers before their Sunday classes; dead office-bearers in the church; dead worshippers in the pews; dead works everywhere, because the Holy Spirit is ignored and religion is attempted in the energy of the flesh alone.

The terrible severity of the punishment which fell upon Nadab and Abihu may to some seem harsh and unmerciful. But not so. God was inaugurating a system of worship which was to lead that whole people up to life, and was at the same time pointing out the way in which he would save the world. It was absolutely necessary that at the very outset the people should be impressed with the great fact that they were dealing with God and not man; that obedience to God was the very first thing to be observed; and, therefore, that any contempt of his ordinances or disobedience to his commands would mean death. God has mercifully placed such beacon lights at the threshold of and all along every new and forward development of revelation and redemption. Thus, he caused Achan and his household to be slain for their covetous theft of the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment from the spoils of Jericho, which had been solemnly consecrated to God.¹ Thus he smote down those presumptuous people who would pry into the Ark, and Uzzah who put forth his hands to steady it, which he had commanded them not to do.² Thus he smote King Uzziah, whose heart "was strong and lifted up," and who transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple to burn incense before the Lord, and thus presumptuously sought to usurp the office of the priest. "Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to

burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar." Thus the Lord smote him with a foul leprosy for his disobedience and sacrilege, "and Uzziah the king was a leper until the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord."¹ How King Saul lost his kingdom through deliberate disobedience, and how Ananias and Sapphira were cut down in an instant, because of their covetous practice and for lying to the Holy Ghost, is also well known to the reader. Thus God teaches by this great and terrible severity that he is a Holy God and will be sanctified by the people and before the people, not out of any tyrannical whim, as do some earthly monarchs, but because the salvation of the people depends upon their obedience to the law of righteousness. It is so under the Gospel as it was under the Law. If men died without mercy under Moses' law at the mouth of two or three witnesses, how much sorer shall be the punishment of those under the Gospel who trample under foot the Son of God, count the blood of the covenant wherewith they are sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite to the Holy Ghost!² Truly it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for he "is a consuming fire" wherever sin and disobedience are persisted in. From all this severity we learn that it is a dangerous thing, in the service of God, to go contrary to his express commands. We have to do with a God who is used to prescribe his own worship—not arbitrarily, but in love, grace, and wisdom—just to require what he has prescribed, and powerful to avenge what he has not prescribed. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell [through disobedience and unbelief], severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off."³

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAW OF OFFERINGS.

THE Book of Leviticus is divided into four parts. Part First, chapters i-vii, is devoted to the law of offerings, or sacrifices as we often call them; Part Second, chapters viii-x, to the institution of the priesthood; Part Third, chapters xi-xxii, to moral and ceremonial uncleanness, its removal and punishment; Part Fourth, chapters xxiii-xxvii, to the

institution of solemn feasts, and various other laws, exhortations, and promises. For the present we have to do with the first part, which relates to the principal and great offerings ordained by God for the worship and sanctification of the people. Having caused the tabernacle to be built, in which he took up his dwelling amongst the people, and made all

¹ Joshua vii, 16-26.

² I. Samuel vi, 19, 20; II. Samuel vi, 7.

¹ II. Chronicles xxvi, 16-21.

² Hebrews xii, 25-29.

³ Romans xi, 22.

ceremonial provisions for a proper and intelligent approach to him in solemn worship, obviously the next thing to be done was to institute by ordination the sacrifices or offerings which were to be made. Hitherto a single offering had been made, namely, an offering of blood or life, which was for sin rather than for worship; but now the time had come when the offerings should be clearly defined as to their significance and object.

1. Looking at the offerings as a whole we perceive that there are five: the Burnt Offering, the Meat Offering, and the Peace Offering; the Sin Offering and the Trespass Offering. These belong really to two groups. The first three are "offerings of a sweet smell," and were offered on the brazen altar within the court of the tabernacle, and, as we shall presently see, had in them no suggestion of sin. In this particular they differed from the Sin and Trespass Offerings, which were burned outside the camp, and were not offerings of a sweet smell. Different words are used to designate the burning of either class of offerings. The one used in case of the "offerings of a sweet smell" indicates acceptance, the other indicates wrath. The meaning of this will become apparent as we examine them in their order.

2. The next thing to be observed is, that these five offerings, taken together, represent the entire ministry of Christ for us, in his great work of redemption. The Israelites probably saw this dimly, and only the most spiritual of them discerned even so much. But we need only to read the Epistle to the Hebrews to understand clearly the typical and symbolical meaning of these offerings. The tenth chapter of Hebrews undoubtedly had these five offerings in view, speaking of them as a whole. They were the "shadows of good things to come and not the very substance." Christ is the true substance of these shadows which were cast before him as he approached, in time, the earth and the place of man's sin, moving forth "from the bosom of the Father."

3. The five offerings, taken separately, represent various aspects of the work of Christ. No one offering or sacrifice could possibly do that. Therefore, there are here represented five phases of his work. (a) In the burnt offering we shall see an offering without sin, given or offered to God. In this offering man had no part. It was offered wholly to God. This sets forth the truth, that God requires of a man a whole and complete obedience or offering up of himself. In fact, this offering presents to us Christ entirely meeting and satisfying the first table of the Law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." The meat offering differed from the burnt offering in that, while it was also offered unto the Lord, it was only partly consumed and the rest was eaten by the priests. The substance of this offering was altogether different. In the burnt offering a life was offered; in the meat offering food was offered—flour, frankincense, green ears of corn, and oil. This was, in fact, an offering made to God for man's sake. In other words, it was that phase of our Lord's work in which he perfectly met the requirements of the second table of the Law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The peace offering sets forth the idea of perfect reconciliation and fellowship between God and man. A part was offered to God; the rest was eaten by the priests and the offerer. Coming to the sin and trespass offerings, we see an entirely different aspect of Christ's work. Here we deal with sin. The first, the sin offering, recognizes the sinfulness of our nature, while the second, the trespass offering, represents the sins or transgressions of the life. Both natural and actual sins had to be atoned for, and they were so atoned for by the offerings of the proper victims "outside the camp" while the blood was sprinkled before the Lord and poured out at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering. I append the following diagram in order that the reader may more clearly understand these various offerings:

NAMES.	SACRIFICE OFFERED.	DISPOSITION OF.	TYPICAL TEACHINGS.
Burnt Offering.	Bullock, sheep, goat, dove or pigeon.	Wholly consumed.	Entire surrender to God. Fulfillment of First Table. Fulfillment of the Law.
Meat Offering.	Flour, oil, frankincense.	Part only consumed; the rest eaten by priests.	Pure and holy walk amongst men. The fulfillment of the Second Table of the Law.
Peace Offering	Sheep, lamb, goat.	Fat only consumed; the rest eaten by offerer and priest.	Peace. Reconciliation, Fellowship.
Sin Offering.	Bullock, goat, lamb, turtle-doves, flour.	Fat consumed; rest burned outside the camp.	Perfect sacrifice for sin. No condemnation to the offerer.
Trespass Offering.	Ram, money, compensation.	Fat consumed; rest of ram eaten by the priests.	Restitution and confession of sin.

4. The next thing to be noted is the order in which these offerings are set forth. If we contemplate Christ coming forth from the tabernacle to us, we see him first in the burnt offering, fulfilling man's perfect duty to God. Then we see him in the next offering perfectly fulfilling man's duty to man. Then, in the peace offering we see how these two offerings have made the basis of a perfect fellowship between God and man. Next we see him in the sin offering, putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. In the trespass offering we see him the constant Advocate with the Father, by reason of his atoning sacrifice for our transgressions. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." On the other hand, if we consider the offerings as the way of our approach to God, we start from outside the camp, first confessing our sins, then our sin (the sinfulness of our nature)—this brings us into peace with both God and man (the peace offering); then at the meat offering we take up and discharge our duties to our neighbor, and the consummation of our life is in the burnt offering where we present our "bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is" our "reasonable service."

5. Finally, for general consideration, we must keep in mind that the sacrifice or offering, the offerer, and the priest, are all types of Christ. He is the offering, he is the offerer, and he is the priest—that is, he is all these to us. We accept him as our representative and substitute. What can we offer but himself? who can offer for us but himself? and how can we come except in him? Thus is "Christ all and in all." There are many details which we must omit and be content with an outline study.

THE BURNT OFFERING. For the details of this great offering reference is made to Leviticus, chapter i. It is both interesting and singularly comforting to notice the place from which the Lord gave these special directions to Moses. "The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation." Hitherto all God's commands had been spoken from the Mount of Sinai: the place of fire, and blackness, and tempest, and cloud. But now how different the circumstances! "From the fiery mount went the fiery law," but here, from the tabernacle, we hear the Lord speaking, not of law, but of grace. Here he had taken up his abode and dwelt among "a stiff-necked people," only to recover them from sin by atonement, and not to destroy them under law. It is true that God is just as holy in the tabernacle as he was on the mount. But there his holiness was manifested only in connection with the holy law; while here, though relaxing his holiness not a whit,

he manifests it in connection "with the perfect grace which characterizes the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, our Lord." It is one thing to hear God speaking to us from the mount in the midst of a fire that consumes, and quite another to hear him speak to us from a tabernacle surrounded with all the provisions of grace and the means of putting away sin—in fact, from a mercy seat upon which the blood of acceptable sacrifice has been sprinkled. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." God speaking from the tabernacle to the children of Israel was the same to them as when, in these last days, God has spoken to us by his Son. There they "beheld him full of grace and truth," even as we do in the face of Jesus Christ.¹

It is necessary to remember that this offering refers, in the first place, to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is seen in it as offerer, sacrifice, and priest for us. That is, we identify ourselves with him by offering or laying our hands upon him, claiming him as ours, and standing with him as he stands for us.

The Offering. "Let him offer a male without blemish." This was the first consideration in all the offerings. Viewed in respect to our Lord Jesus, it points out to us that, before he could make an offering acceptable to God, he must be without sin. "He was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners"—"a lamb without spot or blemish." There was no fault found in him by God, and no fault found in him by men, though they found fault with him. Satan himself came searching him, and trying him with "all manner of temptations," but "found nothing in him" upon which he might lay any "accusation" against him, or on account of which he could impeach his holiness and righteousness before God. He "always pleased the Father." There are several interesting particulars noted in the second section of the text, where the work of the priest is described in making the offering. (a) "And they shall flay thy burnt offering"—that is, take the skin off. This act revealed the perfect health and absolute spotlessness of the offering, within as well as without. Our Lord was not only perfect in his outward life, but there was no imperfection hidden in him. (b) "And they shall cut it in pieces." Here its perfections are seen in every part. Not only was it without blemish as a whole, but taken piece by piece there was no fault in it. Each several act of Christ was as perfect as the sum of his whole life. There were no "buts" or "ifs" about him. As the bullock was perfect in its head, perfect in its legs, perfect in the inwards and fat of its whole being, so was Christ in thought, in walk, and in

¹John 1, 14.

the secret energy of his being. (c) "His inwards and his legs shall they wash with water." This was a further search after blemishes. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts." There is more difficulty in discovering sin in the inward parts of a man than in his outward parts—that is, it is more difficult to detect motive than it is to discover action. Therefore, were the inward parts and the legs washed with water. This action also rendered the offering ceremonially clean (as it was actually clean). When the leper was cleansed, he was washed to declare him clean. So this offering, having been searched in every part, was thus declared to be perfectly clean, and without the taint of evil about it. (d) It was a voluntary act. There was no compulsion on the part of the offerer to make this offering. This is fundamental in considering the sacrifice of Christ for us. "He gave himself," and "through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God."¹ No man took his life from him. "I have power to lay it [his life] down, and I have power to take it again."² It was his delight, in the matter of redeeming sinners, to do the will of God.³ The voluntary act of Christ in giving himself up to God for the salvation of sinners constitutes no small part of the value of the sacrifice—indeed, it was essential to any value at all. What a glorious sight it is to the believer to stand at the foot of the cross, and behold Christ, not as a sin offering, but only accomplishing the will of God, and delighting to do so, rendering to him a voluntary obedience even unto the death, because as man he owed that to God, withholding no part of his being from him! What a contrast this to the first Adam, and to all men since then! In this voluntary act of Christ, he tells out to God his own deep love to him, apart entirely from the chief end of his mission. There was a profound and unbroken communion between Jesus and the Father in all the work he did. When our salvation is completed, and worked out in us, it will be so, also, with us. All duty will be lost in love, and all service will be the highest pleasure.

The Offering in Respect to God. It was a whole burnt offering. In this offering everything was given to God. The priest who offered it had no lot nor part in it, as far as their usual portion was concerned. Here we see Christ fulfilling the first table of the decalogue: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." And here all was given to God—the head, the legs, the inwards, and the fat, or, as has been suggested, the mind, the walk, the heart and the energy of them all. It was to this offering that the apostle alluded when he

exhorted the Romans, "by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "It was an offering made by fire of a sweet savor unto the Lord." I have already pointed this out as peculiar to the first three offerings. This offering lay upon that brazen altar (as incense lay upon the golden altar) inside the tabernacle, and was received as incense with a sweet smell by God. He was pleased and delighted with it. There is no expiation of sin here; only perfect obedience on the part of the offerer. And shall we not gladly delight in the work of Christ in this respect? Shall we only consider his work from our own selfish point of view, and love him only because he puts away our sin? He is the holy and perfectly obedient Son before he becomes our "servant" in redemption. Is there not in him, in this respect, that which calls out our highest adoration and strongest affections, as well as when we view him as our sin offering, burning under the wrath of God's holy justice—a being dealt with as the sinner's substitute? Here he is, the sinner's model and pattern, the firstborn among the many brethren whom he will finally bring to glory as whole and complete as himself. Our Lord begins his work on the cross as a whole burnt offering—an offering of a sweet smell; he ends it as sin and trespass offering. We first apprehend Christ as trespass offering; then as sin offering; then, as we go farther on with him, we apprehend him as our peace offering; then as our meat offering, and, finally, we know him as our whole burnt offering. As we thus go on, growing "in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," we may hope some day to stand before God ourselves, purged of all sin, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," whole burnt offerings ourselves, offerings of sweet smell to God.

The Offering in Respect to the Offerer. We have seen that this offering was made wholly to God, as an expression of perfect love and perfect obedience, keeping back no part and giving even the very life, in the blood that was sprinkled on the altar. We have now to notice two particulars in which the offerer himself is said to be benefited by his offering. (a) "And it shall be accepted for him." This is not to be understood in a vicarious sense. The meaning here is that his offering shall be accepted. Now, since there is no offering for or acknowledgment of sin in this offering, but only an offering of "a sweet savor unto the Lord," the question arises: Can any man come into the presence of God and offer himself wholly to him, and be accepted? Certainly this cannot be true of any man of Adam's sinful race; but it was true of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom

¹ Galatians ii, 20; Hebrews ix, 14.

² John x, 18. ³ Hebrews x, 7.

the Father twice said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He lived out his perfect life, and at last came before his Father and offered himself, longing to be accepted; and he was accepted. Concerning ourselves, our hope is that we may be and are "accepted in the beloved" now, and shall be, by and by, presented to the Father "without spot or wrinkle," and "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." We may well bless God that Jesus was able, in the likeness of our sinful flesh, to make a perfect and acceptable offering to God of himself, even after his fearful trials under the law and under the stress of Satan's power. This is the first part of our completed redemption. His acceptance with God as a perfect man sets him, the man Christ Jesus, on high, and enables us to see the possibility—nay, the absolute certainty—of our final place with him in the glory. (b) "And it shall be to make atonement for him." This expression naturally leads the superficial reader to doubt what I have previously said, that in this offering there is no suggestion of sin, either in the acknowledgment of sin, or in expiation of it. A closer study of it, however, establishes, rather than undermines, the view I have taken. Granting that the word atonement in the Old Testament always carries with it the idea of making satisfaction, we still have no difficulty. God may be satisfied in two ways—that is, there is in God's sight more than one matter about which to be satisfied. His loving and holy requirements under the law may be satisfied, or his offended justice may be satisfied. In the burnt offering we see the former satisfaction rendered to God, and this is testified by the savor of the sweet smell. Jesus, in offering himself to God without spot or blemish in character or act, perfectly satisfied, or atoned, the loving requirements of God from man under the law. This he did before rendering that other satisfaction or atonement for our sin and transgression, when he offered himself alike as sin and trespass offering. Thus we may read the clause. This offering was accepted in order that he might make the other atonement of satisfaction. This brings out a line of truth which is most precious to all believers who have desired to look into the glorious mystery of our redemption.

Such is the teaching of the burnt offering in its principal features. How gladly do we come to Jesus Christ and recognize in him the Voluntary Man who came to our world and to our race to make, on our behalf, perfect satisfaction to God in respect of our obedience.

THE MEAT OFFERING. For the account of the institution of the Meat Offering the reader is referred to the second chapter of Leviticus.

I have endeavored to set forth some of the main features of the burnt offering—enough to put the reader in possession of its chief typical significance. The space at my disposal does not allow a full exposition of these interesting and important ceremonial offerings, but, even briefly as I shall have to discuss the balance of them, no doubt sufficient can be said to set the meaning of each clearly before the reader, and, I trust, to induce him to pursue the subject farther for himself. The variety in the victims and material offered I do not discuss, as these are not material to the chief teaching contained in the various offerings. Before entering upon the details of the meat offering, it may be well to call attention again to the fact that all these offerings represent and typify the work of our Lord Jesus Christ for us, and in each feature—that is, alike as offering, offerer, and priest—we are first of all to see him. It is as we appropriate him, that we are united to him in all that he does. In the burnt offering we see him fulfilling the requirements of the first table of the Law—that is, loving God with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and making that love manifest in the entire surrender of himself to God in perfect obedience. In the meat offering we shall see him perfectly fulfilling the second table of the Law—that is, loving his neighbor as himself, and rendering to him a perfect love and service.

1. *The material used in this offering* is not life as we see in the burnt offering, but the fruit of the ground—flour, oil, and frankincense. These are the food of man. We may, therefore, expect to see man having some portion—even the chief portion—of this offering. "And the remnant of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'." Our Lord had to fulfill the whole law in its righteous requirements before he could enter upon his redemptive or atoning work as the sin bearer. That is, he must offer to God a perfect life, wholly surrendered in obedience; then he must, as man also, give to his fellow man a perfect brotherly service. When God created man he gave for his meat, "every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of the tree yielding seed."¹ This, then, is man's portion, the "meat offering." At the same time God has forbidden man to eat blood, for that "the life is in the blood," and God's portion in the creation is the life. When our Lord was on earth going about doing good, healing and blessing all who had need of him, he was offering to God on our behalf the meat offering. Had Christ only offered to God a perfect obedience he would have satisfied God apart from man; but this

¹Genesis i, 29.

would not have sufficed, for God has identified himself with man and so man must have his portion. God will not accept his own portion without also seeing that man, his creature, has his. On the other hand, had Christ only given himself up to the service of man and made no offering to God, this would have been to rob and dishonor God. So it was that the burnt offering and the meat offering were always offered together.¹ The meat offering was the complement of the burnt offering; they belonged to each other. No service offered to God which does not include good will to man is acceptable with him; on the other hand, no devotion to man which ignores God is acceptable. Cornelius the centurion seemed to have a true conception of that which was fitting in the service of God. His "prayers" and "his alms went up for a memorial before God." Thus he offered in spirit both the burnt and the meat offering and they are called a memorial, the very word that is used in connection with these offerings. "And the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar."

2. In the various substances used in this offering we note, first, the flour, which is the proper food for man. The flour also sets forth to us how Christ is our true bread; the grinding of the corn, in order to its proper use as food for man, points to the breaking of Christ's body, while the baking of the flour with fire points to his sufferings for us. He has given to us his broken body for bread. The oil suggests the Holy Spirit with which our Lord was anointed, and in the power of which he lived his life among men and wrought all his mighty works. The frankincense, that most perfect of all perfumes, indicates how sweet the whole service rendered by our Lord was to God. It is noticed that the frankincense was burnt with the memorial on the altar and did not pass to Aaron and his sons. The frankincense made the odor of the sweet smell. No leaven or honey was permitted in any meat offering, as the one was the type of sin and the other of things sweet, indeed, but liable to ferment and turn sour. On the other hand, every meat offering was to be mingled with salt.² Salt, as we know, was the symbol of grace, and of that which preserves and keeps. Therefore, we are exhorted to season our conversation with salt.³ Thus we see how perfect was our Lord's offering. The flour was fine, the oil was of the best, the frankincense of the sweetest, no leaven or honey in it, and the whole seasoned with salt.

3. We note in the second place that the meat offering was one of the "sweet savor offerings" made to the Lord. That is to say, there was no suggestion of sin or the putting away of sin

in it. It simply represented Christ perfectly fulfilling man's duty to man.

4. *This Offering was not Wholly Burnt.* A part was offered to the Lord by fire, but the greater portion of it was consumed by Aaron and his sons. The symbolism is simply this: in our relations to man we also have relations with God. The difference between philanthropy and Christian charity is this, that philanthropy simply recognizes man's need and our obligation. God is excluded. But Christian charity teaches that no perfect good can be done to man that is not first offered to God. We love our brother, and seek to serve him, because of the love which God hath to us, and we offer our service to him on the altar of our devotion to our God. In the much-vaunted religion of the Buddhist we behold service to man but no recognition of God—no offering to him in our offering to man. Any separation of duty to God and to man is fatal to both services. They stand and fall together.

5. *The Meat Offering was Eaten by the Priest and His Sons.* No doubt these represent both the servants and the sons of God, who both worship and serve him. To them Christ our Lord is meat, indeed, and we in our measure are also to be meat to each other. We are, therefore, exhorted, as we have "opportunity," to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." With these very brief remarks we must leave the meat offering and pass on to the consideration of the peace offering, the third in the series of "offerings of a sweet smell."

THE PEACE OFFERING. This, as already remarked, was "a sweet savor" offering like the burnt and meat offering, and so with them stands in contrast with the sin and trespass offerings. The point of most importance, however, in this offering is that God, the priests, and the offerer all had a part. God had his portion;¹ the offerer had his portion;² and the priest and his sons had their portion.³ If our Lord is seen in the high priest, and the priest's sons stand for the Church—and that is our title as believers—then we see a perfect communion between all the parties concerned in the offering. In the former offering there was no participation on the part of the offerer in so far as eating a portion of the offerings was concerned. In the burnt offering God had the whole. In the meat offering God had his portion and the high priest and his sons had the rest. But in this offering we see God, the high priest and his sons, and the offerer each having a portion. When our Lord satisfied God with respect to the first table of the Law, and then satisfied man (through God) with

¹ Numbers xxviii, 12, 13, xxx, 3, 4.

² Leviticus ii, 11-13.

³ Colossians iv, 6.

¹ Leviticus iii, 5.

² Leviticus vii, 16.

³ Leviticus vii, 31, 32.

respect to the second table of the Law, we are not surprised to find a third offering in which Christ is represented as bringing about perfect communion between God, himself (the high priest), and the man on whose behalf the offerings are all made.

Taken together, the three offerings "of a sweet smell" show us a perfect reconciliation or rather union between God and man, brought about by the work of our Lord Jesus Christ — man communing with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who, as our High Priest, has offered up to God for us his own body, with all its wealth of life. This is a much higher truth to apprehend than that which is shown in the sin and trespass offerings. There we find man reconciled to God on the ground of the remission of sins. But here we find man rejoicing, not simply in the remission of sins and the avoiding of the consequences of sin, but rejoicing in God and in Christ. Here there is no question of sin, but just communion. When we learn how to ground our communion with God on himself alone, and not on the mere deliverance from wrath, we shall reach a much higher spiritual life. The sin and trespass offerings are absolutely acceptable, and to know Christ in these relations is most precious; but after passing these we should come to the three offerings of a sweet smell in order to come into the sphere of perfect spiritual communion. Our religious experience is found in the apprehension of God in Christ, and in all the high and blessed offices he fulfills for us. This I cannot emphasize too strongly, inasmuch as so many Christians are seeking spiritual experiences in some kind of effort to arouse their emotions, whereas experience depends entirely upon our right apprehension of Christ, and our position in him, and so of our proper relation to God and man.

THE SIN AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS. For information concerning this group of offerings the reader is referred to Leviticus, chapters iv-vi. We must treat of these two offerings very briefly. As the first three offerings formed the group of sweet savor offerings, so these two stand by themselves and are offerings without a sweet savor. The first three had no suggestion of sin in connection with them and, therefore, the offerer and his offerings were for acceptance; whereas, in both these offerings we find sin, confessed, judged, expiated, and pardoned. The further details will be pointed out as far as the main features are concerned.

Let us go back to the Law for a moment, in order to show the connection between these offerings and that great revelation of God's righteousness. The first table of the Law required perfect obedience to God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and

with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The second table of the Law, summed up in the words of our Savior, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is no less a part of our obedience to God, for God is the protector and defender of all men, and he exacts and demands that every man shall be true to all his human as to his divine relations and obligations. To refuse what is meet and due from us to each other is to refuse what is due from us to God on man's behalf. So great and good is God in his Creator-Fatherhood to all men, however untrue and disobedient they may be to him. Every man is God's man and, therefore, every sin or trespass of one man against another is a sin and trespass against God. It was this truth, deeply impressed by conviction on the heart and conscience of David, that led him, in confessing his sin against the Hittite, to cry out to God: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."¹ To show, therefore, the double obligation which every Israelite owed to Jehovah under the law of perfect righteousness, the burnt offering and the meat offering were instituted. These offerings were made on the brazen altar at the door of the tabernacle and were "for his acceptance" — that is, to show that his offering, and, therefore, himself, was accepted of God. It was, therefore, "an offering of a sweet savor unto the Lord." In addition, he brought his meat offering, which showed his obligation to his fellow man, and offered it likewise through the priest on the brazen altar. It was accepted as an offering of a sweet smell. The result of these two offerings is set forth in the third, the peace offering, in which is shown (God having had his perfect portion in the burnt offering and man his perfect portion in the meat offering) how, where the whole law is fulfilled, both Godward and manward, there is perfect communion and peace. The peace offering, therefore, complements and completes the symbolism of the two former offerings.

We come now to offerings totally different in their character as to method, place, and intent. If the burnt and meat offerings represented the actual facts in the case of man, as they did in the case of Jesus the Antitype of these offerings — that is, if man were perfect in respect of the requirements of both tables of the Law — then there would have been no need of sin and trespass offerings, for there would have been no sin and no trespass. But since man has sinned and failed, both in obedience to God and in his righteous obligation to his fellow man, there must be some way in which he can come to God in peace, else he must forever be

¹ Psalm li, 4.

excluded from all communion with God and forever bear the curse and wrath of the broken Law. In these two offerings, as in the former three, we see Jesus offering himself in man's stead, here not as a sacrifice for acceptance, "a sacrifice of sweet smell," but, outside the camp, for expiation of sin.

1. *The Sin Offering.* We notice in the first place (a) that the sin offered for in this offering is what is called the sin of ignorance, the sin that lies deeper than the human conscience. This is the sin of the nature, that inherent sin of which we are ignorant as a personal act, but which God sees and knows and which is pointed out to us by the Law, and, indeed, may only be thus known. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." It is the sin of the heart out of which proceeds evil thoughts, etc. We constantly hear men saying that they are not responsible for, or conscious of, what is sometimes called Adam's sin or the natural depravity of the nature. But God sees that and has pointed it out to us, and as we get on in the knowledge of God and of self, this sinfulness of nature is oftentimes a deeper grief than that of mere transgression. When David's great sin was brought home to his conscience by the reproof of Nathan the prophet, and he came to confession, he perceived that his transgression in the matter of the Hittite was an ultimate consequence of a sinful nature out of which came his wicked transgression. Therefore, he confesses before God that sin: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."¹ This is, also, what the lament of Jeremiah meant when he said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins."² Of the same John speaks when he says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This is in contrast to the next verse but one where he says: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."³ This is a distinction everywhere maintained in the Scripture. It is, therefore, for "sin" that Christ, the true Sin Offering, first makes provision. When he was first introduced to the world by the Baptist, it was in these words: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"⁴ — not our sins. It is necessary to keep this distinction in mind in order to understand these offerings and rightly to appreciate the perfect work of Christ of which they are the types. (b) It will be noticed that this sin offering was to be made alike for the priest, for the congregation, for the rulers, and for the common people, and for each man severally; show-

ing that, without regard to any known or conscious transgression, all men were sinners, even though they were ignorant of it when tried by the law of conscience. (c) The offering in this case for the priest and the congregation was a young bullock; for a ruler it was a kid of the goats, a male without blemish; for one of the common people it must be a female of either of the goats or of the flock; or, if any were too poor to offer a kid of the goats or of the flock, a turtledove or a handful of fine flour. The living sacrifices were slain and their blood sprinkled before the Lord.

Even when the offering was of flour, the very fact of its being flour shows that it involved suffering or death by means of the grinding. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." (d) In making this offering the priest, either for himself, for the congregation, or for the individual, ruler, or common man, caused the offerer to place his hands on the head of the victim and there by implication confess and transfer his sin to his "sin offering" or "sin bearer," which was to be slain for him. (e) This offering was slain but was not burnt upon the brazen altar where the sweet savor offerings were presented, but the carcass was carried "without the camp where the ashes were poured out and burnt with fire on a clean spot of earth." In this we see clearly, in the light of the inspired commentary, what was meant. "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."¹ This passage settles the ultimate meaning of the sin offering. (f) The blood of the victim was carried by the high priest and sprinkled before the Lord — that is, seven times before the veil which covered the Holy of Holies. Though the offering was burned outside the camp to show God's detestation of sin, the blood was offered to God as an atonement for it. (g) That the offering in any case was to be without blemish is the setting forth of the deep and precious truth always preserved in these ceremonies, that when Christ the true Offerer and Offering came he would be a sinless sacrifice, though made to "be sin for us." Had there been so much as a single sinful word or thought in Jesus, he never could have become the sin offering for his people. And yet how solemn it is that, when he went forth outside the camp, his offering sinless, and well beloved as he was, he was not received as one of a sweet smell! On the contrary, as the sin offering of old was cast out as something to be

¹ Psalm li, 5.

² Jeremiah xvii, 9, 10.

³ I. John i, 8, 10.

⁴ John i, 29.

¹ Hebrews xiii, 11, 12.

loathed, and hated, and burned on the ground, so was he. Deserted by friends, surrounded by enemies who heaped every reproach upon him, he was even forsaken by God; hence that bitter and awful cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The answer is: "Because thou art made sin for the people, and as such must bear their shame and reproach as their penalties, as well as feel the abhorrence of God, who hates sin with a perfect hatred and cannot look upon it." (b) In this offering there is no acceptance with God by a sweet smell; there is no meting out of neighborly obligations to man; there is no sweet communion and feeding together as in the peace offering; for here sin was being dealt with. (z) The last thing to be noticed in this offering is that all the inward fat was taken away with the kidneys and offered or burnt on the altar of the burnt offering. This may be taken to indicate that the energy, health, and vigor of the whole were offered to God. That is, though the body of the sin offering was burnt without the camp, the person of the sacrifice in himself was accepted of God. Jesus Christ as the sin offering for his people, was cast out, but he himself was always beloved and accepted of God; and, indeed, the great sacrifice which he made for atonement was offered to God, else it would not have availed for us.

2. *The Trespass Offering.* We need not say much about this offering, not because it is of minor importance, but because its characteristic and meaning must be already clearly discerned from a consideration of the other offerings. (a) Like the sin offering, it differed from the first three, in that it was not an offering for a sweet smell, because in it we see sin being dealt with, and sin can never come up to God with pleasure and delight. (b) We notice that it differs from the sin offering in that it is for sins and not for sin—that is, this offering has to do not with the deep and hidden fountain of sin, but with the outcome of that fountain, with sins, or acts of transgression. These are defined as wrong done to God and wrong done to his neighbor.¹ It has been observed that in this offering no particular notice is taken of the person offering, but of the wrong thing done. In the sin offering we see the person dealt with—the priest, the congregation of Israel, the ruler, and the common person; but in this we have all the emphasis laid on the wrong thing or act done, whether in the matter of the "holy things of the Lord" or in the matter of "violent getting," "deceitful taking," or "swearing falsely about that which is found." It is also remarked that

every sinful act or wrong done to one's neighbor is also counted as a wrong done to God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," was David's conception of a sinful action. The evil was done against his neighbor, but the sin of it was against God. There it must be atoned for. Jesus not only bore our sin, but he also bore our sins. "He was wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities." He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." He was "delivered for our offenses." These passages point to sinful acts and atonement made for sins; while it is said that God "made him to be sin for us," and that his soul was made "an offering for sin." (c) Practically the same offering was made for trespasses or sins, as was made for sin. As a matter of fact, it was the same and treated in the same way, the whole difference lying in the distinction made between sinfulness of character and sinfulness of action. Both had to be and both were atoned for. (d) There is a remarkable addition made in the requirements of the man who offers for trespass, beyond that which is made for sin. The offering for sin recognizes only wrong being while the trespass offering notices wrong doing. There must, therefore, not only be confession and atonement made for wrong doing, but there must be money paid by way of restitution. "He shall even restore it in the principal [that is, the thing in which he has defrauded his neighbor], and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering."¹ Notice that this restitution has to be made before the trespass offering is brought, and that a fifth part more has to be given. Here is a fine lesson. It is of no use for a transgressor who has wronged his neighbor to go to God for forgiveness, even though he confess his transgression and trespass, without first having made restitution. Zaccheus had learned this lesson. This was the fruit meet for repentance when he declared that if he found he had wronged anyone in the discharge of his duty as a publican, he restored to such an one fourfold.² It is not straining the Scriptures, in the light of all that might be brought to bear, to say that when Jesus, in his one offering which he made for us (in which was included all the five offerings), not only made up to God fourfold all the wrong which he had suffered by our sin, but also made up to us a thousandfold all we have suffered at the hands of all sinners. (e) The last remark about this offering is, that no matter what a man's sins and transgressions were, if he brought the trespass offering, "the priest shall

¹ Leviticus v, 15-17, 19.

¹ Leviticus vi, 4, 5.

² Luke xix, 8; compare Exodus xxii, 1.

make an atonement for him before the Lord; and it shall be forgiven him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein."¹ How blessed this is! We cannot but turn to our great Trespass Offering and listen to these words: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. . . . If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."²

Before leaving this subject, we must remind the reader again that these five offerings were five aspects of man's position before God for acceptance; that, it being impossible for him to fulfill these requirements himself, by reason of sin and "weakness of the flesh," he was permitted to do so by offerings, in which he was accounted as accepted. That these offerings, one and all, were fulfilled by Jesus Christ our Lord, as they pointed to him, is clearly seen by reading Hebrews x, in which these are shown to be but the shadows, while Jesus is the true substance. As a matter of fact, Jesus has filled every function of these sacrifices or offerings for us, once for all, and by One offering. Yet these many-sided offerings in the ceremonial of Israel enable us to see how many-sided was the sacrifice of Christ. Approaching us from the tabernacle, we see him at first as burnt offering, then as meat offering, and then as peace offering—all of which was the picture of his perfect obedience to God, his perfect service to man, and the perfect communion set up thereby. He is now enabled to turn to the sinner and bring him into the tabernacle to have all this holy communion in peace. First,

he undertakes by the sin offering to deal with our sinful natures; then by the trespass offering to deal with our sinful actions; and all this he has done for us once for all, and there remaineth, therefore, "no more offering for sin," for the whole case has been met. Therefore, the writer of the Hebrews exhorts his readers, having explained the relation between the types and Christ himself, as follows: "Having therefore, brethren, holdness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; . . . let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised."¹

It is full of interest, also, to observe that as the sinner approaches God the order of the offerings is reversed. Jesus appeared to us beginning with the burnt offering and ending with the sin and trespass offerings. But in our approach to God we pass back by the way he came. The first thing an awakened sinner feels is the consciousness of his sins, his wrong doings; then he comes to know that wrong doing is the result of wrong being. When these two necessities are met by the blood of Christ, he passes on to communion through the peace offering; then to a high appreciation of his obligations to his brother whom he hath seen, and finally he attains to the rank of sonship when he offers himself to God, whom he hath not seen, in the burnt offering, which is his high and reasonable service.² These are the five foundation offerings. Every Christian and every intelligent student of the Bible should ponder them well.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL.

THE twenty-third chapter of Leviticus is one of the most interesting and significant in the books of the law, especially in respect of the ceremonial observances of Israel. In addition to the celebration of the sabbath,³ there are seven great feasts provided for, as follows: The Feast of the Passover;⁴ of Unleavened Bread;⁵ the First Fruits;⁶ the Pentecost;⁷ the Feast of Trumpets;⁸ the Day of Atonement;⁹ the Feast of Tabernacles.¹⁰ Beyond these seven, there is the great Year of Jubilee, an account of the establishment and significance of which we find in the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus. Each of these

feasts was deeply significant and had much to do with the development of the religious, social, and national life. They are all highly symbolic of great events and epochs of time in connection with the further unfolding of God's purpose of redemption; and all of them are closely related to some phases of the redemptive work of our Lord. Our space does not permit of a full unfolding of these significant ceremonials, but we shall just glance at them in passing, and must be content with expatiating on the two most important ones, namely, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Atonement is the foundation upon which everything rests as between God and man, and, indeed, between man and man; and the Feast of Tabernacles points to the

¹ Leviticus vi, 7.

² I. John i, 7, 9, ii, 1.

³ Leviticus xxiii, 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 9-14.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 15-21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 23-25.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 26-32.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 33-43.

¹ Hebrews x, 19-23.

² Romans xii, 1-3.

millennial glory of God's people. After these have been looked at somewhat in detail, we shall refer to the great feast of the Jubilee.

It is scarcely necessary to note in particular the sabbath, which is so well understood as pointing to the final rest of God's people founded on the finished work of Christ and into which "we which believe do enter." Jesus could only give us rest from our sins and all the unrest growing out of them by himself bearing them in his own body on the tree, where he "finished" the new creation and entered into rest through resurrection, as God finished the old creation and rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we have a reference to the sabbath which shows its chief symbolic significance so far as we are concerned.¹

1. *The Feast of the Passover.*² This was to commemorate the deliverance of the children of Israel out of the hand of Pharaoh and out of the land of bondage, and from the judgment of God upon sin on the night when the firstborn ones were all slain in Egypt. That it has a special significance to us in Christ is seen in the fact that it was on the night of that feast that our Lord, the true Passover Lamb who was slain for us,³ inaugurated the Lord's Supper, which has ever since taken in the Christian Church the place of the passover feast among the Jews.

2. *The Feast of Unleavened Bread.*⁴ This feast followed on the Feast of the Passover, and was designed to set forth the necessity of holiness in the people of God. The unleavened bread—that is bread made without leaven (always the type of sin in the Scriptures)—was the principal article of food during the feast. Reference to this feast, in its symbolic and doctrinal teaching, is seen in the New Testament. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."⁵

3. *The Offering of the First Fruits.*⁶ In this celebration we have the significant teaching that the harvest about to be gathered and from which a first fruit was taken and waved before the Lord was his bountiful gift, and that the wave sheaf laid up before the Lord was the pledge and guarantee of the forthcoming harvest. Its symbolical reference is to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is

a "kind of first fruit" of the people of God, "the firstborn among many brethren," and the "first fruits of them that slept."¹ This is very beautiful; and just so far as we shall grasp the truth comprehended in it, we shall be always praising God for gathering out from among the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his ascension was waved as a "first fruit" of the great harvest of redeemed men and women which shall be gathered when he comes the second time to gather in his harvest.

4. *The Feast of Pentecost.*² This feast is also most significant in its symbolism. It was celebrated fifty days after the bringing of the wave sheaf to offer it before the Lord. Symbolically it refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the gathering of the Church of Jesus Christ. We read in the second chapter of Acts how the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples and the people and the Church of the Firstborn was gathered in. This was the fulfillment of the feast of pentecost or, as it is sometimes called, the feast of weeks, Pentecost taking place fifty days after the Resurrection, or the fulfilled symbol and type of the wave offering of the first fruits. The wave loaves, mixed with leaven, indicating the sinfulness of the people who were gathered into the Church on that occasion, but the lambs without blemish, with the young bullock and two rams, for a burnt offering, and also the kid of the goats for a sin offering, and the two lambs for a sacrifice of peace offering, show how God could and did receive sinners into his Church through the merits of Christ, our perfect burnt offering and our sin offering, and bring all into peace. In no other way could a leavened loaf be accepted as a wave offering before the Lord.

5. *The Feast of Trumpets.*³ This feast of trumpets, which occurs after a considerable interval following the feast of pentecost and the gleaning of the fields by the poor and the strangers, is believed to point to the final gathering in of the scattered and dispersed—the spiritually blinded and wandering Jews—when the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and crying shall flee away forever. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy Mount at Jerusalem."⁴ Space does not allow further reference to this significant feast and to the great truth which it points to of God's faithfulness to his ancient covenant people, in preserving them through all their

¹ Hebrews iii, 11-19, iv, 1-11.

² Leviticus xiii, 4, 5; compare with Exodus xii.

³ I. Corinthians v, 7.

⁴ Leviticus xxiii, 6-8.

⁵ I. Corinthians v, 7, 8; compare Timothy ii, 19.

⁶ Leviticus xxiii, 9-14.

¹ I. Corinthians xv, 15-20.

² Leviticus xxiii, 15-21.

³ Leviticus xxiii, 24, 25.

⁴ Isaiah xxvii, 13.

wanderings, and his calling them in at last and returning them to their land, when their iniquity shall be pardoned and they shall receive the double (or title deeds of their ancient possessions) in the land, all through the fountain opened in the house of Israel for all sin and uncleanness.

The next two feasts, those of the great day of atonement and tabernacles, we shall now treat of more at length, as they are much more significant to us as pointing to that which is always present with us—the basis of our reconciliation with God and the coming glory of the Church. In connection with these elaborate ceremonials and feasts, it is only right to remark that it is more than probable that they were not all of them strictly carried out by the Hebrews. What commandment of God is, by men? We know that many of them lapsed and fell entirely into desuetude, and, perhaps, notably the feast of tabernacles, until after the return from Captivity, when it was restored and reestablished with great pomp by Nehemiah. The sabbath, the pentecost, the harvest, and atonement festivals were more or less faithfully kept. The point of view is not so much how faithfully these festivals were kept, but what did God intend they should signify to the Hebrews, and what place they should have in those significant symbolic prophecies which pointed to the coming and the work of Christ our Lord. It is easily seen that almost every phase of our salvation and eternal hope is typified in the offerings and feasts of Israel. The study of these types and shadows of good things to come, in connection with the first ten chapters of the Epistle of the Hebrews, will be most helpful and instructive to the thoughtful student of God's Word.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.¹ In each of the first four books of Moses, there is one preëminent chapter in which the very central truth of our redemption is taught. In Genesis, twenty-second chapter, we have an account of the offering of Isaac by Abraham, which surely points to the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son. In Exodus, twelfth chapter, we have an account of the slaying of the paschal lamb, whose blood was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the Hebrew cottages, and saved them from the destroying angel; which surely points to the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is "our Passover, slain for us." In the book before us² we have an account of the institution of the great sacrifice of the day of atonement, in which the central mystery of God's way of putting away sin from his house and from his people is set forth; which, of course, points to

the great atonement which our Lord Jesus has made for us once and for all. In Numbers, nineteenth chapter, we have an account of "the waters of purification," and the "ashes of an heifer," which is another most significant type of the power of Christ's blood to purify us from all sin.¹

All the ceremonial sacrifices of this and the other books of Moses, and all the subsequent ceremonial observances of the Law by the Jewish people, had a double significance. First, they testified to them the fact of their sin, and their need of atonement and purification; secondly, they pointed typically to the final and complete sacrifice of Christ, who "once in the end of the world . . . appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The Epistle to the Hebrews is the divine commentary upon all these types and shadows, and ought to be carefully read and compared with the various ceremonials mentioned by Moses in the three books in which he has especially set forth the law of offerings, namely: Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. The ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews should be carefully studied in this connection.

"The great day of atonement" stood out in unique prominence among all other days in Israel. It had its human occasion in the sin of the sons of Aaron, in offering "strange fire" before the Lord, for which they were immediately slain by him. This account is found in the tenth chapter of Leviticus. Their sin seems to have grown out of an imperfect apprehension of the absolute holiness of God and the necessity of recognizing that fact, and observing all his commandments in reference to approaching him, with punctilious exactness. Immediately thereafter the Lord spake to Moses, and gave him a detailed account of things clean and unclean, both in man and beast, and in inanimate things; and special ceremonial sacrifices and offerings for their cleansing. These directions occupy the five chapters between the tenth and that which contains our present lesson. The great day of atonement was the culmination of these instructions, and was instituted to purge the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the camp and people of all sin and uncleanness which must have accumulated during the year, in spite of all the care which they could possibly take. It points out to us the subtlety and deep-seated character of sin, and shows us that nothing short of an entire covering of sin, by means of atonement, could avail to bring us into the presence of God "without dying." This somewhat lengthy explanation of the matter is made necessary by the rather fragmentary

¹ Leviticus xvi, 1-6, xxiii, 27-32.

² Leviticus xvi.

¹ Hebrews ix, 13, 14.

character of our studies in these first books of the Bible.

1. *The Way Into the Holiest.* Referring to the death of Nadab and Abihu,¹ who lost their lives by carelessly and willfully coming into the presence of the Lord with strange fire, Moses, at the command of the Lord, forbade Aaron to go into the Holiest of Holies "at all times" or carelessly, lest he, also, should die before the Lord, like his sons. Once a year only must he enter therein, and then only with the "blood of atonement," shed according to minute instructions, together with other observances, to-wit: the special clothing prepared for Aaron, and the burning censer.² The careful way in which the holiest of all was guarded and hedged about from the approach even of the high priest, and the fact that even then he might only enter on one day in each year, and that the entire congregation of Israel devoted that day to the observance of this single ceremony, signified to them the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the utter holiness of God, and the certainty of death overtaking any sinner who might essay to come into his presence with any taint of sin upon or about him, either without or within, in connection with priest or people, or even the furniture of the tabernacle and its instruments of worship. To us it signifies that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest," and points us to Christ, who, "being come an High Priest of good [perfect] things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, . . . by his own blood, entered in once [for all] into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."³ The perfection of Christ's atonement was signified to us in this respect by the rending of the veil of the Temple on the day of his crucifixion, which tells us that now we may all come "boldly into the presence of God through him." This is most precious to us, and though we are as sinful in ourselves as the most sinful of the Hebrews, yet since Christ has perfectly put away sin and opened up a new and living way for us "through the veil of his flesh," we need now have no fear of "dying before the Lord" when we draw near to him.⁴

2. *The Atonement for the High Priest.* The ceremony of atonement begins with the atonement ordered and made by the high priest himself. This was because he must offer for the people. But a sinful priest cannot make atonement for a sinful people. Unless he be first free from sin, he may not come into the presence of God, and, therefore, cannot approach God to make atonement for the peo-

ple. This ceremonial purification of Aaron points us to Christ, who in himself was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and needed not to make an atonement for his own sins.¹ We have seen how Christ offered himself as a whole burnt offering in which there was no confession of sin, but an offering accepted on the ground of its perfection as a satisfaction to the holy requirements of God as to righteousness under the Law; and that he might subsequently offer himself as a sin offering to make atonement for us—that is, satisfaction to the justice of God in respect to our sin and transgressions. Aaron had to do more than this, as will be observed in the following particulars.

3. *A Bullock for a Sin Offering.* Aaron must first make acknowledgment of his own sin and that of his house, by offering the prescribed sin offering, and so make atonement.² This purged him from all guilt, and set him justified before God. He was now ceremonially sinless.

4. *A Ram for a Burnt Offering.* Having first purged his own sin, he next appeared before God with a burnt offering, which he offered in token of the entire surrender of himself to God, as was due under the Law, which required the whole and unbroken obedience of man, and also, in token that he gave himself up according to the will of God, as our Lord Jesus did, to become the atoning High Priest for his people, and to make reconciliation for their sins.³ In all this we see how, step by step, the high priest took, both ceremonially and typically, the place of Jesus Christ in the great work of atonement.

5. *The Holy Linen Garments.* These, together with the washing of his flesh, are mentioned last—as a matter of fact, they were first in order. Laying aside his garments of "glory," in which he discharged his ordinary daily service, he bathed his flesh in water, and clothed himself in the pure white garments of the common priest, thus in all points making himself like unto his brethren. In this attire he proceeded to make atonement for himself, and afterward for the people. This washing and clothing in white was to declare him characteristically, as well as ceremonially, clean—clean as to his flesh, and clean as he stood in the sight of God and men. Only so could he discharge the office of priest for the people on this "great day of atonement." It is all very beautiful, and, rightly understood, makes the character and work of our Lord Jesus most precious to us.

6. *The Atonement for the People.* Having made atonement for himself, the high priest

¹ Leviticus x. 1, 2. ¹ Leviticus xvi; Hebrews ix, 4.

² Hebrews ix, 8-12.

³ Matthew xxvii, 51; Hebrews vi, 19, x, 20.

¹ Hebrews vii, 26, 27.

² Leviticus iv. 3.

³ Hebrews ii, 17.

proceeded to make atonement for the people, which he did in the manner that is now to be described.

7. *Two Kids of the Goats for a Sin Offering.* These were also first presented at the door of the tabernacle before the Lord. Here we have a perfectly unique sacrifice. The two goats are considered as one in the offering, and the manner in which they are disposed of presents for our contemplation the two great phases of our Savior's sacrificial death "before the Lord." These two goats being presented before the Lord, a lot was cast to determine which should stand for the Lord and which for the people. The one upon which the Lord's lot fell was to be offered to him as a sin offering, in satisfaction to his justice for the sins of the people; while the one which fell to the people was to be "the scapegoat," to bear away the sin of the people, which the Lord's goat had already expiated, "into the wilderness," elsewhere spoken of as the "land of forgetfulness." This double phase of the atonement is most important, and merits further explanation. (a) *The Lord's lot.* It is significant that a literal translation of the ninth verse would read thus: "And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot went up, and shall make it sin." This is deeply instructive, teaching us that there is, in the matter of atonement, a part which belongs to God only, and which is offered to God only. Sin is a guilty thing, for which satisfaction must be made. This satisfaction is rendered to God. In this transaction man has no part whatever. The blood of atonement is not offered to man, but to God. Here judgment and death are put upon the goat offered to the Lord, and man's sin is punished and expiated. There are those who would have us believe that there is nothing in the nature or character of God which requires from us any expiation of sin; and, therefore, there is nothing so inherently sinful and guilty that God may not pass it by in simple forgiveness. But we learn from this that God's holiness and justice require that he should punish sin by judgment and death. This has been done by the one offering which Christ made of himself, "through the eternal spirit," for our sin. This is that which he did when "he purged our sin," before he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."¹ Let it be clearly understood that sin is something which God must take account of, wholly apart from the question of man's salvation. Sin must be met and expiated, whether man be saved or not. It is a part of the gracious purpose of God in dealing with man, to give him the benefit of this expiation and provide for

his return through the open door of forgiveness in connection with the putting away of sin. Therefore, we are prepared to understand how the expiation of sin by Christ "for the whole world," and "for every man," is made efficient for salvation only for those who, through faith and repentance, come back to God. There is no waste in this work of Christ because some do not believe, since it is something done unto God entirely apart from man's acceptance. God's glory could not be purged of the affront offered to it until sin had been put away by the amazing sacrifice which Christ accomplished. The punishment of the sinner does not glorify God in this respect, but the work of Christ does. A right understanding of this will clear up many of the popular objections to the atonement as it is objectively considered, or in its Godward aspect. (b) *The people's lot.* "The goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness."¹ Here we have man's side and share in the atonement. This goat was offered to the people as the former one was offered to the Lord. This transaction tells us how the sin of the people, which had been expiated by "the Lord's lot," is now carried away into the wilderness by "the people's lot." Beautiful type of that utter forgiveness and forgetfulness of our sin by the Lord whenever we accept his atonement and make it ours! "Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man [who was offered up to God as a sin offering] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins [a scapegoat to bear away your sin]: and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."² If we might imagine any one man of Israel declaring that he would have nothing to do with either the Lord's lot or the people's lot, we should still see that both transactions (which are to be counted as one) would still have gone forward; while the man who repudiated both would be left to bear his own sin as though nothing had been done for him. So it is possible, though Jesus be set forth as the expiation for our sins and forgiveness freely declared through him, that the unbeliever is left for that to come upon him which was declared by the prophets: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish."³

8. *The Ram for the Burnt Offering.* We merely mention this since it belongs to the atonement for the people, as well as for the priests. The meaning of it has been already explained. It teaches us that not only must

¹ Hebrews i, 3, ix, 14.

¹ Leviticus xvi, 10.

² Acts xiii, 38, 39.

³ Acts xiii, 41.

our sins be expiated and borne away by the scapegoat, but that every believer is expected, in virtue of his redemption, to offer himself in entire surrender and consecration to God. Forgiveness and justification are not enough. God requires that all his people be a whole burnt offering to him. We need not carry this thought farther.

The Order of the Atonement. Having explained the underlying facts of the great atonement, it is well worth our while to look briefly into the order in which this atonement was accomplished.

The High Priest's Atonement. Before attending to the sins of the people, Aaron makes complete atonement for himself. Having cleansed himself and put on his linen garments, he takes his sin offering, and, with its blood, approaches the holiest of all. On the way he takes the golden censer, and, with fire from off the brazen altar, he goes into the holiest of all and burns it before the mercy seat, and sprinkles the blood before the mercy seat seven times.¹ This completes his offering. Our Lord is supposed to have passed into the heavens to accomplish this high-priestly function, just after his resurrection and before his appearance to his brethren.² The High Priest was thus first accepted for himself with God.

The People's Atonement. Having completed

his own atonement, the high priest next proceeds to make atonement for the people. This he does by first offering the Lord's lot. With the blood of this sin offering he passes into the holiest of all, as he had done before for himself. On his way out he sprinkles the veil, and all the instruments and altars of the tabernacle, to show that the uncleanness which has come upon all things for man's sake must also be put away. Then he comes out, having offered the blood of the Lord's lot to him, and takes the live goat—the scapegoat—and sends him away into the wilderness. This shows us that there can come no forgiveness or putting away of our sin until the question of sin itself has been first thoroughly settled by the sin offering in the person of the Lord's lot. This is a matter well worth our observation and attention, and puts our Lord's sacrificial work and his ministry of forgiveness in its true light before us.

The whole action of the high priest is beautifully summed up in the three appearings of our Lord, referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹ First he appears to put away sin, and then passes into the holiest of all to appear in the presence of God for us, that, finally, to those who look and wait for him, he may appear "the second time without sin unto salvation."

CHAPTER XI.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

THE Book of Leviticus is divided into four parts (see Chapter IX). Our present study lies in the fourth section of this wonderful book and has to do with but one of the holy seasons—the Feast of Tabernacles. It is a part of our embarrassment that there is a very vital and significant connection between all the feasts and holy days, which ought to be carried in one's thought when studying any one of them separately. The same embarrassment met us in attempting to explain and apply the burnt offering, which was but one of five great offerings. In Leviticus, chapter xxiii, we have the account of eight holy days and seasons, inclusive of the sabbath, which has a unique place in Israel's history, and does not properly belong to the enumeration of what are called their "feasts." There are properly seven, as follows: The Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which is joined to the Passover feast), the Feast of the First Fruits, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Feast of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹ Leviticus xvi, 11-14. ² John xx, 17.

The feast of the passover was properly the first great feast in order, since it celebrated the deliverance from Egypt in connection with the slaying of the paschal lamb. The feast of tabernacles was the last and the "great feast," as it came in the end of the year, after all their fruits were gathered in. This feast is entirely Jewish, and both in its present practical import and in its typical prophecy refers only to them. It is, incidentally, very important to us Gentile Christians, in that it helps us to understand the order of God's purpose in respect to the Jews, and so enables us to understand our relations to that wonderful people, and to find our true place in the great consummation of things when the full typical significance of the feast is seen in its antitypical fulfillment.²

1. *The Celebration of the Feast.* We have in this chapter (Leviticus xxiii), and in the twenty-ninth chapter of Numbers, almost full details of its celebration. Some details not given in these Scriptures are added by Moses

¹ Hebrews ix, 24, 26.

² Exodus xxiii, 16; Exodus xxxiv, 22; Deuteronomy xvi, 13; Ezra iii, 4; Nehemiah viii, 14; John vii, 2, 37.

in Deuteronomy, and by Ezra and Nehemiah. For our purpose, however, we shall practically confine ourselves to the text before us.

2. *As to Time and Place.* "The fifteenth day of the seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles." This date corresponds to our month of October. It was the "feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field,"¹ "after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine."² This should be borne in mind when we come to point out the typical significance of this feast. It was not only the last feast in the year, but the crowning feast in the order of celebrating all the Lord's dealings with Israel. As to the place in which it was celebrated, it is manifest that it was not in the Wilderness, but in the "good land into which the Lord had brought them," though it looks backward to the day in which God brought them out of Egypt, and caused them to dwell in "booths," during the first part of their journeyings in the Wilderness, before they had made for themselves more permanent tents. The time during which this feast lasted was eight days, including the sabbaths on which it began and ended. More properly, it was seven days, since there is reason to believe that the feast proper ended on the seventh day from the first sabbath, the second sabbath marking the termination of the feast by some peculiar rites not observed on the ordinary sabbath.

3. "*Ye shall do no servile work therein.*" This was peculiar to all the feasts. It is eminently proper that, on days and during feasts in which the goodness and grace of God are commemorated, no servile work should be done. God's people are not given over to servile work. All their work is worship, done in the liberty and freedom which belongs to sons and not to slaves. "We are not under law, but under grace." "The holy service of God's people is not servile labor, but the sweet unfolding of Christ's life and character." Therefore, "for me to live is Christ." This is truly characteristic of all the employments of those of God's people who rightly understand their relation to him through grace. It applies not only to the so-called "religious and spiritual service" done on Sundays or at other times, but to all our labor and employments. "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do," we do it "unto the Lord," as a joyful expression of our oneness with him, and our deliverance from law and from oppressive care. We do not, indeed, suspend our ordinary occupations when we become Christians, as the Jews did on their sabbaths, but we should carry

our sabbath into all our life and work. All time is holy to the Christian, and, therefore, all work is holy. We break the sabbath not in the non-observance of a day, but in the un-sanctification of our lives, and in the spirit of our employments and recreations.

4. "*Ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.*" During the whole seven days and on the eighth day, there was to be special and abundant offerings of the class distinguished by the sweet smell; that is, their feasting and worship were characterized especially by obedience, love to each other, and fellowship—a beautiful type of the condition of life and worship in the millennial time, of which this feast was typical, as we shall see presently. In the account of the offerings given,¹ we note that on the first day there were thirteen bullocks offered for burnt offering, and on each succeeding day one less, which may signify the gradual disappearance of these offerings or the complete fulfillment of them in the perfect sacrifice to which they pointed. On each day there was one kid offered for a sin offering, which indicates that even among the holiest of God's people, and at the holiest of seasons, there is still sin which must be confessed and put away.

5. "*Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs [or fruit] of goodly trees, and branches of palm trees,*" etc. These were both for the purpose of building booths in which they were to dwell during the celebration of this feast in memory of their former pilgrim state, and to remind them of the fact that, though they now dwelt in houses, they were still to regard themselves as pilgrims and strangers, having "here no continuing city." This custom was actually revived by Ezra when the people came back to their land from the long Captivity.² It is a matter of wonder to us that, notwithstanding the explicit commandment given for the celebration of this feast, it was never celebrated—at least not this particular feature of it—from the days of Joshua till after the return from Captivity, as is noted in the Book of Nehemiah, in the passage just referred to. This may indicate typically the great apostasy of the Jews from the faith in their final millennial glory, while as yet they were in the Land of Promise. It was, indeed, revived by Ezra, and the feast continued to be regularly and carefully celebrated down to the days of our Savior's advent on the earth, though latterly with little spiritual understanding. It was probably in imitation of this custom during the feast of tabernacles that the people broke off boughs of trees and strewed them before Jesus as he entered Jerusalem.³

¹ Exodus xxiii, 16. ² Deuteronomy xvi, 13.

¹ Numbers xxix.

² Ezra iii, 4; Nehemiah viii, 14.

³ Matthew xxi.

Thus the observance of what is called "Palm Sunday," commemorating our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, a few days before his crucifixion, may be regarded as, in part, an echo of Israel's joyous thanksgiving festival.

6. "*Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.*" In this we see the general character of the feast. It was essentially a time of thanksgiving. Neighbors and friends came together who had been parted during the year; and general fellowship and communion were indulged. The abundant harvest was gathered, and all the goodness of the Lord was talked over; in a word, this was a time of thanksgiving in which all Israel participated.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FEAST. We have already anticipated this branch of the subject in some particulars, but it will help us to understand it better, even if we repeat a little of what has been said.

1. *Its Present Significance.* This is seen in the time and occasion of the feast. It was the Jewish thanksgiving festival. The ground, under the blessing of the Lord, had brought forth plentifully. They had gathered in their corn, their wine, and all the fruits of the field. Their time of hard labor had passed, and they were made secure in basket and store. It was meet that they should set apart a time in which to recognize the good hand of God, who had fulfilled his promises to them in the land which he had given them. Nothing is, or can be, of more practical value to any people than the practice of grateful thanksgiving to God. It reminds them that the supply for their need comes from God, and not from their own toil alone; and thus prevents pride of heart and selfishness of conduct. It turns their thoughts away, for awhile, from sordid occupations and "servile work," and lifts up their hearts to the thought of better and higher joys than those which come from mere possession. Their feasting, and visiting, and mutual congratulations served to bind the Israelites together alike in family, national, and spiritual bonds. The weakness of most of our lives is seen in the barrenness of our hearts in gratitude and thanksgiving to God, and in the lack of spiritual feasting and fellowship one with another.

2. *Its Retrospective Significance.* "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." The Israelites were taught here how God had dealt with them in the past, and how his providences had led them up to present blessing and affluence. It also reminded them that, though they were now in the enjoyment of earth's richest blessings, they were not of the earth, earthy; but were, in fact, pilgrims and strangers looking forward to a better country, even an heavenly;

and must not allow themselves to be bound too fast to the earth, or fixed too permanently in "houses made with hands."

3. *Its Typical Significance.* In this regard we see its highest meaning. There is no doubt that this great feast pointed to a time and a condition of things which has not as yet been realized by the Jews as a people. In order to understand this, we must take at least a brief glance at three other feasts mentioned in the chapter before us, and note how they have been fulfilled as to their typical meaning. First: The Passover Feast undoubtedly pointed to the coming into the world of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled in himself the prophecy of the paschal lamb which was the foundation of that feast. As the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage of Egypt by the shedding of the blood of their passover lamb, so have we and they been delivered from the corruption and bondage of sin by the slaying of "Christ our Passover."¹ Secondly: The Feast of the First Fruits. "Then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it."² This was typical of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus, which occurred "on the morrow after the sabbath." Christ is the First Fruit of the great harvest of resurrection and of the ingathering of his people.³ There can be little doubt of this in the mind of the thoughtful and careful student of God's blessed Word. Thirdly: The Feast of Pentecost. This occurred just fifty days after the Feast of the First Fruits. Just so, on the fiftieth day after the resurrection of our Lord, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost was poured out and the great harvest of his people began to be gathered in. The work is still going on, and will continue through the preaching of the Gospel until the whole harvest is gathered. Then will roll in the great feast of tabernacles, when of all the remnant of God's ancient people will be gathered in. Thus the feast under consideration points to the "restitution of things," when the "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord"; when God shall send Jesus "whom the heaven must receive" until then.⁴ It is undoubtedly the feast that typifies the millennial reign of the Jews on the earth—a view that is still further strengthened when we remember that there was a great apostasy of the Jews from the observance of the feast, from the days of Joshua until the time of Ezra, when a little remnant of God's people returned from their long Captivity. It was

¹ I. Corinthians v. 7.

² Leviticus xxiii. 10, 11.

³ I. Corinthians xv. 23; James i. 18.

⁴ Acts iii. 19-21.

then that, in reading the Law, the commandment concerning this feast was discovered, and the feast restored with great joy.¹ If there remains any doubt in the minds of any as to this typical reference, they need only to turn to the Book of Zechariah, where we have a glimpse of Israel in future millennial glory and power. "And . . . every one that is left of all the nations shall go up every year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles."² We have not dared, in our attempt to expound this important passage of Scripture, to follow the beaten paths of the "spiritualizers," and cover out of sight what we believe to be the true meaning

of the Spirit in this matter. We know that those who are wise in the Scriptures will see the truth and rejoice, and can only pray that thoughtful students who have not as yet seen this truth may be persuaded to "search the Scriptures" and see "if these things be so." In the meantime, for ourselves, we will keep this feast in our hearts for the sake of "the brethren of the Lord" who are at this time dispersed "with the veil over their hearts," but who shall at last come to see and acknowledge their rejected Messiah and King, and with everlasting joy enter again into their land, evermore to keep the feast of tabernacles in millennial glory and power.

CHAPTER XII.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

IN many respects the Year of Jubilee was the most remarkable and significant civil and religious institution of the Hebrew people. A careful reading of the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus cannot but impress every reader with the wonderful wisdom and divine goodness manifested in the law of the Jubilee. The Lord commanded that, upon entering upon their possessions in the land which he gave them, they were to observe first the sabbath day; but besides this they were to observe a sabbatical year—that is every seventh year the land was to rest; neither sowing, nor planting, nor reaping, nor gathering was allowed. The land must rest. If there was a doubt as to how the people were to survive without one whole year's produce from the land, the Lord comforted and reassured them as follows: "And if ye shall say, what shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits shall come in ye shall eat of the old store."³ Here is a wonderful provision made for those who serve and obey the Lord. Man is always asking: "What shall we do?" and God is always saying to them who trust him: "I will command my blessing." God sets his blessing over against man's need and nature's inability. He is able to do much more for us than we ask or think. Nature is not our sole provider. God is over and above nature. By herself nature is a bountiful mother, but when God commands his blessing upon nature there will be wonderful increase. Early in their history God taught

his people that he was the Almighty and that he could do for them through nature what nature could not do without his quickening. Nature could not bring forth a son to Abraham and Sarah in their old age, but God is greater than nature and at his word nature wrought through him that was as good as dead, and her who was barren, and gave them the Son of Promise. They that are in the way of God's commandments need not fear for either the famine or the pestilence.

The jubilee year was the fiftieth year from the first celebration of the day of atonement after they entered into the land—a complete round of seven sabbatical year periods. The year was ushered in with the sound of the trumpets which were blown just as the atonement was completed, and with that blast the whole land of Israel awakened with joy. We can well imagine the scene and the unspeakable gladness. For fifty years man had been getting his affairs into disorder. The poor and unthrifty had lost their lands and patrimony; some were deeply in debt; others were sold into bondage; families were separated by these unhappy circumstances. The thrifty were growing more rich, having bought the land of their poorer neighbors and taken their service in lieu of moneys borrowed and not paid; but God was over all. He had said: "The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."¹ As soon as the priest ministering at the atonement had finished the offering and came forth and blessed the people, the trumpet was placed to his lips, and liberty was proclaimed "throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."² This first bugle blast and proclamation of liberty was taken up by

¹ Nehemiah viii. 14-18.

² Zechariah xiv. 16-19.

³ Leviticus xxv. 20-22.

¹ Leviticus xxv. 23.

² Leviticus, xxv. 10.

the Levites and spread from hilltop to hilltop, until the sound of the glad jubilee was quickly sent throughout the land. All prison houses were opened, all debtors were set free, all slaves, save those of the bored ear, returned to their families; and all men who had parted with their possessions were privileged to return to them, and did so return. Everything was set in order according to God's mind. It is difficult to conceive of any provision so complete as that made by the jubilee for the straightening out of crooked things and the righting of all wrong things; for bringing order out of the confusion created by the thriftlessness and sinfulness of some men and the greed and overreaching avarice of others.

1. *The chief feature of the jubilee was its association with the atonement.* "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land."¹ It is the atonement which is the basis for the settlement of all things which have gone wrong, both as between God and man, and man and man. Has man sold himself unto sin? Then it is God's blessed atonement which makes it possible for him to proclaim forgiveness for all sin and the deliverance of the soul from the bondage of corruption. Has man gotten all earthly things into confusion and hopeless inequalities, and intentionally or otherwise forfeited his earthly privileges or grasped more than his share? It is the atonement of God which is the basis of settlement for all disputes between man and man. We first learn to prize God's forgiveness of our debts to him, and then we are made willing to forgive all those who are indebted to us. It is only when man is made right with God that he can make things right with his fellowman.

2. *The jubilee was also intimately connected with the Sabbath of the Lord.* The Jubilee Year was a sabbatic year. It tells us that we shall not always toil and sweat for our bread, but that God has a sabbath in store for us. Here, again, it is the finished work of Christ which constitutes the true atonement and brings in rest to us, so that "we which have believed do enter into rest."² Moreover, the land itself, which is to share in the final restitution of all things, rested in the jubilee as a foretaste of the time when its fair bosom shall no longer be torn by the plow or pierced by the spade; when the fields and the vineyards shall bear in their season, without the pruning and cutting which goes on now.

3. *The poor and unfortunate and sinful were redeemed out of all their trouble and took their*

places as the Lord's freemen, upon their own patrimony and in their own homesteads, and thus were not disgraced but dignified by the jubilee deliverance.

4. *The rich were taught that God stood between them and the poor,* and was the redeemer of such as had need, and that the land was the Lord's and not man's; and further, that he would not allow any one man permanently to take advantage of any other one man's misfortune. In a word, the rich were reminded that the poor and unfortunate and afflicted had rights which they were bound to respect. It was also a great lesson in moderation to the grasping. They could not get possession of the land permanently. However they may have added field to field and house to house, at the jubilee they had to relax their grasp and be content with their own patrimony.

5. *That God's grace and mercy were over all* was another teaching of the Year of Jubilee. God was man's redeemer and friend, and, in due time, would right all wrongs. He was the redeemer and friend of the poor, but none the less also of the rich, for by the same token with which he protected the poor he also saved the rich from making shipwreck of faith and from falling into the temptations and snares which overtake so many rich men.

6. *The Year of Jubilee shows us how superior God's day is to man's day.* All values were regulated by that day. If a man bought a piece of land the first year after jubilee, it was worth only what he might produce in the next forty-nine years. If bought the year before the jubilee, it was worth only its products for one year. And so of service from slaves and value from money lent.

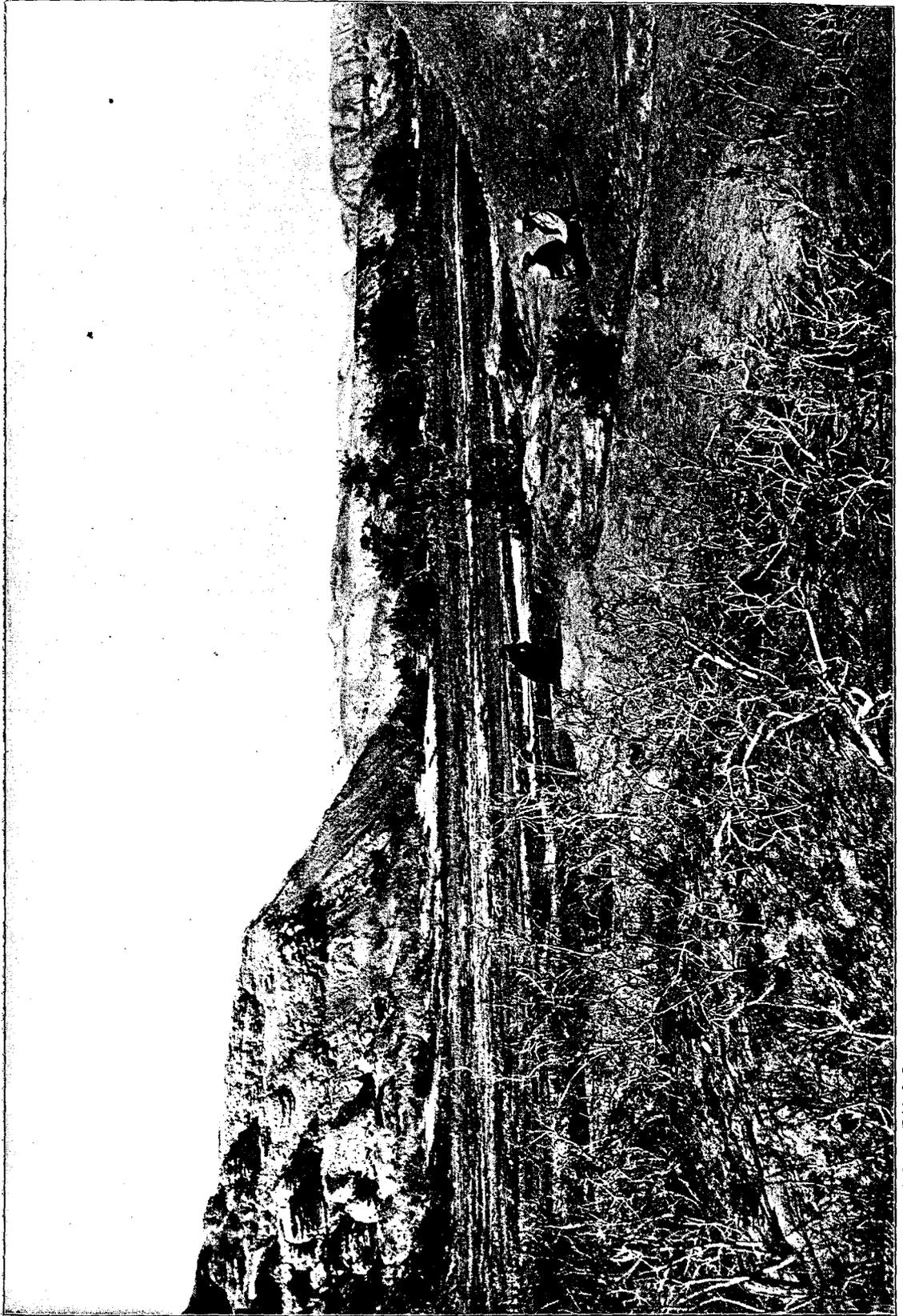
7. *The significance of the jubilee, prophetically, to the Jews* was very great. It pointed to the time when the whole Hebrew people would be, as it were, banished ones, even as they are to-day; driven from their possessions in the land which the Lord their God gave them, and scattered among the nations. Not only are they banished from their land, but the land is in the hands of aliens and strangers. But this is not forever. The land is the Lord's and the Jewish people are his tenants forever. Therefore, the time will come when the trumpet shall sound throughout the world and his banished ones shall hear the sound and shall return again to their own land. This is the burden of all prophecy.¹

8. *The typical significance of the jubilee in respect of the Gospel.* The blowing of the jubilee trumpet upon the finishing of the atonement is nothing less than the sounding forth of the Gospel throughout the whole

¹Leviticus xxv, 9.

²Hebrews iv, 3.

¹Isaiah xli, lxi; Zechariah ix, etc.



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ELIM.

world upon the finishing of the great work of atonement by Jesus. In the beautiful sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, the prophet makes the coming Messiah to say "the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable [forgiveness, or jubilee] year of the Lord." This passage Jesus appropriated to himself and said it was that day fulfilled in the hearts of the people to whom he preached the glad tidings.¹ His commission to preach the Gospel to every creature was the proclamation of jubilee to the whole world. On the day of pentecost the trumpet was sounded and the captives and the prison-bound, the poor and the penitent, began to go free, and in virtue of this jubilee proclamation the banished ones have been returning all through the long and

blessed jubilee time of grace. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation [jubilee]." ¹

9. *The final significance of the jubilee is seen in the restitution of all things*—when the dead shall be brought forth from their prison-houses—the graves—both in the land and in the sea; when the long-parted shall be united, and the earth and the Church, with the converted Jews reclaimed by the coming the second time of Christ, shall rejoice together.²

For ourselves we might do well to remember and give place in our lives to the lessons of the jubilee—to remember the poor, not to oppress them; to moderate our greed of gain, remembering that the Lord Jesus is coming and that the value of all things is regulated by his near approach; and especially to see that we do not suffer our ears to be bored so that at the sound of the Gospel Jubilee we cannot go out with the rest of the sin debtors and prisoners.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONSTITUTION OF HEBREW SOCIETY.

IT is interesting to note the steady development of the Hebrew people, who came out of Egypt a huge mob of recently released slaves, into a perfectly organized commonwealth or State. Ordinarily, communities are organized about the person of some masterful man who has made himself king or governor by his superior wisdom or his sheer might. Such were the ancient kings and such were the ancient communities. In later times we note that communities have been organized upon some basis of philosophical government in which the rights of men, especially of the upper classes, have been recognized and safeguarded, and the whole constructed on principles of utilitarianism, the greatest good to the greatest number being often urged, not overlooking the preservation of the State in domestic peace and from foreign invasion. The organization of Hebrew society or the Hebrew commonwealth differed from all these, for it was a purely "theocratic" commonwealth. The tabernacle was the visible center of its organization. From the door of the tabernacle all laws were proclaimed, and there, also, all questions at issue between man and man were settled. In that tabernacle and over the mercy seat dwelt the visible "shekinah" of God, who was, in fact, the King of Israel. All the laws of the Hebrews, civil, criminal, domestic, and religious, were promulgated from the throne of Jehovah, and all of them had a

direct bearing upon the religious life of the people. All of them had reference to the spiritual and ethical training of the people, and all of them pointed to a higher and more lasting state of existence.

In fact, we may say that Hebrew society was theocratic socialism pure and simple. The tenure of the land, the laws concerning debts, profit, bondsmen, taxes, interest, and all sanitary and dietetic laws were under divine and religious regulation, and all were so constructed as to make for the spiritual welfare of the people. God was "all and in all" not only in the more strictly religious ceremonials, but in the commonest detail of life at home, in the fields, and in the market, as well as about the tabernacle.

The land belonged to God and the holder of the land was God's tenant. It seems to have been the purpose of God to promote agricultural and rural life more than city life. This may be seen in the regulations touching the tenure of the land. When Israel was numbered just before entering the land of Canaan, which God had given to them, it was found that there were 600,000 men, exclusive of the Levites. These were not left to go up and possess the land, as it were indiscriminately, as did the Normans when they conquered England.

¹ II. Corinthians vi, 2

² See Acts iii, 19-21; Romans viii, 19-23; I. Corinthians xv; I. Thessalonians iv; II. Peter iii, 13; Revelation xxi; etc.

¹ Luke iv, 16-21.



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PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

They were placed in possession of the land under a strict and equal division. Cities were not mentioned in the division, but every man had a portion of land for himself, which was his under divine leasehold. He might not permanently alienate it from himself or his family. For, even if he did sell his land, it was restored to him or to his heirs at the time of the jubilee year. The universal release of land and property at the jubilee did not apply to cities. For in cities, if houses were sold and were not redeemed within one year, they were alienated forever.¹ The discrimination in favor of the country land, as against the city property, had a tendency to make the land of more value than city property. There was in this law an entailment of land certainly; but the working of the law of entail among the Hebrews was utterly different from the law of entail in England, for instance. In the first place, inasmuch as there could be no permanent alienation of land from one proprietor to another, there could be no extension of estates, and so no class of vast landholders. The whole land was divided into small holdings; the people were kept in comparative pastoral, or, at least, agricultural content, and the modern tendency to gather in cities was avoided.

The tenants of this land of Jehovah paid to him, as it were, a kind of rent in the tithe (to be spoken of more particularly), which went for the maintenance of the public worship of the nation, and for the support of the Levites. Every freeholder of land under this splendid land system was obliged to render military service under his own chief or the head of his tribe.² Thus the agrarian system of the Hebrews tended to the highest cultivation of the land and to promote patriotism, and at the same time kept down internal ambitions and strife for power and provided for the defense of the country against foreign aggression.

With regard to town or city life, the Hebrew genius, or rather the final cause of the Hebrew society, did not encourage it. God's people from the earliest times had never been builders of cities. That employment seems to have been the peculiar prerogative of those who wished to throw off God's yoke, from the days of Cain downward. The earliest account of city building is that of the City of Enoch by Cain, and all the subsequent mention of city building is in connection with the apostate families of the earth, such as Nimrod and his descendants, the Canaanites and the Egyptians. Sodom is one of the earliest mentioned cities properly so called, and the story of it is not encouraging for the people of God. Lot, who

took up his residence there, escaped "so as by fire" after "vexing his righteous soul" with the wickedness of its inhabitants. It is true that, upon entering the land, the cities which were not destroyed—such as Jericho and others—were occupied by the people. Later on, Jerusalem became the capital of the kingdom, but it was not till after the kingdom of Israel succeeded to the commonwealth proper. The internal government of Jewish cities was vested in a "council of elders, with judges who were required to be priests." Josephus says there were "seven judges with two Levites as officers."³ In the time of Samuel it was his province to go from city to city, to hold a kind of circuit court and to offer sacrifice. Still later, under the kings, further regulations were inaugurated, upon which it is beyond my province to enter. But, all things considered, the safeguarding of the rights of the people was carefully provided for, and the municipal life and government of the cities of Israel might well be followed in our day.

The Levites among the tribes of Israel were set apart for special service about the tabernacle. They were a kind of lay priesthood; not allowed, indeed, to enter the tabernacle proper, but they served in the court and did all the manual labor in connection with the ceremonial law. It was their business to bear the tabernacle furniture from place to place, taking it down and erecting it again. This was the tribe of which Moses and Aaron were distinguished members. Because they were thus set apart for special service, no share in the divided land was given them, since they had other business to occupy them than agricultural pursuits and soldiering. To them, therefore, were given cities in the land to dwell in and a suburban portion of land extending 1,000 cubits from the walls of the city outward round about.² They had forty-eight cities in all. Of these six—three on either side of Jordan—were specially set apart to be "cities of refuge" for the involuntary manslayer, to which he might flee from the "avenger of blood" and be safe. The privilege of refuge or sanctuary was extended alike to the stranger and the sojourner in the land, according to that large charity which characterized the Hebrew society. The cities of refuge were Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth Gilead, and Golan.³ The object of these asylums was that the hasty revenge by the avenger of blood—the next of kin to the slain man—might be stayed until the case could be inquired into. Before being admitted to permanent residence the flier from vengeance was

¹ See Leviticus xxv, 23-37; Numbers xxvi, 33-54, xxxvi; Deuteronomy xv, 1-11.

² Deuteronomy xx, 5; Exodus xviii; Numbers xxxi, 14.

¹ Deuteronomy xvi, 18, xix, 17, xxi, 5, 19; Ruth iv, 2.

² Numbers xxxv, 1-8.

³ Numbers xxxv, 10-34; Joshua xx.

subjected to a rigid inquiry. If it was found that the killing had been in malice or with murderous intent, then he was denied asylum and delivered over to the avenger. If it was shown that the killing was by accident or in self-defense, then he was given asylum in the city to which he fled, and a convenient residence assigned him, and he was provided for by the Levites. He was allowed to go about within the 1,000 yards' boundary without fear of the avenger; but if he went beyond these limits, he did so at his own risk. Upon the death of the high priest he was permitted to leave the city under perfect protection of the law and return to his own land. If he should a second time slay a man, he must flee to another city than that one in which he had already once had asylum. It is said by Jewish writers that the roads leading to these six cities, which were well placed so as to be within comparatively easy reach from all parts of the land, were kept in perfect repair, not less than thirty-two cubits broad—that is, forty-six feet—and every inequality on the surface was carefully taken away, so that a runner might not stumble in his flight. The rivers and streams were all bridged, and at every turning of the road there was a clear and largely written sign board marked "*Refuge! Refuge!!*" so that the manslayer might not lose time by inquiry. This is probably the origin of the expression, "He that runs may read."¹ That is, the letters on the sign post were so large that the runner need not stop to spell it out, but might read it running, or, reading it running, need not stop or stay his flight. Perhaps, also, this suggested the proverb, "I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straightened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble."² It is not surprising that all readers of the Bible have found in this wise, humane, and just provision for the manslayer in the cities of refuge, a type of Christ and his salvation for sinners. He is accessible to all; there is a highway, the teaching is plain, and the refuge is perfect.

The most perfect arrangements were made for the protection of the health of the people, in ordinances covering personal habits of cleanliness, the removal from their houses and camps of all effete matter that might breed disease, and the careful regulation of their food, especially as to the kinds of animal food which they might eat. Certain kinds of flesh, fish, and birds were prohibited as unclean. The distinction between the clean and unclean was no doubt to a large extent based upon the in-

herent unfitness of the prohibited kinds for wholesome food. But there was ethical and spiritual teaching in these laws, as well as sanitary protection. Everything pointed to and reminded the people of God's holiness and their own obligations to holiness as the peculiar people of God. These regulations also served to mark them off from the surrounding nations.

The laws in respect of debt and usury were made to prevent the poor and improvident man from becoming the prey of the rich and thrifty, and to restrain the natural tendencies of the strong and prosperous to make gain of their poorer brethren.

Vows were made most sacred. One might not make a vow and break it with impunity. This was both for protection in all transactions between man and God and between man and man, and also to teach the sanctity of one's plighted truth or word.¹ For details in respect of all these things the Book of Leviticus is especially referred to.

In order that the whole system upon which the Hebrew society was founded may be brought before the reader so classified that it may be seen at a glance, the following compendium and analysis is appended.

I.—THE CIVIL LAWS.

A. IN RESPECT OF PERSONS. 1. *The Father and Son.* (a) The power of the father was to be held sacred. Cursing or smiting, and stubborn or willful disobedience on the part of a son was held as a capital crime and punishable by death.² But the uncontrolled power of life and death was not absolutely in the hands of the father. It must be sanctioned by the congregation—that is, the ruling elders of the people.³ (b) The right of the firstborn to a double portion of the inheritance might not be set aside by mere partiality.⁴ (c) Inheritance by daughters was to be allowed where there was a default of a son—provided the daughter so inheriting married in her own tribe.⁵ (d) Unmarried daughters were to be entirely dependent on their fathers.⁶ 2. *Husband and Wife.* (a) The power of the husband was so great that the wife could never, by herself, enter independently into any engagement, even before God.⁷ A widow or divorced wife became independent, and did not fall again under her father's authority.⁸ (b) Divorce for unfaithfulness to the marriage re-

¹ Hebrews vi, 16-18.

² Exodus xxi, 15-17; Leviticus xx, 9.

³ Deuteronomy xxi, 18-21.

⁴ Deuteronomy xxi, 15-17; compare Jeremiah xxxiv, 5-16.

⁵ Numbers xxvii, 6-8; compare xxxvi.

⁶ Numbers xxx, 3-5.

⁷ Numbers xxx, 6-15.

⁸ Numbers xxx, 9.

¹ See Habakkuk ii, 2: "that he may run that readeth it." ² Proverbs iv, 11, 12.

lation was allowed, but was formal and irrevocable.¹ (c) Marriage within certain degrees of relationship was forbidden.² (d) A slave wife, whether bought or a captive, could not be actual property, nor sold; and if ill treated that was *ipso facto* her freedom.³ (e) Slander against a wife's virginity was punishable by fine and the deprivation of the right of divorce; on the other hand, ante-counubial unchastity on her part was punishable by death.⁴ (f) The raising up of seed (the levirate law), was a formal right to be claimed by the widow, under pain of infamy, with a view to the preservation of families.⁵ 3. *Master and Slave.* (a) The power of the master was so far limited that death under actual chastisement was punishable; and maiming was to give liberty.⁶ (b) The Hebrew slave was to be liberated in the sabbatical year, his wife and children to go with him only if they came to his master with him, unless by his own formal act he consented to a perpetual slavery.⁷ In any case he was freed at the jubilee with his children.⁸ If sold to a resident alien, he was always redeemable at a price in proportion to the distance from the jubilee.⁹ (c) Foreign slaves were to be held and inherited as slaves forever,¹⁰ and fugitive slaves from foreign nations were never to be given up.¹¹ 4. *Strangers seem to have been apart—sui juris*—without law and able to protect themselves; but, and perhaps, therefore, protection, kindness toward them was particularly enjoined as a sacred duty.¹²

B. THE LAW OF THINGS. 1. *Of Land and Property.* (a) All land was the property of God and its holders to be deemed his tenants.¹³ (b) All land sold was to return to its original owners at the jubilee, and the price of sale to be calculated accordingly; and redemption on equitable terms was to be allowed at all times.¹⁴ (c) A house in a city was redeemable within a year; and if not redeemed within that time passed away forever.¹⁵ (d) The houses of the Levites and those dwelling in unwalled villages—farm settlements—were redeemable at all times in the same way as lands; and the Levitical suburbs were inalienable.¹⁶ (e) Houses or lands sanctified, or tithes, or unclean firstlings, were capable of being redeemed at five-sixths of their value (calculated, according to the distance from the jubilee year, by the priest); if devoted by the owner and unre-

deemed, they were to be hallowed at the jubilee forever, and given to the priests; but if devoted only by the possessor, they were to return to the owner at the jubilee.¹ (f) Inheritance was in the following order of succession: (i) Sons. (ii) Daughters. (iii) Brothers. (iv) Uncles on the father's side. (v) Next kinsman, generally.

2. *Laws of Debt.* (a) All debts of an Israelite were to be released at the seventh (sabbatical) year; a blessing was promised to obedience and a curse on refusal to lend.² (b) Usury, from Israelites, was not to be taken.³ (c) Pledges were not to be insolently or ruinously exacted.⁴

3. *Taxation.* (a) Census-money, a poll tax of half a shekel, was to be paid for the service of the tabernacle.⁵ (b) All spoils in war were to be halved: of the combatants' half, one five-thousandth; of the peoples', one-fiftieth; to be paid for a heave offering for Jehovah. (c) Tithes of all produce were to be given for the maintenance of the Levites.⁶ Of this one-tenth was to be paid as a heave offering for the maintenance of the priests.⁷ A second tithe was to be bestowed in feasting and religious charity, either at the holy place or every third year at home.⁸ (a) First fruit of corn, wine, and oil, at least one-sixtieth—generally one-fortieth for the priests—was to be offered at Jerusalem, together with a solemn declaration of dependence upon God, the King of Israel.⁹ Firstlings of clean beasts, the redemption money (five shekels) of a man, and (one-half shekel or one shekel) of unclean beasts, were to be given to the priests after sacrifice.¹⁰ (e) For the poor. (i) Gleanings in the field or vineyard, were to be the legal right of the poor.¹¹ (ii) Slight trespass, to be eaten on the spot, was to be allowed.¹² (iii) The second tithe was to be given in charity (see above). (iv) Wages were to be paid daily.¹³ (f) Maintenance of the priests.¹⁴ (i) One-tenth of Levites' tithes (see above). (ii) The heave and wave offering—breast and right shoulder of all peace offerings. (iii) The meat and sin offering were to be eaten solemnly in the holy place. (iv) First fruit and redemption money (see above). (v) Price of all devoted things, unless given for special service. A man's service or that of his household was to be redeemed at 50 shekels

¹ Deuteronomy xxiv, 1-4. ² Leviticus xviii.

³ Exodus xxi, 7-9; Deuteronomy xxi, 10-14.

⁴ Deuteronomy xxii, 13-21.

⁵ Deuteronomy xxv, 5-10. ⁶ Exodus xxii, 20, 26, 27.

⁷ Exodus xxi, 1-6; Deuteronomy xv, 12-18.

⁸ Leviticus xxv, 10. ⁹ *Ibid.*, 45-54. ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 45, 46.

¹¹ Deuteronomy xxiii, 15.

¹² Exodus xxii, 21; Leviticus xix, 33, 34.

¹³ Leviticus xxv, 23. ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 25-27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 29, 30. ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 31-34.

¹ Leviticus xxvii, 14-33.

² Deuteronomy xv, 1-11.

³ Exodus xxii, 25-27; Deuteronomy xxiii, 19-20.

⁴ Deuteronomy xxiv, 6, 10-13, 17, 18.

⁵ Exodus xxx, 12-16.

⁶ Numbers xviii, 18-24. ⁷ *Ibid.*, 24-32.

⁸ Deuteronomy xiv, 22-28.

⁹ Deuteronomy xxvi, 1-15; Numbers xviii, 12-13.

¹⁰ Numbers xviii, 15-18.

¹¹ Leviticus xix, 9-10; Deuteronomy xxiv, 19-22.

¹² Deuteronomy xxiii, 24, 25.

¹³ Deuteronomy xxiv, 15. ¹⁴ Numbers xviii, 8-31.

for a man, 30 for a woman, 20 for a boy, and 10 for a girl.

II.—CRIMINAL LAWS.

A. OFFENSES AGAINST GOD (of the nature of treason). 1. *Acknowledgment of false gods*,¹ as, e. g., Moloch,² and generally all idolatry.³ 2. *Witchcraft* and false prophecy.⁴ 3. *Blasphemy*.⁵ 4. *Sabbath breaking*.⁶ Punishment in all these cases was death by stoning. Idolatrous cities were to be utterly destroyed.

B. OFFENSES AGAINST MAN. 1. *Impiety toward parents*,⁷ was to be punished by death, by stoning, to be publicly adjudged and inflicted; also disobedience to priests (as judges) or Supreme Judge.⁸ 2. *Murder* was to be punished by death, without sanctuary, or relieve or satisfaction.⁹ (i) The death of a slave actually under the rod was to be punished.¹⁰ (ii) Death by negligence was punishable by death.¹¹ (iii) Accidental homicide. The avenger of blood was to be escaped by flight to the cities of refuge till the death of the high priest.¹² (iv) Uncertain murder was to be expiated by disavowal and sacrifices by the elders of the nearest city.¹³ (v) Assault was to be punished by *lex talionis*, or damages.¹⁴ 3. *Adultery* was punishable by death of both offenders; the rape of a married or betrothed woman by death of the offender.¹⁵ (ii) The rape or seduction of an unbetrothed virgin was to be compensated by marriage, with dowry—50 shekels—and without power of divorce; or, if she be refused, by payment of full dowry.¹⁶ (iii) Unlawful marriages—incestuous—were to be punished; some by death, some by childlessness.¹⁷ 4. *Theft* was to be punished by fourfold or double restitution. A nocturnal robber might be slain as an outlaw.¹⁸ (ii) Trespass and injury of things lent were to be compensated.¹⁹ (iii) Perversion of justice—by bribes, threats, etc.—and especially oppression of strangers, were strictly forbidden.²⁰ (iv) Kidnapping was punishable by death.²¹ 5. *False witnesses* were to be punished by *lex talionis*;²² slander of a wife's chastity, by fine and loss of power of divorce.²³

¹ Exodus xxii, 20. ² Leviticus xx, 1-5.

³ Deuteronomy xiii, xvii, 2-5.

⁴ Exodus xxii, 18; Deuteronomy xviii, 9-22; Leviticus xix, 31. ⁵ Leviticus xxiv, 15-16. ⁶ Numbers xv, 32-36.

⁷ Exodus xxi, 15-17; Leviticus xx, 9; Deuteronomy xxi, 18-21. ⁸ Compare I. Kings xxi, 10-14; II. Chronicles xxiv, 21. ⁹ Exodus xxi, 12-14; Deuteronomy xix, 11-13.

¹⁰ Exodus xxi, 20, 21. ¹¹ Exodus xxi, 28, 30.

¹² Numbers xxxv, 9-28; Deuteronomy iv, 41-43; xix, 4-10. ¹³ Deuteronomy xxi, 1-9.

¹⁴ Exodus xxi, 18, 19, 22, 25; Leviticus xxiv, 19, 20.

¹⁵ Deuteronomy xxii, 13-27.

¹⁶ Exodus xxii, 16, 17; Deuteronomy xxii, 28, 29.

¹⁷ Leviticus xx. ¹⁸ Exodus xxii, 1-4.

¹⁹ Exodus xxii, 5-15. ²⁰ Exodus xxiii, 9, *et seq.*

²¹ Deuteronomy xxiv, 7.

²² Exodus xxiii, 1-3; Deuteronomy xix, 16-21.

²³ Deuteronomy xxii, 13-19.

III.—LAWS, JUDICIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL.

A. JUDICIAL. (a) Local judges—generally Levites, as being more skilled in the Law—were appointed for all ordinary matters by the people, with the approbation of the supreme authority (as of Moses in the Wilderness), throughout the land.¹ (b) Appeal to the priests, at the holy place, or to the judge. Their sentence was final and to be accepted under pain of death.² (c) Two witnesses at least were required in capital matters.³ (d) Punishment, except by special command, was to be personal and not to extend to the family.⁴ Stripes were allowed,⁵ but limited to avoid outrage on human frame. These regulations were set aside to a great extent in later times under the kings of Israel, and in still later times by the Sanhedrim, as the supreme court of the nation, after the return from Captivity.

B. OF THE ROYAL POWER. This was limited by law as written and formally accepted by the king; and directly forbidden to be despotic;⁶ yet he had power of taxation (one-tenth); and of compulsory service;⁷ and could declare war.⁸ There are distant traces of "mutual contract," as in the leagues of David⁹ and Joash¹⁰ with their people, the remonstrance with Rehoboam being not extraordinary.¹¹ The princes of the congregation or heads of tribes¹² seem to have had authority under Joshua to act for the people; and in later times "the princes of Judah" seem to have controlled both the king and the priests.¹³

IV.—ECCLESIASTICAL AND CEREMONIAL LAW.

A. THE LAWS PERTAINING TO SACRIFICE, considered as the sign and the appointed means of reconciliation and union with God, on which communion with him depended and as a means to maintaining the holiness of the people.

1. *The ordinary sacrifices*—of which we have fully treated, namely: The burnt offering; the meat offering; the peace offering; the sin and trespass offerings, for sins of trespass and of nature.¹⁴

2. *Extraordinary sacrifices*. (i) At the consecration of the priests.¹⁵ (ii) The purification of women.¹⁶ (iii) The cleansing of lepers.¹⁷ (iv) On the great day of atonement.¹⁸ (v) On the great festivals.¹⁹

¹ Deuteronomy xvi, 18.

² Deuteronomy xvii, 8-13; compare Exodus xviii, 26.

³ Numbers xxxv, 30; Deuteronomy xvii, 6, 7.

⁴ Deuteronomy xxiv, 16. ⁵ Deuteronomy xxv, 1-3.

⁶ Deuteronomy xvii, 14-20; compare I. Samuel x, 25.

⁷ I. Samuel viii, 10-18. ⁸ I. Samuel xi, 5-7.

⁹ II. Samuel v, 3. ¹⁰ II. Kings xi, 17.

¹¹ I. Kings xii, 1-6. ¹² Joshua ix, 15.

¹³ Jeremiah xxvi, 10-24, xxxviii, 4, 5.

¹⁴ Leviticus i-vi. ¹⁵ Leviticus viii, ix.

¹⁶ Leviticus xii. ¹⁷ Leviticus xiii.

¹⁸ Leviticus xvi. ¹⁹ Leviticus xxiii.

B. LAWS OF HOLINESS — arising from union with God through sacrifice.

1. *Holiness of Persons.* (a) Holiness of the whole people, as "children of God;"¹ as shown in: (i) The dedication of the firstborn;² and the offering of all firstlings and first fruits.³ (b) Distinction between clean and unclean food.⁴ (c) Provision for purification.⁵ (d) Laws against disfigurement; against excessive scourging.⁶ (e) Laws against unnatural marriage and lust.⁷

2. *Holiness of the Priests and Levites.* (a) Their consecration.⁸ (b) Their special qualifications and restrictions.⁹ (c) Their authority and rights.¹⁰

3. *Holiness of Places and Things.* (a) The tabernacle, with the ark, the veil, the altar, the laver, the candlesticks, etc., and the priestly

¹ Exodus xix, 5, 6; Leviticus xi, xv, xvii, xviii; Deuteronomy xiv, 1-21.

² Exodus xiii, 2, 12, 13, xxii, 29, 30.

³ Deuteronomy xxvi.

⁴ Leviticus xi; Deuteronomy xiv.

⁵ Leviticus xii-xv; Deuteronomy xxiii, 1-14.

⁶ Leviticus xix, 27; Deuteronomy xiv, 1, xxv, 1-3.

⁷ Leviticus xviii, xx. ⁸ Exodus xxix; Leviticus viii, ix.

⁹ Leviticus xxi, xxii, 1-9.

¹⁰ Numbers xviii; Deuteronomy xvii, 1-6, 8-13.

robes.¹ (b) The holy place chosen for the permanent erection of the tabernacle, where only all sacrifices were to be offered, and all tithes, first fruits, vows, etc., to be given or eaten.²

4. *Holiness of Times.* (a) The sabbath.³ (b) The sabbatical year.⁴ (c) The year of jubilee.⁵ (d) The passover.⁶ (e) The feast of weeks—that of pentecost.⁷ (f) The feast of tabernacles.⁸ (g) The feast of trumpets.⁹ (h) The day of atonement.¹⁰

The above is a fair compendium of the various laws—civil, criminal, ecclesiastical—of the Hebrew people. It will be seen how full and comprehensive they are, and especially how they all tend to holiness of life, obedience to God, and all righteousness toward men. It is not surprising that many of the laws of the Hebrew people survive on our own statute books to this day, nothing so good or complete having ever been devised by man.

¹ Exodus xxv-xxviii, xxx.

² Numbers xviii.

³ Exodus xx, 9-11, xxiii, 12.

⁴ Exodus xxiii, 10, 11; Leviticus xxv, 1-7.

⁵ Leviticus xxv, 8-16.

⁶ Exodus xii, 3-27, xiii, 4-16.

⁷ Leviticus xxiii, 15, etc.

⁸ Leviticus xxiii, 33-43.

⁹ Leviticus xxiii, 23-25.

¹⁰ Leviticus xxiii, 26-32, etc.

W. F. Culbert



DAVID AND ABIGAIL.

BOOK VI.

FROM THE INVASION OF CANAAN TO THE LAST OF THE JUDGES.

BY REV. R. S. MACARTHUR, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

THE conquest of Canaan marks a new era in the history of civilization and religion. It was a conquest not only for Israel, but also for all humanity. It was the turning point in the history of our race; it was the triumph of civilization over barbarism, and of true religion over a gross heathenism. Every intelligent student of history must be interested in a chapter so replete with instruction and warning as the story of the conquest of Palestine. It is true that in this history we are brought into a more secular and human atmosphere than that which prevails in most parts of the Bible; still all history is sacred history to the devout believer, and it ought to be equally so to the philosophical student. The distinction between profane and sacred history is imaginary and not real. God's hand is never withdrawn from the affairs of men; at certain times its presence may be more marked than at others, but whether seen by us or not it is ever present, moving armies, controlling nations, and governing empires for the glory of God and for the good of men. Rightly understood, all things are tending toward the triumph of truth and the establishment of righteousness. Before the advent of Christ all events converged toward his coming, and since that coming all have diverged from his cradle and his cross. Christ's advent is the pivotal point around which all historical events revolve in smaller or larger orbits. There ought, therefore, to be no unwillingness to use such a phrase as "The Conquest of Palestine"; for while it is true that in studying this subject we are concerned with the conquest of a country only a little larger than the State of New Hampshire, and a little larger than Wales, and only about one-third the size of Scotland, still its conquest was a most important part of a great human and divine movement for uplifting the nations of the earth. We, therefore, utterly miss the meaning of this invasion if we think of it as only one of many migrations from one country to another. That element it

possessed, for those who were displaced by the Israelites had once themselves been invaders and had displaced still earlier invaders; but this conquest is unique among the great providential movements in the world's history.

The old race of "giants"¹ comes to us from the dim light of primeval ages. Doubtless the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the Edomites had united with the Philistines to invade and largely to destroy former populations; then came the Israelites; and the land was afterward invaded by Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, French, and English;² and perhaps other invasions may yet take place. But the conquest of Canaan by Joshua had a larger purpose and a wider influence than such invasions as we have just named. In this purpose and influence this conquest stands quite alone. Like some of the invasions made later, it was the fulfillment of divine prophecy, the infliction of threatened punishment, and the bestowal of promised blessing. The victories of Joshua, furthermore, are types and prophecies of still greater spiritual blessings which God had promised to his chosen people. Not to have this larger view of this conquest is to miss its most significant lessons. He is but a prejudiced student of history who refuses to recognize the purpose of the Almighty in the invasion made by Joshua.

There were several stages in the conquest of Palestine. Strictly speaking, the beginning of this conquest extended beyond the time of Joshua; it began when the passage of the brook Zered was accomplished under the leadership of Moses.³ The final conquest was not made until hundreds of years after, when David entered Jerusalem in triumph.⁴ But we may with propriety speak of the conquest in connection with the territory afterward known as Palestine, when it became, in a general

¹ Deuteronomy, ii, 20; Joshua xiii, 12.

² Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

³ Deuteronomy ii, 13. ⁴ II. Samuel v. 6, 7.

sense, subject to Joshua. The first stage in this conquest was the occupation of the district east of the Jordan; then came the victories over the original inhabitants on the western side of the river, covering its three great divisions, the valley of the Jordan, the southern and central mountains, later known as Judea and Samaria, and the northern mountains, finally known as Galilee.¹ The conquest of eastern Palestine prepared the way for crossing the river and winning victories on the western shore. The territory east of the Jordan has always been romantic, beautiful, and mysterious. On that side lived portions of the aboriginal race, under the name of "Emim" and "Zamzummim," or simply "Zuzim."² These aboriginal tribes were once expelled by the tribes of Moab and Ammon, and they, in turn, were dispossessed by two Canaanitish chiefs, who manifested much ambition and acquired much power.³

The approaching Israelites were preceded by thrilling stories of God's dealings with them and of his promises on their behalf. Their attack on the Canaanitish kings was assisted by immense swarms of hornets which, though never uncommon in Palestine,⁴ seemed to have been miraculously multiplied and employed on this occasion.⁵ The rough mountaineers were forced by the hornets into the plains, and there the conflict began, and there the victory was won. Sihon, who occupied the district between the Arnon and Jabbok, having wrested it from Balak's predecessor, had established himself at Heshbon.⁶ The victory over him was duly celebrated in a thrilling war song, which was often sung in later times as illustrative of power and bravery on the part of God's people.⁷ At Jahaz, near the rich pastures of Moab, the decisive battle was fought.⁸ There the slingers and archers of Israel displayed wonderful valor, matched by corresponding skill. Sihon was overthrown, the army retreated, and, seeking to stay its thirst, was finally destroyed in the bed of a mountain stream.⁹

Long did the memory of the contrast between the former glory and the present defeat of the great chief survive in the triumphant songs of Israel. The five Arabian chiefs of the tribe of Midian, who had been the vassals of Sihon, urged the king of Moab to destroy the invaders by the curse of Balaam; but he was powerless to accomplish their wish.¹⁰ But the licentious rites of the Midianites were likely to

lead the people of God into degrading forms of sin. They were, however, saved by the sacred war headed by the priest Phinehas.¹ The Ark was brought out, a blast from the sacred trumpet was heard, and the people were religiously aroused. The chiefs of Midian were slain, and the mysterious prophet shared their fate.² Their pastoral possessions became the property of the conquerors, much wealth in gold and oxen, sheep and asses was secured, and, in harmony with the customs of war at the time, a terrible slaughter of the conquered tribe took place. It is thought that about this time Rameses III.,³ of Egypt, made an incursion into Canaan, and thus Sihon was prevented from obtaining help from his kinsmen on the west of the Jordan.⁴ On marched the triumphant hosts toward the Jordan. Soon Og, the king of a territory extending from the Jabbok to the base of Hermon, was attacked by the invaders. His "iron bedstead," whatever this was, was carried off by the Ammonites as their trophy, and very soon the whole country, part of which was known then and afterward as Gilead, with its walled and fortified cities, was in possession of Israel, while other chiefs and tribes also fell before their restless power.⁵

The tribes of Reuben and Gad were nomadic to a marked degree. They possessed a great multitude of cattle, and so desired the land east of the Jordan as their territory. These tribes never entirely threw off the peculiarities of their patriarchal ancestors. They divided the kingdom of Sihon between them, thus occupying the territory between the Arnon and the Jabbok, and the eastern side of the Jordan valley all the way up to the Sea of Galilee.⁶ Reuben was strictly pastoral, and his tribe rendered but little aid in the struggles of the nation. "Unstable as water,"⁷ he could not excel, and finally he vanished away like any desert tribe. In the song of Deborah bitter complaints were uttered against him for his indifference,⁸ if not cowardice. Gad occupied the forest region south of the Jabbok.⁹ From his tribe came the eleven valiant chiefs who crossed the Jordan in floodtime to assist the outlawed David.¹⁰ They were swift as gazelles, and they were fierce as lions.¹¹ Manasseh on the eastern side, like their brethren on the western shore, possessed something of the pastoral character of Reuben and Gad, but had also a genuinely martial spirit. We might well

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 230.

² Deuteronomy ii, 10.

³ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, Lecture IX.

⁴ Deuteronomy i, 44. ⁵ Exodus xxiii, 28.

⁶ Numbers xxi, 26; Joshua xii, 2, 3.

⁷ Numbers xxi, 27, *et seq.* ⁸ Numbers xxi, 23.

⁹ Josephus, "Antiquities," IV, v. ¹⁰ Numbers xxii.

¹ Numbers xxxi, 6-8. ² *Ibid.*

³ "Bible for Learners," I, 328.

⁴ "Bible for Learners," Drs. Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuenen, Vol. I, p. 328. ⁵ Numbers xxi, 33-35.

⁶ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, pp. 241, 242.

⁷ Genesis xlix, 4. ⁸ Judges v, 15.

⁹ Joshua xiii, 24. ¹⁰ I. Chronicles xii, 14.

¹¹ I. Chronicles xii, 8.

expect a separation to occur between these pastoral tribes and those who crossed the Jordan; such a controversy was almost inevitable, and traces of it are found constantly in their history. The connection with the rest of the nation, however, was never entirely broken. Their territory was most congenial to these pastoral peoples. It is often described because of its fitness for the support of flocks and for its beauty and fertility. This land was often a place of refuge. It is wild, poetic, and mysterious; and it is immortalized in thrilling psalms and romantic histories.

There were inducements for the Israelites to remain on the eastern side of the Jordan; but had they so done, the whole history of Judaism, of civilization, and of Christianity would have been changed. Under the impulse of their high destiny, they pressed forward; they were as certainly drawn from the eastern to the western side as was Abraham from Mesopotamia, or Moses from Egypt.¹ They were now to be transformed from a nomadic to a settled people; from pastoral tribes to agricultural communities. They were to send out their influence to the western world, and to have their part in the great theater of progress to the end of time. Had they yielded to the charms of the fertile valleys and rugged hills on the eastern side of the Jordan, they would have missed their great opportunity, they would have remained insignificant tribes, instead of becoming a mighty people; they might all have been, like Reuben, "unstable as water."

It is fitting at this point that we get a definite idea of the land to be conquered. It has been known at various periods by different names. Sometimes it has been called "The Land of Canaan," from the original settler, Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, who divided it among his eleven sons,² and each of whom became finally the head of a distinct people. The name Canaan applied especially to the country west of the Jordan,³ and was opposed to "The Land of Gilead" on the east. It has also been called "The Land of Promise," because of the promise given to Abraham that it should be possessed by his posterity.⁴ It has also been known as "The Land of the Hebrew," as the descendants of Abraham were called Hebrews, the word "Hebrew" meaning "crossed over," and applied by the Canaanites to Abraham upon his crossing the Euphrates; or perhaps the word came from Eber, the last of the long-lived patriarchs. Sometimes it was named "The Land of Israel," from the Israelites, or posterity of Jacob, who there

found a home. This name occurs frequently in the Old Testament; it included at one time the tract of ground on both sides of the Jordan given by God to the Hebrews for an inheritance. Later, however, the term was often restricted to the territory occupied by the ten tribes. It is also called "The Land of Judah." This title originally was limited to the territory occupied by the tribe of Judah; but after the separation of the ten tribes "The Land of Judah" included the territories which belonged to both Judah and Benjamin; and the whole country, even that beyond the Jordan, retained this name even under the dominion of the Romans. "The Holy Land" is a name which seems to have been used by the Hebrews during and after their captivity in Babylon. This name, "Terra Sancta," or "Holy Land," was the most common one throughout the Middle Ages. The name "Palestine," or the land of the immigrant, was derived from the Philistines, who probably came from Egypt and expelled the aboriginal inhabitants, and then settled on the shores of the Mediterranean. This name was finally given to all the country, although they never really were its masters. Heathen writers have variously used the names Palestine, Syria, and Phœnicia. The population increased so that probably it was not less than 5,000,000 in the most prosperous times in the history of Israel. Canaan was bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the north by the high ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, on the east by Arabia Deserta, and on the south by Edom and the desert of Zin and Paran. These boundaries may be differently described according to the nomenclature which may be chosen. The size of the country varied at different times; but its extreme length seems to have been about 140 to 180 miles, and its average width from 40 to 60 miles. It contained an area of nearly 11,500 square miles, more or less, according to the changes in its boundaries. It lay on the extreme western edge of the East. Asia seemed to have rejected this strip of land, impassable deserts separating it from Mesopotamia and Arabia. It lies on the shore of the Mediterranean, as if waiting to send out its influences to the new world. It became the highway for communication between Egypt and Assyria. Like the Netherlands in Europe, it was the arena on which for successive ages hostile powers fought their battles and contended for the control of vast empires. It lay in the center of the great countries of antiquity, and yet was remarkably isolated. In area and conformation, the country has been frequently compared to the State of New Hampshire. "Along the shore of the Mediterranean run the Shephelah and the Maritime

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 250.

² Genesis x, 15-18.

³ Numbers xxxii, 32.

⁴ Genesis xii, 7.

Plain, broken only by the bold spur of Mount Carmel; parallel to this is a long range of hills; . . . beyond the Jordan valley runs the straight, unbroken, purple line of the mountains of Moab and Gilead. The country from north to south may be represented by four parallel bands—the seaboard, the hill country, the Jordan valley, and the transjordanic range.”¹ Few countries are diversified more beautifully than Canaan, with its mountains, plains, rivers, and valleys. It is essentially a mountainous country; its principal mountains are Lebanon, Carmel, Tabor, Gilead, Hermon, and the Mount of Olives. The plains of the Mediterranean, of Esdraelon, and of Jericho are associated with historic events of the greatest importance. The chief rivers are the Jordan, the Leontes, the Arnon, the Sihor, the Jabbok, and the Kishon. The lakes or seas are the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, and Lake Merom. At the northern boundary are the lofty peaks of Lebanon and Hermon. At the base of Hermon are the sources of the Jordan, “The Descender,” which flows south with innumerable windings into the Dead Sea. From its source to its mouth it has a descent of nearly 3,000 feet, and its windings are so numerous that in a space of sixty-five miles, in a straight line from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, it traverses, in its innumerable curves, at least 200 miles.

The original inhabitants were of various tribes, and portions of their history are involved in great obscurity. The Canaanites, as we have seen, were descendants of Ham, while Abraham and his kindred were descendants of Shem. The Hivites dwelt in the northern part of the country at the foot of Mount Hermon.² They were defeated, together with the united forces of northern Canaan, by Joshua.³ The Canaanites, in the restricted meaning of the word, inhabited the northern valley and the plains west of the Jordan on the coast of the Mediterranean. The Girgashites also dwelt on the west of the Jordan.⁴ The Jebusites occupied the hill country around Jerusalem whose ancient name was “Jebus.”⁵ The Benjamites, to whom this region was assigned, did not fully drive out the Jebusites; it was David who first captured the citadel of Jebus.⁶ The Amorites, in the earlier history of Palestine, inhabited the region south of Jerusalem on the western side of the Dead Sea.⁷ Later they spread themselves out over the mountains which formed the southeastern part of Canaan. They had, as we have seen, before the time of Moses, two kingdoms on the eastern side of

Jordan. The Hittites, or children of Heth, dwelt among the Amorites in the mountainous district of the south,¹ the district afterward called the “Mountain of Judah.”² In Abraham’s time they possessed Hebron.³ After the invasion of Canaan they moved farther north. The Perizzites seem to have occupied various parts of Canaan; and the name is closely associated with that of the Canaanites when Abraham⁴ entered the land. In addition to these seven tribes there were others of the same parentage, such as the Arkites, Arvadites, and other tribes of different origins, such as the Anakim, the Amalekites, and still others.⁵ Taking these people as a whole, at the time of the Israelitish invasion, their history is striking, instructive, and interesting. The Israelites regarded them as monsters of iniquity. They, in the judgment of their conquerors, deserved absolute extermination; but we can see that they, also, in the divine providence, had a mission to fulfill. They had their part to perform as parents of civilization, founders of literature, and pioneers of commerce.

The Phœnician power attained its highest development when Israel sojourned in Egypt—at least so recent discoveries seem to show. With a comparatively high degree of civilization came luxury; and with luxury eventually came demoralization. This law finds its illustration in the history of all peoples, in all countries, and in all centuries. Modern discoveries are giving special interest to these early inhabitants; and still fuller investigation will doubtless add results of greater value to those already secured. It thus comes to pass that much of interest gathers about this Phœnician race. The aboriginal inhabitants, in the view of many writers, once belonged to a region so dim and shadowy that they were called Rephaim, a word afterward used vaguely to describe the ghostly guardians of the underworld.⁶ They appear before us amid the shadows of that remote time, as lofty in stature and fierce in warfare. On the west of the Jordan they appear especially under two names, the Anakim in the southern mountains, and the Avites on the Maritime Plain.⁷ Soon came powerful chiefs belonging to the Phœnician or Canaanitish branch of the Semitic race. The Canaanites, or Lowlanders, occupied the lowlands along the coast. But it is most interesting to remember that Canaanite is but another name for the Phœnician, and that the accursed race, as it appears in the books of Joshua and Judges, is the same as that from

¹ Farrar, “Life of Christ,” p. 67.

² Joshua xi, 3. ³ Joshua x, xi.

⁴ Joshua xxiv, 11. ⁵ Joshua xviii, 28.

⁶ I. Chronicles xi, 5. ⁷ Genesis xiv, 7-13.

¹ Joshua xi, 3. ² Joshua xx, 7.

³ Genesis xxiii, 2. ⁴ Genesis xiii, 17.

⁵ Genesis x, 17, 18; Numbers xiii, 29.

⁶ Stanley, “Jewish Church,” I, p. 230, and the authorities there quoted. ⁷ Stanley, “Jewish Church,” I, p. 231; Deuteronomy ii, 21-23.

which Greece received letters, commerce, and civilization.¹ Indeed, the Septuagint translators, in two cases, use Phœnician rather than Canaanite.² Had they adopted this word throughout, our ideas of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine would be vastly more favorable than they now are. They certainly were a remarkable people; hints are given presenting them to us with their dusky complexions, their gigantic forms, their monarchical institutions, their superiority in social arts, their treasures of brass, iron, and gold, their ability in erecting fortified towns, and their observance of the rite of circumcision. Their religious worship appears to have been peculiarly degrading, consisting of human sacrifices, licentious orgies, and the service of many divinities. As we might naturally suppose, the Gentile accounts of this people showed but little conception of the degrading and debasing cruelties and the nameless sins which true Israelites loathed—sins found in connection with the worship of Baal, Ashtoreth, and Moloch; and yet these are substantially the same deities so familiar to us under the names of Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, Hercules, and Adonis.³ In the mythology of Greece we have the bright side of this heathenism; but in the religious worship of these early inhabitants of Palestine we have the horribly dark side. The legend of Cadmus shows us how they introduced letters to the Greeks; and probably the Hebrews, also, derived their letters from the same source. They founded colonies at Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Asia Minor, Sicily, and Spain. We know, too, that Carthage derived its name of Punic, and probably its language, also, from the same people. The Bible presents them, according to some interpreters, as a Turanian race;⁴ and their adoption of the Syrian language, authorities claim, does not disprove their Turanian origin. It is certainly interesting that under the name of Hittite, or Chittite, they were among the leading races of that early day. Carchemish was their capital, and they held a position of equality with the Babylonian and Egyptian powers. Recent researches at Carchemish, made in 1874 and 1875, by Mr. Skene, the British Consul at Aleppo, seem to establish this fact. Previous to these discoveries, we were dependent upon tradition and monuments for our knowledge of this people. Joshua gave their power a terrible blow, and Rameses III., in his expedition against the Syrians, gave the final blow to their preëminence.⁵ Their religion seems to have

been the parent of the religions of Greece and Rome. Baal was equivalent to Zeus; and Ashtoreth possessed the characteristics of Artemis and Aphrodite. The worship of Asherah, the prototype of Rhea or Cybele, combined certain phallic rites "with the idea of the fecundity of nature." It is not necessary here to trace all the points of similarity between their worship and that of the classic nations; it is sufficient to say that the chief deities known to Greece were derived from the Phœnician pantheon, and that they probably had a similar place in Babylonian worship. They not only gave the Greeks the letters of the alphabet, but also much information in astronomy, in navigation, and in the manufacture of glass, purple, and many other things. No other people ever rivaled the Canaanites, or Phœnicians, in the mixture of bloodshed and debauchery with which they worshiped their deities.¹ All their rites were stained with blood.

They seem to have been divided like the ancient Greeks into a number of separate States; many of which were probably monarchical, but some had a republican form of government. Their kings seemed to have possessed autocratic power, as is implied in several references to them in the Book of Joshua;² and the people seem to have been, on the whole, peaceful in their habits and mercantile in their pursuits. There were, however, leagues formed by both the northern and southern tribes for offense and defense.³ Perhaps, indeed, the great Hittite power was already on the wane when Joshua made his triumphant entry into Canaan. They seem, at one time, to have owed a sort of feudal allegiance to their Hittite head at Carchemish.⁴ Tyre and Sidon, even to a late period, showed the remarkable degree of their commercial achievement and mercantile enterprise. For trading purposes they established settlements on the Mediterranean shore. Other nations of the times were not sailors; the Jews thought of the sea with fear, but the hardy Phœnicians ventured beyond the Pillars of Hercules. They established a large trade in tin and other metals, with the inhabitants of otherwise unknown islands.⁵ They have left footprints in Spain which remain until this day. This was the character of the original inhabitants of Palestine. Against such a people did Joshua have to contend. His military skill, his personal bravery, and the help of God, were all needed in fighting so powerful a foe. The victories he achieved have, to a great degree, shaped the moral progress of the world; for both Christianity and Mohammedanism have sprung from

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 232.

² LXX.; Exodus xvi, 35; Joshua v, 1.

³ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 234.

⁴ Genesis ix, 18, x, 15-18.

⁵ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary," pp. 24, 25, *et seq.*; Wright, "The Empire of the Hittites," pp. 35, 114, 115.

¹ Introduction to Joshua, "Pulpit Commentary," p. 26.

² Joshua ii, 1, 2, ix, 1, x, 1, 3, 5, xi, 1, 2.

³ Introduction to Joshua "Pulpit Commentary," p. 27.

⁴ *Ibid.* ⁵ *Ibid.*

these conquests. Hence, the reason for declaring that Joshua's conquest of Canaan was an event of world-wide importance. It was an event so great in its influence that we might well expect God would mark it with portent and prodigy, and many miraculous displays of divine power.

We have already seen that the task before Joshua was no holiday encounter. He was to war against one of the oldest and the greatest nations of antiquity. Thothmes III. brought much booty from Palestine and adjacent countries, and the records of Rameses II. give evidence of the power of these people in the time of Moses. Valuable possessions, such as gold, cattle, ivory, ebony, horses, chariots inlaid with gold and silver, fragrant woods, gold vessels, ornaments of lapis lazuli, vases of silver, precious stones, and plunder of every kind such as would be produced in a rich and civilized country, were brought to Egypt from Palestine by Thothmes.¹ It was thus no vacant territory that Joshua was to enter, and no savage people that he was to overcome. His difficulties were numerous and great. The Canaanites were furnished with horses and iron chariots, or at least chariots armed with sharp sickles at the hub of the wheels. Some suppose that such chariots were unknown at this time, but it is certain that there were chariots in some way strengthened by iron.² Joshua had to take fortresses and to destroy formidable leagues of brave chieftains and ambitious kings. Against soldiers thus equipped he could only oppose a rude, half-armed militia, with inadequate training and miserable equipment. The Israelites

were approaching as invaders; the Canaanites were fighting for their homes and native land. The Israelites came as strangers to the intricate mountain paths and dangerous caves; the Canaanites were familiar with every inch of the soil in valley and on mountain. Every element within them was thus aroused to defend their land and save themselves from the hated invaders.

But the Hebrews came with a fiery enthusiasm and a holy energy; like the valiant Franks of the fifth century they came to seek a new home. They were inspired by religious fervor; they believed themselves to be the instruments of God to destroy his foes and to establish his truth. They had failed forty years before because they were not wholly loyal to God. The forty years of wandering in the Wilderness, with its painful discipline and frequent punishment received because of idolatrous tendencies, and especially because of God's recent display of righteous wrath against their partial submission to the abominations of Baal-peor,¹ had wrought wonderful changes in their character. They were now recovered from their wandering, and were fierce and zealous for God. They were, therefore, inspired with a holy enthusiasm and an irresistible energy. They believed that God was going before them, that he would fight their battles and would win their victories. Though marching on foot, they believed they could capture chariots and horses, overthrow walled cities, and win glorious victories for God. In this spirit of lofty zeal and holy inspiration, they crossed the Jordan and entered the land of promise.

CHAPTER II.

JOSHUA AND HIS WORK.

WITH the exception, probably, of the Book of Daniel, no other books in the Bible have given rise to more discussion than the Pentateuch and Joshua as to date and authorship. The great miracles of the Book of Joshua have sometimes even created a suspicion regarding its reliability as history. The Talmud affirms that Joshua was its author, that Eleazar wrote the account of Joshua's death, and that Phinehas gave the account of the death of Eleazar. The earlier Jewish tradition considered it a contemporary document. Keil and some others believe that it was composed twenty-five or thirty years

after Joshua's death.² Critic follows critic, showing the absurdity of his predecessor's opinion, only to have his opinions in turn reduced to similar absurdities by his successors. It is not necessary to go into a full statement of the various theories regarding the authorship of this book. As a rule, the destructive critics assume that there is no place for the supernatural in the history; that the parts which claim to be prophecies were written after the occurrence of the events which they assume to foretell; that all the prophecies are legendary additions to historic facts; that the book is the work of many authors; and, finally, that the critics may authoritatively determine the authors of the various portions of

¹ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 384, and authorities there quoted.

² Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 385, and his authorities.

¹ Numbers, xxv, 5.

² Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

the record. But the contradictions of these critics go far to neutralize their authority. The methods some of them employ, if applied to Hume or Macaulay, to Motley or to Prescott, to Shakespeare or to Milton, would reduce their writings to hopeless confusion and meaningless absurdities. The lofty assumptions of some of these critics regarding their predecessors are equaled only by the assumption of their successors regarding themselves. Ingenious though many of these theories are, those of their opponents are equally ingenious, and equally untrustworthy. Ewald regarded the Book of Joshua as "a composition of the Deuteronomist in the time of Manasseh." But where in the book can any conclusive evidence be found that it was written in the time of Manasseh? That there are many and great difficulties in the book all admit; but that there are more numerous and still greater difficulties in the theories of some of these critics may be fearlessly affirmed. That the book was written at an early period is evident from the entire absence of reference to the condition of Israel in later periods of its history. The book gives no evidence of the regal state which marked the history in later times. It seems absolutely certain that it was written before the time of David, for it is affirmed that up to the time of writing the Jebusites dwelt among the people.¹ The reference to the place which God should choose² indicates that the Temple had not then been erected, nor even its site selected. The reference to the Gibeonites,³ without even mentioning Saul's neglect of the promise of protection⁴ made to them, suggests that the book was written before Saul's time. Quite too much has been made by some critics of the phrase "until this day," as suggesting a late authorship for the book. The writer indulges in the habit of repetition which is always characteristic of the early literary period in a nation's history.⁵ Verbal criticism is seldom authoritative in fixing dates or authors; but there are several striking verbal peculiarities which greatly help us in reaching decisions both as to author and date.

The writer's familiarity with the history of the tribe of Judah indicates that he was a resident within the limits of that tribe. A similar remark applies to his knowledge of the personal history of Caleb,⁶ and of the city of Hebron.⁷ The almost uniform Jewish tradition is that it was written by Joshua;⁸ and several Christian writers down to recent times, among whom are Köning and, so far as concerns the

first division of the book, Hävernack,¹ so believe. No one could so well write the account of Joshua's frequent intercourse with God as Joshua himself;² and no one was so likely as Joshua to commit to writing the two addresses,³ delivered in circumstances of so great solemnity, which were Joshua's legacy to the people. He had, also, peculiar facilities of knowing the events related and for collecting documents and making records. The example of Moses in this regard, we may fairly assume, would have its influence on Joshua, his pupil and successor. The additions, undoubtedly made to the book⁴ after Joshua's death, do not invalidate the claim that it was substantially his composition; other events, some of which may have occurred, or at least were completed, after Joshua's death, may also have been added to the record by another writer. It is almost certain, therefore, that the greater part of the book was written by Joshua himself, and all parts of it soon after his death. The expression, "Unto this day," is found fourteen times in the book; but, as already remarked, it does not carry the weight of evidence which many have given it, for in three places,⁵ at least, it undoubtedly refers to a period during the twenty-five years which Joshua lived in Canaan; and in other instances it clearly goes to a period but a little more remote.⁶ In the other passages in which it is used there is no positive contradiction to this interpretation.⁷ Those who find difficulties in believing that Joshua was the author of the volume do not get rid of them by assigning the book to a later date, and attributing it to another author.

It is important, also, that some reference be made to the scope and contents of the book. It consists of twenty-four chapters, and is divided into three main parts: (1) Conquest of Canaan, the first twelve chapters; (2) The Division of Canaan, the next ten chapters; (3) Joshua's Farewell, the two remaining chapters. The period covered by the book is probably about twenty-five years. The first twelve chapters are a continuous narrative, the account being often so minute as to show that it was written by an eyewitness. The divine presence is continually felt in every part of the history. We seem to keep step with the leadership of God in the solemn preparation, the tremendous struggle and the glorious victory.

The whole style of the Book of Joshua is simple and natural. It is free from hero-wor-

¹ "MacClintock and Strong Cyclopædia," article on Joshua.

² Joshua i, 1, iii, 7, iv, 1, v, 2, 9, vi, 2, vii, 10, viii, 1.

³ Joshua xxiii, xxiv.

⁴ Joshua xv, 13-19, xv, 63, xix, 47, xxiv, 29-33.

⁵ Joshua xxii, 3, xxiii, 8, 9.

⁶ Joshua iv, 9, vii, 26, viii, 29, x, 27.

⁷ Joshua viii, 28, xiii, 13, xiv, 14, xv, 63, xvi, 10.

¹ Joshua xv, 63.

² Joshua ix, 27.

³ Joshua ix.

⁴ II. Samuel xxi.

⁵ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

⁶ Compare Joshua xiv, 13-15 with xv, 13, 14, xxi, 11-13.

⁷ Joshua xiv, 13-15, xv, 13-19.

⁸ *Raba Bathra, Cap. I, fol. 13b.*

ship; it does not glory in man. But still Joshua is its chief figure, as it opens with the account of his installation in his high office, and closes with the touching narrative of his death. Attention has been called to the fact that the book stands related to the Pentateuch somewhat as the Book of the Acts of the Apostles does to the Gospels.¹ In the Pentateuch we have a statement of the laws of Judaism; in the Book of Joshua we have an illustration of the application of these laws to life and duty. The Pentateuch and the Gospels give us the youth of Judaism and of Christianity; the Books of Joshua and the Acts of the Apostles the manhood of both. In the Book of Joshua, Moses in a sense continued as a leader of the chosen people; in the Acts of the Apostles, Christ lives in apostles, evangelists, deacons, and martyrs, as the Leader of the Church. The Pentateuch and the Gospels are not primarily historic; they are the text-books of Judaism and Christianity.² They contain history, but simply enough to make clearer the principles which they teach; but the books of Joshua and the Acts are distinctively historical. The Book of Joshua, therefore, is not simply an appendix to the Pentateuch; and, strictly speaking, it is not a preface to the books that follow; it is a link between the two, and yet it has an independent character of its own.

It would be possible to trace the similarity between Joshua and the Acts even to details.³ As Israel was hindered by the walls of Jericho, so the Church was hindered by the ignorance and the prejudice of the men of Jerusalem. At these two cities war had to begin, and their surrender was necessary to subsequent progress. The seven days in the one case are paralleled by the ten in the other. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the trumpet of the Gospel, blown by the Apostle Peter, caused the walls to fall, and gave the Church its first great victory. As Achan sinned and suffered, so, also, Ananias and Sapphira attempted to deceive, and suffered the penalty of death. As Joshua led the tribes to battlefields, so Jesus, as the true Head of the Church under such officers as Peter, John, Paul, and others of like faith and zeal, led the Church into fierce conflicts and secured for the Church glorious conquests. Antioch, Damascus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome will take their places beside the cities conquered by the triumphant hosts under the leadership of Joshua. There were Canaanites still left in the land to corrupt the Church of God in the days of the apostles as in the days of Joshua. The Book

of Joshua bears also a close relation to Christian experience. It illustrates the trials of individual saints in their conflicts with sin and Satan. At the Jordan both Jesus and Joshua began their public ministry. The Church also has its Gilgal, with its memories of neglected duties and its encouragements to their performance. The Church also has its corn of the land ready for the nourishment of the soldiers of Christ. The Church has its spiritual foes as truly as had Israel; but while Joshua dies, the Captain of our Salvation lives and reigns forever, and gives us the assurance that our triumph shall be complete and eternal.

"Moses my servant is dead!"¹ This is a truly startling announcement in the history of Israel. This is, also, the divine greeting to the noble Joshua. Who can be a successor to the great Moses? Who can take up the work which the illustrious leader and inspired law-giver lays down? Are God's resources exhausted? Has he no other leader for his chosen people? He may not have another Moses; but another Moses is not needed. "To every man his work,"² is a divine law. A great variety of gifts is needed in the work of the Lord, and men possessing a great variety of gifts are furnished by the Lord for his work. The death of the greatest man does not, after all, make much of a gap in the plans of God; God can bury or translate the leaders and still continue the march. Great trees need to be removed sometimes that saplings may have room to grow. Few would expect after reading, "Now, after the death of Moses," that the command would immediately be given, "Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan;"³ but this is God's method. He immediately calls another leader into his service. He practically tells the people not to bow their heads in too much sorrow, not to spend strength and time in useless tears. The loss, indeed, is great, but there shall be an element of gain even in the great loss. The shadow will not be long upon the path. Leaders die, but God lives, and his work must go forward. Let, then, his people arise, gird on the sword, and continue their march of trial and triumph. A new era is dawning; a new leader is furnished. Great as is the blank in the history of Israel when Moses dies, there shall be a leader divinely equipped, who shall accomplish the divinely appointed end. Not a priest, but a soldier, is to be the successor of Moses, and he is none other than the brave and noble Joshua, the son of Nun. He is a man of illustrious pedigree; it reaches back to Joseph.⁴ Elishama, his grandfather, marched through the wilderness of Sinai at the head of his tribe; perhaps he had special charge of the embalmed

¹ Dr. Donald Fraser, Lectures on "The Books of the Bible," p. 78.

² Introduction to Joshua, "Pulpit Commentary," p. 8.

³ Fraser, "Books of the Bible," p. 79, *et seq.*

¹ Joshua i, 2.

² Mark xiii, 34.

³ Joshua i, 2.

⁴ I. Chronicles vii, 20-27; Numbers i, 10, ii, 18-24.

body of Joseph.¹ It is a great gain to have noble ancestors; and in this honor the tribe of Ephraim fully shared. Moses acted personally in this matter and earnestly referred to the divine promise in the case.² Already Joshua has been honored as the heroic assistant of Moses; already as his bosom friend.³ They furnished one of the best illustrations of an unselfish and beautiful friendship to be found in the early history of Israel. To Joshua will be intrusted the difficult, but successful, leadership of the chosen people. The history will not cease, nor will its continuity be broken, although a new leader is provided. This glorious promise was given to Joshua, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."⁴ Was ever a nobler promise given to any man? The man to whom such a promise is given will be strong and do exploits for God and for man!

Moses and Joshua differed greatly, and no doubt men of widely different characteristics were needed. For the work now awaiting Israel a soldier was required, and a soldier was furnished—the first soldier set apart for this purpose in the history of God's people. Joshua has not been conspicuous as a teacher; he did not assume the functions of a prophet. Dean Stanley has pointed out that he even disliked the extension of prophecy and "could not restrain his indignation when he heard that there were unauthorized prophesiers within the camp."⁵ He was a simple-hearted man, a dauntless leader, and a heroic soldier. He first appears in sacred history when appointed to repel the attack of Amalek.⁶ But for a long time he remained in obscurity. God's great men must bide their time. The true Joshua lived in silence for thirty years in the obscure and dishonored village of Nazareth. Joshua stands on a sublimely historic hilltop midway between Moses and Samuel. His spear is ever associated with his name, and he appears constantly before us with it in his hand or hanging from his shoulder. He was exhorted by the Lord, in connection with the sublime promise of which we have spoken, to be "very courageous";⁷ and his patient labors and his wonderful achievements show how fully he obeyed this exhortation. Never did he turn to the right hand or to the left, however difficult and dangerous his duties were.

We see him moving grandly forward leading the hosts from Jordan to Jericho,⁸ from Jericho to Ai,⁹ from Ai to Gibeon,¹⁰ from Gibeon to Beth-horon,¹¹ and on at last to Merom.¹² He

was marked by that most uncommon sense which we call common sense. He was a Napoleon in his ability to make a forced march; a Grant in patient heroism; a Lincoln in love of liberty and justice; and a Gustavus Adolphus, a William the Silent, a Havelock, a Gordon, a "Stonewall" Jackson, and a General Howard in consciousness of the divine presence and inspiration. Not to him, as to Moses, did the divine command come in the burning bush; but it came to him in the person, as we believe, of Jehovah-Jesus, appearing as Captain of the host of the Lord, with a drawn sword in his hand.¹ The drawn sword symbolized his form of duty, and bravely did he do it until the kings of Canaan, the enemies of the Lord and of Israel, lay conquered at his feet.² If ever there was a name given to a man by divine prescience, it was the name Joshua. Originally the name was Hoshea, meaning "Salvation";³ later it was changed to Jehoshua, or simply Joshua, meaning "God's Salvation." It finally took the form of Jason, through the Greek, but more often the form of that name which is above every name, "Jesus."⁴

Most writers have seen a striking resemblance between the lives of Joshua and Jesus. This analogy is not fanciful; it demands our considerate attention and our appreciative recognition. In that early day the name of Joshua suggested the deliverance which Jesus was to secure for his people from their enemies, and especially from the great enemy of the human race. Joshua saved Israel from Canaanitish and other foes; Jesus was to "save his people from their sins."⁵ The history of Joshua also suggests the martial and soldier-like features under which Christ is so often represented as "The Captain of their Salvation."⁶ Joshua began his life by sharing the sufferings of his brethren in Egypt; so Jesus took upon himself the form of a servant and suffered with his brethren. The passage of Jordan under Joshua was free from difficulty and danger; so Jesus robs the river of death of its terrors. Joshua took twelve stones from the bed of the Jordan as witnesses of the deliverance wrought by God; so Christ selected twelve living witnesses of his resurrection. Joshua also suggests Jesus as the Overcomer of all enemies, a character which is conspicuously illustrated in the writings of the Apostle John, both in his Gospel and in the Book of Revelation.⁷ Joshua brought Israel into the land of promise; Jesus brings his people into the heavenly Canaan. When Joshua completed his work he ascended the Mount of

¹ Parker, "People's Bible," V, p. 45.

² Exodus xiii, 19. ³ Exodus xxiv, 13, 14.

⁴ Joshua i, 5. ⁵ Numbers xi, 28.

⁶ Exodus xvii, 10. ⁷ Joshua i, 7.

⁸ Joshua vii, 2. ⁹ Joshua viii, 1.

¹⁰ Joshua ix, 17. ¹¹ Joshua x, 10. ¹² Joshua xi, 7.

¹ Joshua v, 13.

² Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 253.

³ Numbers xiii, 16.

⁴ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 254.

⁵ Matthew i, 21. ⁶ Hebrews ii, 10.

⁷ Revelation iii, 21.

Ephraim and lived in quiet and security from his foes; so Jesus, having finished his final work, ascended to the right hand of God.¹

Joshua was the son of Nun, and of the tribe of Ephraim. He grew up as a slave in the brickfields of Egypt. He learned to govern wisely in manhood, because he learned to obey promptly in boyhood. It is evident that he was born about the time Moses fled into Midian; he was, therefore, a man about forty to forty-four years old at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. Moses was skillful in knowing and using men, and he readily discovered the qualities in Joshua which would make him, for the time, his fitting colleague, and afterward his able successor. At the fight with Amalek at Rephidim, Moses chose Joshua to lead the hosts of Israel.² When Moses ascended Mount Sinai to receive the tables of the law, Joshua accompanied him for a part of the distance,³ and was the first to meet him on his return. He was uncontaminated by the idolatry of the golden calf. He was also one of the twelve chiefs sent to explore Canaan,⁴ and he was one of the two who had courage and knowledge sufficient to give a favorable report of what they saw. He and Caleb were the only ones of the twelve exploring princes who urged the people at once to enter the promised land.⁵ At the close of the forty years of wandering, Joshua remained as one of the few survivors of the earlier day, and Moses, but a little time before his death, solemnly inaugurated him and invested him with authority of headship over the people.⁶ He was thus chosen for the service which Moses forfeited at Meribah.⁷ Later, God gave an additional charge to Joshua.⁸ We shall see later in his history that his is one of the lives, so few in any history recorded with completeness, on which no stain ever rested. Had he lived in the Middle Ages, he would have been celebrated by chronicler and poet as a knight, warrior, and saint. He combined the gentleness of a pure and noble life with the whole-souled courage which comes from a high and unselfish motive. He stood near to God; he heard the word and saw the vision of the Almighty. His majestic presence inspired Israel with awe,⁹ while his mildness and his gentleness in remonstrating with the erring showed the love of a father's heart. He was permitted to gather the fruit of the seeds which Moses sowed. During his active life the Hebrews were preëminently the people of God; but dark shadows fell upon the close of his life, because of the worldly and idolatrous spirit of

the people. He was probably about eighty-four years of age at the time of the passage of the Jordan; and for the next twenty-six years he was actively engaged in his great work of conquering and dividing the land which God gave to him and his people. His unselfishness showed itself in his waiting until all others had received their share before he asked anything for himself,¹ and the portion which he received was small at best,² and was located in the rough mountain country which had been given to his own tribe of Ephraim.³ In that portion of the land he received Timnath-serial,⁴ for which he had asked, and there he spent his remaining days. At the age of 110 his beautiful life ended⁵ in harmony with the spirit which had marked it from the beginning of his public career. At Shechem he summoned the tribes to a solemn assembly; he warned them against idols in the heart, and gave them a farewell charge to be ever faithful to God.⁶ Joshua knew the fickleness, rebellion, and idolatry of his own nation, and so, almost with his last breath, he faithfully warned them to beware of the abominations of their heathen neighbors. Not so much as a warrior, but rather as a friend and father, does he address them. Standing on the brink of the grave, he exhorts and commands them to live in the fear of the Lord. Thus, in simplicity of heart, in loyalty to his people, and in consecration to his God, this aged servant passed to a better Canaan—even an heavenly.

But we return to the order of the narrative. As soon as the mourning over the death of Moses was over, Joshua, now the leader of the people, made the necessary preparations for crossing the Jordan. He gave command that provisions for three days should be prepared; and he also reminded the tribes east of the Jordan of their promise to aid their brethren.⁷ He also sent two spies to Jericho, as this was the first city which he intended to attack.⁸ This city they reached in safety, and there they abode with a woman named Rahab, who lived on the city wall.⁹ Their entrance, however, had been observed, and soon the king sent to Rahab, commanding her to give up her visitors as spies. But their hostess became their unexpected ally; and she manifested a remarkable degree of ingenuity in devising methods for their safety, and for throwing the king's messengers off their track. She affirmed that her guests had already left her, but might be caught if their pursuers hastened at once for that purpose. But her guests were safely hidden on the flat roof of her house, and were

¹ Ephesians iv, 8, *et al.*

² Exodus xvii, 9. ³ Exodus xxiv, 13.

⁴ Numbers xiii, 16. ⁵ Numbers xiv, 6-9, xxxii, 11, 12.

⁶ Deuteronomy xxxiv, 9.

⁷ Numbers xx, 11-13; xxvii, 15-23.

⁸ Joshua i, 1-9. ⁹ Joshua iv, 14.

¹ Joshua xix, 49.

² Joshua xix, 50.

³ Joshua xix, 50.

⁴ Joshua xix, 50.

⁵ Judges ii, 8.

⁶ Joshua xxiv, 1.

⁷ Joshua i, 11-15.

⁸ Joshua ii, 1-3.

⁹ Joshua ii, 15.

covered by the flax which had been recently gathered and was left upon the roof to dry.¹ The king's warriors hastily left the house and made for the passage of the Jordan with all the speed which they could command, and the gates were soon shut behind them, as the time for closing them had come. Their hostess then went to the spies on the house-top, telling them that she had rescued them because she feared the Lord. Already the people of Jericho had heard much of Jehovah, of how the Red Sea became dry at his command, and of how the lands of Sihon and Og had fallen before the power of God's people. She intimated that everyone trembled before them, as no one could withstand the power of Jehovah, the God of Israel, and the God also of heaven and earth.² She then besought the spies to spare her, saying, "Swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token."³ The spies, grateful for the kindness which she had shown, and fully believing that they were acting in harmony with the will of God, took the oath with the condition that she should prove faithful to the end. They then arranged that when they took the city they would shelter her and all her relatives in her own house, and that the besiegers should know the house by the sign of a red cord.⁴ The spies were then let down through the window over the city wall. For three days they hid among the mountains,⁵ and then, having bravely swam across the Jordan, they reached the camp in safety, apparently on the fifth day, and they were able to make report, saying, "Jehovah has given us the land, for its inhabitants tremble for fear before us."⁶

The pledge which the spies made to Rahab, Joshua and the tribes faithfully kept. We know that she was afterward married to Salmon, a prince of the tribe of Judah and son of Naason;⁷ she became the mother of Boaz, the grandfather of Jesse, the father of David. Thus Rahab was one of the ancestors of him who was David's son and David's Lord. Thus, also, she was one of the four women who are named in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus—Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba, all foreigners. These were not stainless names; and this fact has its purpose in connection with the work of Christ. The relatives of Rahab also shared the blessings conferred upon her, lived permanently in Israel, and were placed on a footing of entire equality and hearty friendship.

There has been much discussion regarding the character of Rahab, and the moral quality

of the act which she performed for the people of God. Several scholars of repute prefer the more modest rendering of the word usually translated "harlot," and make it mean simply a hostess; but it is no doubt useless to attempt to explain Rahab's position as simply that of a hostess. Eastern khans, strictly speaking, are not controlled by hosts, far less by hostesses; and the custom of the country would not permit these spies to lodge at the house of any reputable oriental woman. It is interesting to see how providence coöperated with various coincidences¹ in relation to the visit of the spies to the house of Rahab. Probably hers was the only house into which they could go without arousing the suspicion of the enemy. We cannot understand all of God's purposes in using unworthy instruments for carrying out his divine designs.² The woman was there, and the help she could render was needed. Of that help the spies took advantage at this critical period in their journey, and in the history of a great and divine movement. God can use unworthy men and women to advance his divine purposes, and to achieve his determined results. We cannot trace the path of the Almighty when he is treading these devious and obscure ways. Who can say how much the character of the Son of Man was determined by these strains of Gentile, and, as we would say, of tainted blood? Who can determine how much this fact had to do with the sympathy which he manifested for certain classes of women during his earthly career? Who can tell what memories of his own strangely commingled national life filled his soul and moved his heart? Every man is his ancestors in remarkable ways; every man is his descendants in ways equally wonderful and mysterious. No one has yet fully understood the laws of heredity.³ Jesus Christ was the human race; he was, in the profoundest sense, the Son of Man. All the nobility of man and all the tenderness of woman were wrapped up in and manifested by this unique Man. He knew humanity in all its temptations and achievements. Rahab was a student of God's dealings with the nations. Perhaps she enjoyed special opportunities for acquiring knowledge of current events. Perhaps, also, she had her times of serious thoughtfulness over the possibilities of a nobler life. Even the most terribly lost have such times. No one, however, must suppose that the Word of God indorses the character of Rahab as a whole, or even the part which she performed in this strange transaction. She was guilty of falsehood and treason. Nowhere does the Bible indorse her treachery or falsehood; it narrates,

¹ Joshua ii, 6.

² Joshua ii, 11.

³ Joshua ii, 12.

⁴ Joshua ii, 18.

⁵ Joshua ii, 22.

⁶ Joshua ii, 24.

⁷ Matthew i, 5.

¹ Parker, "People's Bible," V, p. 82.

² Blaikie, "Book of Joshua," p. 153, *et seq.*

³ Parker, "People's Bible," V, p. 83.

but does not approve, her conduct. It never pronounced a eulogy on either her conduct or her character. She had remarkable faith and equal intelligence regarding God's presence and purpose. She seemed, in this respect, to rise above herself, above the life she lived, and above the faith even of Israel. God is evermore selecting in strange ways those whom he divinely guides and heroically inspires for sublime faith and work. It was true in that early day, as often at a later time, that scarcely in Israel did he find so great faith and obedience. The Bible often approves of one quality in men and women, while its principles practically rebuke all their other characteristics. This statement finds illustration in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Let it, then, be distinctly understood that God nowhere commends the falsehood of Rahab. The Bible in this respect is absolutely clear of blame.¹

When the soldiers of the king demanded the messengers from Rahab, their request was in harmony with eastern customs, which assumed that no man would enter a woman's house

without her knowledge and permission. As it was the time of the barley harvest, flax and barley being ripe at the same time in the Jordan valley, bundles of flax stalks were naturally on the roof of the house, undergoing the process of drying. The stalks of flax often grow to the height of three feet, and are as thick as a cane.

But for the introduction of this woman into Israel, and for her relation to our Lord, probably no commentator would for a moment question the natural interpretation of the narrative regarding her character. She, however, became a public benefactor to the people of God, and has honor in the history of Israel, in the history of Christianity, and in the history even of the human race. That scarlet cord hanging from the window marked her house, and is illustrative of the scarlet line which runs all through Revelation, marking the presence of Christ as the sacrifice for men, and suggesting the safety which comes to all those who trust in the great truth thus suggestively symbolized.

CHAPTER III.

THE JORDAN AND JERICHO.

WE are now approaching a greater crisis in the history of Israel than any which she had experienced since she crossed the Red Sea. A new epoch is opening before her and us. Great results, for weal and for woe, depend upon the events of the next few days in the history of the people of God. The spies have returned, bringing the information that Jehovah has given Israel the land, and that the "inhabitants tremble for fear before us." Between the people and the Promised Land lies the deep valley of the Jordan, and its gloriously historic and strangely mysterious river; and they must prepare to cross it and to possess the land.

It was a time of deep thankfulness on the part of Joshua, and on the part of all the more thoughtful of the people. Between them and the land rolled the river Jordan, whose current was now swollen to an unusual degree. This river was formed by the junction of three mountain streams, themselves formed by numerous fountains and springs of Lebanon. An order was issued that the people should "sanctify"² themselves by legal purifications and by heart-examination in prospect of the wonders soon to be performed by God. The cloudy pillar seems to have disappeared with the

death of Moses; but the Sacred Ark was now in a special sense the symbol of God's presence. It was near the Passover. The river was greatly swollen because of the melting of the snows on Hermon, and it here and there overflowed its banks. To ford it was absolutely impossible; but it was not necessary. God was now to show Israel and the nations that he was still the leader of his people. The narrator describes the passage over the river with distinctness and beauty. It is a scene which is never forgotten by subsequent writers; it is a scene which has been taken up into the hymnology of the world, and into the touching allegories of Bunyan and other writers. On the bank of the swollen stream we see the priests with the Ark on their shoulders. At the appointed time they bore it forward until their feet touched the water of the rapid-flowing river. The Ark of God was not now occupying its secure central position, but was carried in the van. This movement was dangerous, though necessary to the fulfillment of the divine design. Joshua was apparently exposed to any sudden attack or secret ambush of the enemy; and had such an attack been made, the Sacred Ark might have been captured and the hopes of the people would have been disappointed; but the Ark was borne forward in safety to the bank of the river. The

¹ Parker, "People's Bible," V, p. 84, *et seq.*

² Joshua iii, 5.



From a photograph.

SOURCE OF THE JORDAN.

army followed at a distance of more than three-quarters of a mile.¹ The warriors of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh left their families and flocks behind and joined in the heroic and pious enterprise.² The river, swollen by the early rains and the melting snows on Mount Lebanon, rolled its full volume at the feet of the priests as they stood with the Ark on their shoulders. The Ark was borne to the river; below it marched the army; the women and children being placed, according to the Jewish tradition, in the center for greater protection from the force of the current. Now occurred an amazing miracle. The feet of the priests touched the waters at the edge of the Jordan. Suddenly, as if the hand of God had been thrust into the midst of the stream, the full bed of the Jordan was dried up before their eyes. Far up the river, in Adam, the city which is beside Zaretan, as far as the parts of Kirjath-jearim³—that is to say, at a point thirty miles distant from the bank on which the priests stood—the waters were arrested, until they stood and rose up as if they had been congealed at the command of God. The waters below flowed off into the Dead Sea, and the river bed, over all the intervening space, was left perfectly dry. Israel then passed over dry-footed. Motionless the priests stood in the middle of the channel until the entire host had passed over, the waters being held back until the bearers of the Ark had left the bed of the stream. The three transjordanic tribes, numbering 40,000 men, marched in front, and were thus the first to put foot on the shore. After all had passed over, the Jordan flowed on as before, and, as before in the month Abib (part of our April and May), overflowed its banks. This stupendous miracle gave to Joshua additional authority over Israel, and Israel additional power over her foes. Two appropriate monuments, each built of twelve stones, in accordance with the number of the tribes of Israel, were raised to commemorate the wonderful event. One monument stood in the middle of the Jordan where the feet of the priests had stood during the crossing;⁴ this was, to some degree, simply a tribal monument. The other was a national memorial, and was built on a larger scale. As the priests left the river bed twelve stones, which had been laid bare in the bed of the river, were selected by the twelve chiefs of the tribes.⁵ These stones were placed at Gilgal, in the center of the first encampment of the Israelites on the plain of the Jordan, and became the place of the first Sanctuary in the promised land—the first place considered specially sacred in the Jordan valley, and the place where the Taber-

nacle remained until it was located at Shiloh.¹ For long years Gilgal gave evidence of the honor conferred upon it in connection with this wonderful occasion.

The manna on which the tribes had fed during their desert journey ceased, as soon as the river was crossed.² God never needlessly multiplies miracles. It was best for the people now to eat of the last year's corn and the other produce of the country; and of these sources of supply they partook with gratitude and joy. It is believed that the site thus chosen has been identified by the Palestine Survey, at Jiljulieh, which is but a slight change in the word Gilgal. The name is given to a spot three miles southeast of the supposed site of Jericho. Here, also, all who had not undergone circumcision during the wilderness journey were by that rite introduced into the commonwealth of Israel.³ The neglect of that rite was regarded as a deep reproach, and that reproach was now to be removed.⁴ The knives of flint used in the performance of the rite were long preserved and regarded as relics of a peculiarly sacred character. A name commemorating the event was given to the hill where it had taken place, this hill being called Gilgal, a word whose very meaning indicated that the reproach of Egypt was "rolled away." This rite was the token of their submission to God as his chosen people. Dean Stanley reminds us that a Jewish sect is still reported to exist at Bozra which claims to have separated itself from Israel at this time because they abhor, not only circumcision, but everything that would remind them of the rite, refusing even to cut with knives at their meals. The Passover was now celebrated for the first time in Canaan,⁵ and the first since leaving Sinai—the cakes were not made of manna but from the grain of Palestine, the bread being found in the houses of the people of the district.⁶

The Jordan has been passed, memorial cairns have been erected, the rite of circumcision has been observed, and the Passover has been kept; but the glorious history has only been begun. The people did not march out of Egypt simply to cross the Jordan; they are to overthrow a city hoary with age, venerable in appearance, and strongly fortified by walls and soldiers. In divine things, as in many human affairs, one victory is but the prophecy of other victories; each step taken implies and necessitates the taking of other steps. The first miracle is but the beginning of a series of miracles in the development of the divine purpose. The Jordan of death which God's people shall cross is but the beginning of greater triumphs in the advancing eternal life in Christ. That river the

¹ Joshua iii, 4.² Joshua iv, 12.³ Joshua iii, 16.⁴ Joshua iv, 9.⁵ Joshua iv, 20.¹ Joshua xviii, 1.² Joshua v, 12.³ Joshua v, 2.⁴ Joshua v, 9.⁵ Joshua v, 10.⁶ Joshua v, 12.

great Priest of the everlasting Covenant will enable us to pass over dry-shod and we shall enter upon a still more glorious career of attainments. So with ancient Israel; in passing the Jordan that advance was but the beginning of terrible conflicts and glorious conquests. Gilgal became the frontier fortress. It formed the base of future operations, and was long the headquarters of the army and of the tribes. There the Tabernacle remained until it was removed to Shiloh. The people were now to enter upon a new career.

Even before crossing the Jordan, the attention of Joshua was fixed on Jericho. It was the key of Palestine. It lay seven miles west of the Jordan, and commanded the entrance of the chief pass into the land of Canaan. Nature and art combined to make the city apparently impregnable. On the west side were lofty and apparently impassable mountains. In the city were springs of water, and not far distant were groves of palm trees. The great military problem confronting Joshua at the beginning of his career was the capture of this city. Its abundant water supply, and the fertility of the country, so greatly increased by the heat of a tropical region nearly seven hundred feet below the level of the sea, were additional inducements to the people to capture this city. They regarded it as accursed of God, and were ready to be the instruments of God in inflicting the divine vengeance upon the place. It was also a beautiful region. Luxuriant verdure, abundant moisture, and groves of palms gave it varied charms; and the vicinity was beautified by streamlets, by cultivation, and by variegated shrubs, so that it possessed attractions not often found in Palestine. While in the camp at Gilgal, the people must have gazed on the groves of majestic palms—groves said to have been about three miles in breadth and eight in length.¹ Compared with the territory through which the people had passed, this was a sight to gratify the eye and to gladden the heart. The line of mountains near the city only increased the charm of this fruitful landscape by their prominence and ruggedness. Near the base of these mountains rose, in the midst of the abounding verdure, the temples and palaces of Jericho. To the minds of the wilderness wanderers this city was as beautiful as a dream. It was famous, also, for its wealth and luxury; but it was an object of hatred to Israel, because it was the center of idolatrous worship, and especially of worship associated with all the painful memories of Baal-peor. Here was the home of Ashtoreth, the consort of Baal. Indeed, some have interpreted the word Jericho to mean "City of the Moon,"

and the moon was the well-known symbol of that depraved goddess. It should be said, however, that others understand the word to mean "place of fragrance." It was doubtless the abode of the most revolting rites of an abominable heathenism—a heathenism which Israel regarded as an utter abomination to Jehovah. The Israelites must have regarded this city, notwithstanding its wealth and splendor, with abhorrence and loathing. Jericho was really the only important town in the Jordan valley. Its rich temple, its gold, silver, iron, brass, and Babylonian hangings, indicated its wealth. Above the highest trees rose its lofty walls and towers. It was known as "Jericho, the City of Palms."¹ It was described as "high and fenced up to heaven."

All is now ready for the attack upon this famous city, and soon it is laid under siege. We feel that we are in an atmosphere charged with divine power. The great events which already have taken place, and those pressing now upon us, are under the guidance of the God of Israel, even as was the Exodus from Egypt. Great as are the sagacity of Joshua, the courage of the spies, and the faithfulness of Rahab, we cannot but feel that behind and above all these human instrumentalities is the hand of the Almighty. The storm is about to break upon Jericho, encircled with its amphitheatre of hills. The dwellers in Jericho prudently await behind their walls the attacks of the heralded foe. No one of the citizens is allowed to go in or to come out. They are prepared to offer a desperate resistance; but to their amazement no attempt is made to storm the walls, or force the gates. They see simply a peaceful procession marching in silence round the walls of the city. Their surprise must have given place to amusement, and finally to contempt. What could these fanatical people mean by such a procession? It is true, and they learned it with wonder, that these invaders had crossed the swollen river Jordan, and they doubtless regarded this achievement as a miracle strangely wrought; but the taking of Jericho would be quite another matter. They considered themselves entirely safe behind their strong walls, with their full supply of provisions, and with their trained soldiers; they believed that they were thus able to defy the assaults of almost any foe. If amused or terror-stricken at the first approach of the conquerors of Gilead and Bashan, they would now be only amused and would soon cease to be at all alarmed as, day by day, they watched the strange circuits made in total silence. They observe the priests bearing the Ark on their shoulders, while they hear the sound of trump-

¹ Stanley, p. 260.

¹ See descriptions by Milman, Geikie, and Stanley.

ets. We do not know with certainty whether these trumpets were rams' horns or only of that shape. The number seven, however, impresses us at once as we read this narrative. There are seven priests; there are seven trumpets, and they go before the Ark for seven days, and on the seventh day they go around the city seven times.¹ Now the panic of the people gives place to confidence. Nothing is farther from their minds than that the walls are to give way, and that their enemies are to enter the city in triumph. For six successive days the mysterious marching goes on, and no voice is heard from the vast army, no sound but the shrill notes of the trumpets. On the last day six rounds are made; the seventh is begun, and it is now proceeding; they have neared the close of the last round and the whole army suddenly sends up a tremendous shout. Immediately the walls of the city fall flat, and the triumphant invaders, flushed with victory and deeply conscious of the divine presence and power, rush over the walls and through the streets among the defenseless and flying people. Some have supposed that natural agencies in the form of earthquakes or volcanic convulsions contributed to the falling of the walls.² We know that such convulsions were not uncommon in the Jordan valley. But the marvel is that the convulsions should occur at the right moment in the attack upon the city. Even though it should be proved that natural agencies were employed, the supernatural element is by no means thus eliminated. If ever there was a time when miracles were appropriate in the history of God's people, it was then. These miracles really form a part of the series which began with the plagues of Egypt, was continued in the crossing of the Red Sea, in the guidance of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and in the daily supply of manna. It was the time of the establishment of a new epoch in the kingdom of God, and it was fitting that he should surround it with glorious evidences of his presence and power. God, in accomplishing his great purposes, may use any number of secondary causes; but his presence is clearly seen in the use of these causes at the right time and for the accomplishment of the determined end. God's people in later days, through inspired psalmists, sang of the glory of this victory, giving all the praise to God, whose right hand and whose holy arm had gotten him and them the victory. Joshua himself was profoundly impressed with the idea that Jehovah was leading his people. Before the city was attacked, the illustrious Being who appeared to him with a drawn sword in his hand answered

¹ Joshua vi, 4.

² See King, in his "Morsels of Criticism," III, 287, 305, mentioned by Stanley.

Joshua's challenge with the assurance that he was the Captain of the Lord's host,¹ and Joshua reverently threw himself at his feet awaiting his commands and conscious of the divine Presence.

A terrible fate awaited the inhabitants of Jericho; dire punishment was to be meted out to this doomed people. This city had been laid under the ban; it was devoted wholly to the Lord. Everything in it, therefore, was slaughtered — not merely human beings, but also the beasts of burden. Not a single person, save Rahab and her relatives, was spared. The precious metals were consecrated to the Lord, but all else, including cattle, houses, furniture, everything, was consumed in one fearful sacrifice. Joshua further pronounced a terrible curse over this scene of desolation; and a malediction was uttered, also, upon the head of him who should rebuild this city, now reduced to utter desolation.² Israel was distinctly commanded to smite and utterly destroy the Canaanite race, to show no mercy, and to save alive nothing that breathed. Perhaps this command was not literally obeyed, in all cases; for we know that, in regions named as entirely depopulated, strong Canaanite towns are later found. But, with whatever modifications we may understand this command, we know that the extermination was extensive, and that the penalty inflicted was terrible.

The fall of Jericho was of vast importance to the subsequent victories of the invaders; it opened to them the passes into the neighboring hills. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, commanding them to go up and view the country. We do not know exactly where Ai was situated, but the command given by Joshua indicates that it was near the head of the ravine running up from the Jordan valley. The inhabitants of Ai were strongly fortified, and they drove the invaders backward, smiting them as they went down the declivity.³ This defeat greatly startled Joshua and the children of Israel. The victory over Jericho had been so signal, that it was difficult to understand how an insignificant town like Ai should defeat the victorious invaders, and this surprising check of the two or three thousand men sent to take Ai led to serious inquiry. They were repulsed with the loss of thirty-six of their number; should such defeats be multiplied the terror of the people would at once pass away, and Israel would be at a great disadvantage. Joshua and the elders of the people rent their clothes, put dust on their heads and cast themselves in wonder, inquiry, and penitence before the Ark the whole day;⁴ and all the people were on the point of being panic-stricken. But a careful inquiry revealed the

¹ Joshua v, 14.

² Joshua vi, 26.

³ Joshua vii, 5.

⁴ Joshua vii, 6.

cause of their defeat. The spoils of Jericho had been devoted to destruction; and the divine command had been disobeyed by one man. This man was Achan, and he was of the tribe of Judah. He had taken some gold and silver, and a Babylonian mantle, literally "a mantle of Shinar," of beautiful appearance, and of great value.¹ His offense was twofold: it was a breach of military discipline, and also an act of religious disobedience. Joshua fully realized that he could not allow his soldiers to enrich themselves with the plunder of Jericho. Should he yield at this point, all discipline would soon be destroyed, and the holy enthusiasm and lofty patriotism of the people would be wanting. Achan could not induce himself to burn this robe or to throw the gold and silver into the treasury of the Lord. Foolish man! Wicked man! Did he think that Jehovah did not see his act nor know his heart? As a consequence of his guilt, Israel was defeated. No man sins alone. One man's act may involve his family, his city, his nation in the consequences of his evil conduct. By a most skillful process of elimination Achan was selected by lot out of all the people as the guilty man. The lot fell on the tribe of Judah, then on the family of the Zarahites, then on the household of Zabdi, and then of that household on Achan, the son of Carmi.² His guilt was confessed, and the righteous wrath of Jehovah was inflicted. Achan, his daughters, sons, oxen, sheep, asses, tents, and all his possessions, were brought into a neighboring valley where the terrible punishment was inflicted upon him and them.³ He was crushed under a shower of stones and his body was burned with the furniture, the robes, and the beasts which he had owned, and then a huge cairn was raised over the spot where God's justice had been so signally vindicated. The place was called "the Valley of Achor," "the Valley of Troubling."⁴ It is almost certain that Achan's family shared in his guilt, and so shared in his punishment. By a natural law, whose operations are seen to this day, a man's family shares in his social honors, political preferments, and intellectual achievements; and by the same law his family must suffer, to this hour, in his wrong-doing of whatever kind. This law is as universal as gravitation; it is ancient as man; it is eternal as God.

The divine punishment having been thus inflicted upon Achan, Joshua was assured of the divine presence,⁵ should he make a fresh attack upon Ai. He, therefore, placed by night 5,000 men in ambush far up the ravine between Ai and Bethel, and thus showed that now he had formed a better estimate of his enemy's

strength than on the former occasion. And in another of the deep gorges, which abound in the district, he concealed 30,000 men, and approached the city. The men of Ai, emboldened by their former success, came out to meet them; then the Israelites, pretending to be panic-stricken, fled and the men of Ai pursued. The hidden troops, seeing their opportunity, dashed into the city, the gates being left open and undefended, and set it on fire. This having been done, Joshua's men came out at the front gate to attack the garrison as it rushed back, and Joshua, facing about, also attacked them. The pretended retreat became a deadly attack both in front and rear, and the garrison was slain to the last man, 12,000 warriors of Canaan having fallen, and of Ai nothing remained but blackened stones.¹ The king alone was taken alive, the people having been exterminated, and before night he was hanged on one of the trees near the town. A heap of stones marked the spot where the king's body was cast, after hanging for a day upon a cross. The Israelites in this case were permitted to retain the spoil and cattle. Soon Bethel, also, two miles distant, fell into their hands.

The time was now ripe for an assembly of the people, and for a renewal of their vows of fealty to God. God had given command to Moses that the tribes should assemble at Shechem.² This place was in the center of the land, and was already sacred in the associations of the people. There they were to hear once more their obligations to God and their duty to one another. At Shechem, Abraham and Jacob had pitched their tents, and there Jacob had purchased the field in which the bones of Joseph were to be placed, according to the command received by their forefathers hundreds of years before.³ We, therefore, see the nation, including women and children, and even the representatives of other races, going on the pilgrimage from the banks of Jordan at Gilgal to the space between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. There, also, was the well Jacob had dug, and the oak beneath which he had buried the idolatrous images and other valuables belonging to his family.⁴ Attention has often been called to the fact that this is, perhaps, the most beautiful spot in all Palestine. The valley lies north and south, with a width of from one-quarter to one-half a mile; it is between the twin mountains Ebal and Gerizim, whose summits are two miles apart, although their bases are so near. This valley is one of nature's own great and glorious cathedrals. It was a fit place, alike because of its intrinsic beauty and its historical associations, for a

¹ Joshua viii, 25. ² Deuteronomy xi, 29.

³ See Geikie's fine description, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 410. ⁴ Genesis xxxv, 4.

¹ Joshua vii, 21. ² Joshua vii, 16-18.

³ Joshua vii, 24. ⁴ Joshua vii, 26. ⁵ Joshua viii, 1.

great assembly of the chosen people. No fewer, it is said, than eighty springs supply the rivulets which pour down the slopes, clothing the glen with a garment of greenness and beauty. Here are gardens musical with many birds. Here are the fig, the walnut, the orange, the lemon, the pomegranate, and many other shrubs, while vines and plums fill the scene with rich foliage and luxuriant fruit. Here is Gerizim, rising a thousand feet above the valley "in a huge dome of chalk," whose base is hollowed out into many caves. Dark blue limestone ridges rise with various levels to the summit. On the north stands Ebal, rising in a gentle slope of steel-blue rocks, with cliffs 200 feet higher than those of Gerizim. On the north are many springs. Flowers of many colors and varieties spring up amid the luxuriant grass. The atmosphere is filled with particles of vapor rising from the numerous springs, making the air soft, hazy, and salubrious to an unusual degree. This is really the paradise of Palestine. This valley is a dream of beauty as compared with most other parts of the land. Here, in later times, came one greater than Joshua. It was at Nablus, the modern representative of Shechem, that Jesus sat by the well at the noonday hour and spoke of the water of life to the woman of Samaria.

A sublime sight greets us as we gaze back upon the great assembly gathered under the direction of Joshua. He selected huge stones, covered them with a coating of plaster, inscribed on them an abstract of the law, and then placed them on Mount Ebal. Here, also, an altar of unhewn stones was raised, which was consecrated by burnt sacrifices and peace offerings. The descendants of Jacob, by his lawful wives, took their place on Mount Ebal; his descendants from the handmaids of Leah and Rachel, with Reuben, stood on the slopes of Mount Gerizim. Six tribes were on one height; six on the other. It is common to represent Ebal as a barren, stony, and desolate crag, and Gerizim as a lovely, fertile mountain with luxuriant verdure, abundant streams, and shady groves. If this difference between the mountains was real, Ebal would tell how God would smite the disobedient, and Gerizim how he would bless the obedient with abundance and happiness. The priests with the Ark occupied the valley between the two hills, and about them were the elders, officers, and judges of the nation. The great host are now assembled and are waiting a public proclamation. The silence is broken as the Law given by Moses is read

aloud to the vast multitudes. The voice of the reader ceases, and the tribes on Mount Ebal, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali, respond to the readings of the curses on disobedience, with a loud "Amen"; those on Mount Gerizim, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin, to the recital of the blessings for obedience, respond with a loud "Amen." This was a scene whose impression was as lasting as it was profound and solemn.¹ Tests in modern times have been frequently made at this place which have clearly shown that the voice of a reciter can still be heard by many thousands gathered in this valley and on the slopes of the inclosing hills. Indeed, some tests have proved that speech a little louder than ordinary conversation can be heard perfectly by persons stationed on opposite sides of the valley. It is thus easy to see with what perfect ease the commandments could have been recited and heard. Dr. Geikie calls attention to the fact that such a scene enacted about 1,200 years before the first Punic War, and 1,000 years before Socrates, is, indeed, unique in the history of the world. No other nation ever pledged itself in this solemn way to a religious life so high and holy. The curses as well as the blessings are peculiar to Israel; they include especially such sins as idolatry, disobedience to parents, unkindness to the blind, to strangers, widows, and orphans, and the removal of the land-mark of a neighbor. The laws even of to-day, in the most enlightened nations of the earth, have not reached so unselfish, so lofty, and so noble a standard. The inscriptions on plaster, because of the dryness of the climate, were as lasting as they would be in some countries if carved in granite. Dr. Thomson tells us that inscriptions on the rocks at Sinai, though only mere scratches, are perfectly distinct, after the lapse of thousands of years; and in Egypt and Palestine inscriptions and paintings on plaster are as distinct as when made thousands of years ago.

This form of consecration having taken place, Jehovah having thus been recognized by all the people, and having taken Palestine in his name, the people returned, doubtless with a deep sense of the solemnity of the occasion, to Gilgal, which was still the headquarters of the tribes. As we shall see, the peace now enjoyed was to be rudely disturbed; and fierce battles were yet to be fought, and great victories were yet to be won.

¹ Dean Milman, "History of the Jews," I, p. 255.

CHAPTER IV.

STANDING STILL OF SUN AND MOON.

THE success of Israel at Jericho, Ai, and elsewhere, caused a general panic among the inhabitants of Palestine; they were ready to abandon all their possessions in order to escape the power of the advancing Hebrews. Indeed, it seems evident that a considerable proportion of the population of Central Palestine fled before they were attacked. The subdivision of the people into small communities made them incapable of united action, and the lack of organized troops caused general demoralization. The way was now opened for great triumphs against the people of the land. The great body of the Hebrews still remained encamped at Gilgal. Soon a company of travel-stained men with moldy provisions, rent wineskins, and worn shoes, presented themselves as if they had come from a distant country.¹ They declared that the fame of the Hebrew conquests had reached their remote land, and that they had come to offer their submission. The Israelites entered into a treaty without due inquiry, and they soon found that they had been imposed upon by the inhabitants of Gibeon, a Canaanitish city, which lay at no great distance from the base of Beth-horon, and immediately opposite the pass of Ai. Naturally this city would soon have fallen, in any case, into the hands of the Israelites. The device of the Gibeonites was most quaint, simple, and, withal, strategic. They pretended that they had not heard of the victories of Israel in the Wilderness and in Palestine, but simply of the great conquests made long ago over the Egyptians,² and east of the Jordan. The Israelites were not without their suspicions, but finally they made a treaty with them, and, although it was made under false representations, it was held sacred by Joshua and his people.³ The lives of the Gibeonites were spared, but they were doomed to a kind of slavery to the officiating priesthood, and in that condition their descendants were found long afterward. David was loyal to the vow which Joshua made to the Gibeonites, and this adherence to plighted faith is worthy of all praise in the careers of both Joshua and David. Dean Stanley calls attention to it in contrast with the example of so-called Christians, who have frequently refused to keep faith with those they called heretics and infidels. He cites the case of Cardinal Julian Cæsarini, who, in an elaborate argument, urged Ladislaus of Hungary, when tidings had arrived of unexpected help for the Christian

host, to break the solemn compact he had made with Amurath II., but, as the result proved, to the king's undoing; for Ladislaus, acting upon the cardinal's advice, only hurried his army to destruction. Joshua might have found an excuse for breaking faith with these Gibeonite deceivers; but although the congregation murmured against the princes, the latter said, "We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: now, therefore, we may not touch them."⁴ And their lives were spared, although, as we have seen, they were, with their own consent, subjected to tributary service.⁵ This incident has given a name to one of the popular novels of Walter Besant, whose writings have done so much to ameliorate the condition of the poor of London, of England, and also of America.

The capitulation of Gibeon brought a crisis on the Amorite kings. A league was formed, including five princes of the Amoritish race headed by Adoni-zedek. The purpose of this league was twofold; it was to revenge the defection of Gibeon and to arrest, if possible, the further progress of these triumphant invaders. The five kings, or princes, united in the league were: The king of Jebus, the king of Hebron, of Jarmuth, of Lachish, and Eglon.⁶ These banded together, hastened into the hill country and invested Gibeon. The elders sent hastily to Joshua for help.⁷ Encouraged by Jehovah, he responded to their call for assistance and suddenly broke up his camp, made a rapid night march, at the head of a large force of picked men, and before sunrise reached the foot of the hill on which Gibeon stands.⁸ The sight of Joshua and his men struck terror into the foe. Uttering their terrible war cry, they fell on the Canaanites, utterly defeating them, and pursuing them with great slaughter. Much depended on the suddenness of Joshua's blow. On a former occasion it took three days to go from Gilgal to Gibeon; now, by a forced march, he made the journey in a night. It was all-important that he should break in pieces this confederation even before it was fully formed. This march and victory give Joshua a high place as a military leader. Jehovah himself threw Israel's enemies into confusion and defeat. They fled in frantic haste toward Beth-horon. A tremendous hailstorm increased the panic and added greatly to the numbers of the slain.⁹ Jehovah is represented as discomfiting them and hurling the huge

¹ Joshua ix, 3, *et seq.*

² Joshua ix, 9.

³ Joshua ix, 15, 16.

⁴ Joshua ix, 19. ⁵ Joshua ix, 23. ⁶ Joshua x, 3, *et seq.*

⁷ Joshua x, 6. ⁸ Joshua x, 8-10. ⁹ Joshua x, 10.

hailstones upon them as they fled. It is said that more died from the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.¹ It was on this occasion that the memorable event, known as the standing still of the sun and moon in their respective courses at the prayer of Joshua, took place. Never before nor since was there a day, according to popular belief, when Jehovah had so listened to the voice of a man, and Jehovah had so fought for Israel. This was one of the great battles of history; it largely determined the fortunes of the world and the Church. The five kings finally escaped from their pursuers and hid in a cave near Makkedah;² but they were discovered and placed under guard, and, after the pursuit was over and the remnant of their scattered forces had escaped to their own cities, the doom of these kings was pronounced—a fate sufficiently horrible to fill the mind with sadness even to this hour. Apparently they had not raised a hand against the Israelites, but they were dragged out of their place of concealment and humiliated by having five of the Israelite chieftains place their feet upon the necks of these kings, in token of the complete triumph of the one and the absolute overthrow of the other.³ They were then put to death, and for the rest of the day the five bodies were hung upon five trees;⁴ when they were finally thrown into the cave which they had chosen as a place of refuge, and a heap of stones was raised at the cave's mouth to preserve the memory of their destruction.⁵

No one could now stand before Joshua. Makkedah was taken, and its inhabitants perished. The same lot befell many in southern Canaan. Indeed, the slaughter was complete, the victory was almost unlimited. City after city was reduced, and tribe after tribe was destroyed. Joshua finally returned to Gilgal, having subdued the south as far as Gaza,⁶ with the exception of some very strong fortresses.

Joshua now turned his attention to the invasion of northern Canaan. The princes of the north, like those of the south, united their forces and strove to expel the Israelites. They organized a powerful confederacy and assembled their countless hosts near the waters of Merom.⁷ They derived great strength from the number and character of their war chariots. In the central plains and valleys of Palestine cavalry and chariots could engage in battle with greater effect than in the more mountainous districts in the south. Joshua, however, with the rapidity and vigor of a Cromwell, fell upon them, and in a single battle decided

the fate of that portion of the land. He burned their chariots and ham-strung their horses.¹ Hazor was the headquarters of the confederacy, and was the first place to fall before the power of Joshua, and its inhabitants were put to death; with the exception of the cities situated on the hills, all the other cities were burned. This war is spoken of as lasting from five to seven years, and during this period seven nations—the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Hivites, Perizzites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites—were overthrown, though not extirpated, and thirty-one kings were defeated.² We are not surprised to know that the Israelites finally grew weary of the war and longed to enjoy the comforts of peace. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh were dismissed, at their urgent request, to their families and possessions on the east of the Jordan. But, although Israel's foes were defeated, they were not destroyed; their conquest was incomplete. Many of them still remained within the territory and were ready on every occasion to harass their conquerors, and were constantly leading the Israelites into the barbarous practices and licentious rites of their degrading idolatries.

Two questions are now to be answered: What can be said in explanation of the apparent arresting of the sun and moon in their respective courses? What is the justification of the policy of extermination, commanded by Jehovah and executed by Joshua?

What is the significance of Joshua's command to the sun and moon to stand still in their respective courses? This is a vexed and a vexing question. Jewish and Christian commentators have found this to be one of the most perplexing passages in the Bible. Was it a stupendous miracle, or can it be otherwise explained in harmony with the language of the narrative? That God could perform a miracle, however great, we do not for a moment doubt; we place no limit whatever to his power. It is easy for God to introduce into the boundless ranges of creation laws with which we are not familiar, and whose introduction seems to us a miracle of the most stupendous kind. We do not hesitate to say that God could make the clock of the universe stop, without jarring the mechanism, by introducing laws now unknown to us. He certainly could produce an apparent stoppage of the machinery in entire harmony with recognized law. This he might do through the laws of refraction, as many have already supposed, or in some other way. We know that by various processes we get the after-glow of sunset in the diverse forms familiar to travelers on lofty mountains and in high latitudes;

¹ Joshua x, 11.² Joshua x, 16.³ Joshua x, 24.⁴ Joshua x, 26, 27.⁵ "The Bible for Learners," by Drs. Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuenen.⁶ Joshua x, 40, 41.⁷ Joshua xi, 5.¹ Joshua xi, 6-9.² Joshua xii, 24.



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JOSHUA COMMANDING THE SUN TO STAND STILL.

and this might be done without resorting to the violent methods which some have adopted in explanation of this narrative. But is it necessary to introduce even this modified view of the miracle supposed to have been wrought? We have no hesitancy in accepting a miracle which has been wrought by God; but we are unwilling to allow commentators to introduce their imaginary miracles into the sacred narrative. God, for wise purposes, has seen fit to introduce miracles into both the Old and the New Testament; but he has apparently reduced them to a minimum. Was there, in the ordinary sense of the word, any miracle here? Many able writers, whom no one would suspect of being opposed to revealed religion, doubt not only the extent but even the existence of a miracle in this case. They do not suppose that there was even a preternatural refraction of the sun's rays after it had really gone below the horizon. They regard the description as that of a highly wrought poetical passage taken from the Book of Jasher. Let us look carefully at the evidence in favor of this opinion.

The Book of Jasher, or "the Upright," appears to be a collection of eulogistic odes in praise of national heroes. Some, indeed, have supposed that it refers to some book or books of the Bible itself. It is mentioned¹ when the reference is to teaching the use of the bow. It has been suggested, as an explanation, that Joshua besought God that the black clouds of the storm driving up from the sea should not blot out the sun, and thus bring on night before his victory was complete.² When, according to this explanation, the sun shone out again from the tempest, and the moon stood clear in the sky, his prayer was supposed to be answered. Maimonides, whom Hengstenberg and many other Christian commentators follow, regarded it as simply a poetic way of saying that the day was long enough for the Israelites to win the victory and to slaughter their foes. The early rabbis were almost unanimous in believing that the sun literally stood still; but like the Christian Fathers they differed among themselves as to the length of time that it remained above the horizon.³ Some said that it so remained twenty-four hours, and after its setting that the moon still remained stationary. Some supposed it remained forty-eight hours, others thirty-six hours, and some twenty-eight hours. Some commentators favor what they call a "subjective" prolongation of the day, believing that the day was simply supposed by the Israelites to have been lengthened, they being too busily engaged to note the time. Still others suppose

that the lightning which accompanied the hail-storm was prolonged into the night, giving the night the appearance of day; and that the hail-storm was caused by the standing still of the sun. These latter suppositions are among the curiosities of Biblical interpretation.¹ Which, then, of these views, are the more probable? As already implied, we distinctly dismiss, in our interpretation, all ideas of the impossibility of such a miracle. God holds the waters in the hollow of his hand; he metes out the heavens with a span.² He could certainly arrest the progress of a great universe, though it were ten thousand times greater than it is. Man can stop, in harmony with its own laws, a machine vastly greater than himself. Cannot the Creator stop, by the introduction of higher laws, the machine which he has set in motion?³ It is simply a question as to whether or not he did interpose his power and perform a miracle in this case; and it may be a fair question as to whether so stupendous a miracle were necessary or were likely to be performed by God, who is always economical in his adaptation of means to ends. The success of the Israelites was so great, and the destruction of their enemies so immense, that it may well have been their belief that the day was lengthened miraculously for their advantage. It can readily be seen that those who believe in a literal miracle have some reason for that belief, because such a miracle would give a deathblow to the prevailing superstition of the country connected with the worship of the sun and moon. There is something wonderfully sublime in supposing that the deities of the conquered people were thus arrested in their progress, and made witnesses of the discomfiture and overthrow of their worshipers. But we are not compelled to resort to any such interpretation. We need not regard Joshua's prayer as more literal than the apostrophe of Isaiah, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would flow down at thy presence."⁴ It is, perhaps, not to be regarded as more literal than the statement of Deborah and Barak that, "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera";⁵ not more literal than the words, "the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord";⁶ "the mountains skipped like rams,"⁷ and "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands."⁸ Joshua's words remind us of Wellington's at Waterloo, "Oh, that Blücher or night would come!" There is in the "Iliad" a prayer by Agamemnon, as quoted by Geikie,

¹ Michaelis and König, cited by Keil and quoted in Introduction to "Pulpit Commentary."

² Isaiah xl, 12.

³ See Keil and Delitzsch "Commentary on Joshua and Judah," p. 112.

⁴ Isaiah lxiv, 1.

⁵ Judges v, 20.

⁶ Psalm xcvi, 5.

⁷ Psalm cxiv, 4.

⁸ Isaiah iv, 12.

¹ II. Samuel i, 18. ² Rev. Samuel Cox.

³ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 20.

that is not unlike the prayer of Joshua as here recorded:

"Jove greatest, Jove most glorious, sky-dweller, cloud bedight,
Let not the sun nor darkness fall and wrap the world in night,
Till Priam's stately palace I cast in ruin low."

Then, again, the words of the original have been strangely misunderstood. Literally rendered, they give an idea differing from that usually supposed to be taught: "Then spake Joshua to Jehovah, in the day when Jehovah gave the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said before the eyes of Israel, Sun, in Gibeon, be still! and moon in the vale of Ajalon. And the sun was still, and the moon stood till a nation was avenged of its enemies. Is not this written in the book of the upright? And the sun stood in the midst of heaven, and did not haste to go down, as a perfect day. And there was not a day like that before or after it, for Jehovah to hearken to the voice of a man, for Jehovah fought for Israel."¹ The meaning of the author, it is clear, is involved in some obscurity; but it is quite certain that it is not positively affirmed that the sun remained in the heavens a day, or even an hour, longer than its usual time. What is stated is that Joshua, in impassioned and poetic words, commanded that the sun and the moon should not set until his work was completed, and that this result was secured. The sun and moon were witnesses of his great deeds. They held their courses until his triumph was complete. These words are clearly seen to be poetic expressions. God was with Israel, and they won a glorious victory over their foes. Great States were banded against Israel, with all the appliances of warfare, and yet they were defeated in a single day with tremendous slaughter. It was eminently fitting that Israel should embody such a glorious victory in their national songs, and relate how the sun did not set until the triumph was won, and how the moon continued her light until the defeated remnants of the mighty army were driven from the fields.² It would be strange, if this were a miracle, that it should not be mentioned in any other parts of Scripture among the great things that God did for Israel. No allusion to this event is found except in one obscure passage.³ The omission of such an allusion seems decisive as to the view which inspired writers took of this passage. The importance of the passage seems to have been greatly exaggerated by both the friends and foes of revealed religion. Josephus makes but slight allusion to this supposed miracle,

¹ Translation in Introduction to "Pulpit Commentary."

² For opposite view see Doctor Crosby, "Joshua," and Doctor Blaikie, "Joshua."

³ Habakkuk iii, 11.

saying only "that the day was increased, lest the night should check the zeal of the Hebrews"; and the Samaritan Book of Joshua simply says that "the day was prolonged at his prayer." The traditional interpretation of this distinctly poetic passage invested it with alarming importance when the Copernican system was set forth by Galileo.¹ Around this miracle fierce ecclesiastical battles have been fought—battles almost as important as that fought by Joshua himself. The Vatican has had its share in these battles, and has had to confess its repeated mistakes. We may fearlessly affirm that there can be no collision between science and Scripture when both are rightly interpreted. The explanation of Kepler, quoted by Dean Stanley, deeply interests all students of the passage.² "They will not understand that the only thing which Joshua prayed for, was that the mountains might not intercept the sun from him. Besides, it had been very unreasonable at that time to think of astronomy, or of the errors of sight; for if anyone had told him that the sun could not really move on the valley of Ajalon, but only in relation to sense, would not Joshua have answered that his desire was that the day might be prolonged, so it were by any means whatsoever?" It is time that the great fabric of argument that has gathered around this passage should fall to the ground. It has been somewhat mistranslated; it is possibly an interpolation; it is at least a quotation. In no case ought it longer to trouble devout students of the Word of God.

The progress of physical science in our day has entirely changed the earlier relation of miracles to divine revelation. They are not now considered to be of special evidential value. They were once believed to contribute greatly to the establishment of a divine revelation, and to the support of the Christian religion; but now many affirm that they are objections to faith in the Bible and obstacles to the progress of Christianity.³ The universality and invariability of physical laws, which have been emphasized in recent times, make any departure from the observed course of nature somewhat startling. What once were considered wonderful portents are now seen, in many cases, to be but the natural result of higher laws, of whose existence, until lately, we had no knowledge. There are those who would put the miraculous events of the Bible into the same category with the prodigies of heathen fables, or with the apparitions of Lourdes, Knock, and Ste. Anne de Beaupré. We may well believe that miracles are necessary to

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, p. 275.

² Stanley, p. 277.

³ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 15, *et seq.*

attract attention to new developments of religious truth. Miracles have been frequently called the great bell which summons the congregation, but after it has assembled it may hear something better than the noise of the bell. So with the progress of thought there is constantly a tendency to reduce the miraculous element to the lowest possible point. That element was certainly present during the Jewish history previous to the dawn of Christianity; that element most gloriously marked the birth of the Christian faith and the establishment of Christian truth in so many nations of the earth. It is not surprising that the presence of Jesus Christ among men should have been accompanied by unusual manifestations of the divine presence and power; but after his ascension it was to be expected that the miraculous element should, to a great degree, disappear from sight and thought. He had given the fullest manifestations of power necessary to the establishment of his truth.¹ All that man needed for his salvation was now made known. Faith in the power and mercy of God was able to transform character and to fit men for heaven. The modern miracles of the Roman Church will not bear the test of careful scrutiny. They are neither needed nor established. They tend greatly to throw suspicion upon the true miracles of Judaism and of apostolic days. The supposed miracles of healing, so frequently quoted by Roman writers, are paralleled by equally striking examples of healing on the part of devout Protestant churches or other religious organizations; and these, in turn, are paralleled by supposed cases of healing on the part of men and communities making no claim to any power but magnetism or some other occult science. As to the question of the possibility of miracles, we are free to say that when we admit God we may unquestionably admit all that God sees necessary to be done for the revelation of his will and the establishment of his Church; and there really is neither small nor great with God. All the discoveries of modern science are making it easier than ever before to believe in the existence of God and in the manifestations of his power which have been usually called miraculous; the universality and invariability of law do not eliminate God. Back of all laws is God, and through them he works. Back of all forms of evolution is God as the great Evolver; and nothing can be evolved which was not first involved. Invariable forces and laws are, after all, most plastic in the hands of men moving in harmony with intelligent knowledge of these laws and forces. The will of man is constantly working upon physical agencies in obedience to invari-

able laws. The hand which holds up a book checks for the time being the law of gravitation by introducing another law. The law of preservation in salt checks the law of destruction in meat. The higher law controls the lower.

We make no greater claim for God in relation to miracles than we may rightly make for man in relation to scientific progress in our own day. The discovery of electricity, in its various applications, is almost miraculous. What to-day is a truism was yesterday an unknown phenomenon. The finger of God seems to drive the trolley cars through our streets; and we are to make in the near future discoveries still more marvelous than those which have been made in the recent past. To-day thoughts instantaneously leap from America to England, 3,000 miles under the mighty deep. Here is what once would have been called a miracle. Here is an adaptation of law which is not miraculous, but perfectly natural. We are greatly in need of a new definition of miracles. To-day, Paris speaks to London and to Brussels through the telephone. To-day, New York speaks to Chicago, in round numbers 1,000 miles away, through the telephone. The opening of this long-distance telephone marked an era in the history of invention. To-day telegraphs girdle the world, making it a whispering gallery. To-day telautographs reproduce writing between London and Paris and other cities hundreds of miles away; and the page-printing telegraph sends messages in perfect typescript. If man can talk to man 1,000 miles away, who will dare say that man cannot talk to God and that God cannot talk to man? Telepathy may yet explain thousands of secrets now profound mysteries. Perhaps communication with God may be in a truly glorious sense most natural, God speaking to us and we to God in perfect harmony with natural laws now unknown by us. We are discovering new laws governing locomotion. We shall discover still more wonderful laws, in these and other respects, before many years shall pass. We shall cross the Atlantic in five days, propelled by steam; soon, perhaps, in half that time propelled by electricity; and not much later, perhaps, we shall cross the ocean in air ships in journeys reckoned by hours instead of days. We have brought lightning from the clouds; we use the sun to print photographs. We are able to register the amount of heat generated by the flash of a firefly. We may yet be able to tell the amount of good or evil which men exert over those who come near them. Our discoveries are so wonderful that they have ceased to excite wonder. Who will dare to say what God can do, without violating law, when man has accomplished such wonders in

¹ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

harmony with higher laws, lately discovered? All true science is the handmaid of true faith; all scientific discoveries make faith in God easy; and revelations which once were difficult, are now explicable and simple. Surely it is not so wonderful that God could arrest the course of a river like the Jordan, when man can drain seas in Holland, transforming them into fruitful fields. Surely it is not so wonderful that God should make a path through the midst of the Red Sea, when man can achieve the wonders of modern times. Surely it is not so wonderful that the Creator of heaven and earth should cause the walls of Jericho to fall to the ground, and that, perhaps, by perfectly natural means, pressing into his service laws with whose existence and operations we are not familiar, when a little girl by touching a button caused an explosion of the rocks in the East River near New York, or when one could cause an explosion which would lay Chicago, New York, Paris, or London in ruins. Who are we that we talk about what God cannot do? Who are most of us, that we presume to talk of what man cannot do? Who are even our greatest scientists who presume to deny what greater scientists may accomplish in the near future? The discoveries of

science really render faith in miracles easy, natural, and, one might almost say, inevitable. These discoveries put the defense of revelation in the same category with the defense of modern achievements by the discoveries of laws only recently known and employed. The discovery of these laws in these latter days has brought man into a position in which the vastly sublimer actions of God, in what we call miracles, are seen to be only the result of the application of higher laws which, for the time being, hold in check the usual operations of lower laws with which we are familiar. It could easily be shown that in one sense our Lord's miracles were natural; they certainly were not contra-natural, even though we may say they were supernatural. The man who opposes a divine revelation because of its affirmations regarding natural phenomena, might with equal propriety oppose the affirmations of modern science regarding any phenomenal events with which he did not chance to be familiar. The fact is that all true science lays its crown at the feet of the Almighty Creator, and becomes the handmaid of divine revelation. In the presence alike of true science and divine revelation, human ignorance should be modest, obedient, and reverent.

CHAPTER V.

MORAL DIFFICULTIES IN BOOK OF JOSHUA.

IN the judgment of many critics, the moral difficulties found in the Book of Joshua are greater than the astronomical, or the other miraculous phenomena. Why did God permit, or command, the extermination of the Canaanites? This question many objectors to divine revelation have asked, and they have answered it with serious reflection upon the Bible and the God of the Bible. Several considerations ought to be mentioned at this point to enable us the better to understand this whole question. The history of the partial extermination of the Canaanites is brought out very clearly in connection with the successive massacres following the battle of Beth-horon. We might have considered this matter at that point in the history; but there will be a gain in commenting on these difficulties in their relation to one another. Most persons who read the closing portions of the Book of Joshua are greatly confused by the divine sanction of the cruelties connected with these fearful massacres. One naturally asks, How could such massacres occur without demoralizing the people who were humanly responsible for their commission? How could a book claiming to be divine even seem to indorse such terrible slaughter? Some persons

have endeavored to explain the matter by a partial denial of the facts; while others have attempted to treat this part of the history as if it were a mere allegory. And still others have illustrated the divine method by a reference to the destruction of human life in epidemics, in earthquakes, and in other great natural convulsions.

The extermination of the Canaanites was in obedience to the command of God. In Deuteronomy we read, "Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them;"¹ and the reason assigned is, "that they teach you not to do after all their abominations."² Is such a command in harmony with the divine attributes of justice and mercy? It ought to be borne in mind that God's revelation of himself is given in sundry parts, according as men are able to receive the truth. God has to do—it is said reverently—the best he can with the material in his hand. The age of Joshua was particularly marked by ignorance of the character of God, and was correspondingly characterized by a low ethical standard among men. Men were savage and brutal; acts

¹ Deuteronomy xiii, 15, xx, 16.

² Deuteronomy xx, 16-18.

were allowed, and even commanded, at that time which would have been utterly forbidden under the Gospel of Christ. Men had not then learned to say, "Our Father who art in Heaven."¹ They thought of God as a God of strict justice; and no other thought was then fully made known. The spirit of mercy inculcated by Christ was entirely unknown. It is thus quite unfair to carry back from the New Testament the morality it teaches, and to apply it to the conduct of men living in this early age.

It was also an age when might made right. Property was not an individual possession, but rather that of the community. And as a consequence, communities rather than individuals were held responsible for the acts performed. Punishment of the nations was, therefore, in harmony with the conditions of life and the form of justice then prevailing. Joshua thought himself the minister of God in punishing the sins of the Canaanites. The people of Canaan might have been punished, as were those of Sodom and Gomorrah, by a special divine retribution, without the sword of Joshua; but such punishments would have been less instructive than the method employed. The Israelites were in a sense responsible for the morality of the Canaanites, as for that of Israel; and no act of God could so impress the hatefulness of sin on the part of the Canaanites as the employment of the Israelites as his instrument in punishing their crimes.

It ought to be borne in mind, also, that the Canaanites were guilty of the most abominable crimes conceivable by the human mind—crimes heinous above those committed by others of their time. They sinned against the light of nature, against the examples of patriarchs of an earlier generation, and against the warnings given by God in the punishment of the cities of the plain. If it was wrong for God to punish the Canaanites by the sword of Joshua, it would have been wrong for him to punish them by an epidemic, pestilence, or other natural display of his righteous wrath. God certainly has permitted epidemics in all countries. He has also permitted massacres frequently to take place in connection with the movements of armies in all lands. When people sink into luxury and vice, they bring terrible punishment upon themselves, as the inevitable consequence of the laws of nature which they violate. Other conquerors, such as the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians, were far less merciful than was Joshua. The Greeks and Romans stained the progress of their armies by crimes from which Joshua was entirely free. These classic nations did not

hesitate to dedicate captive women to the impure worship of Aphrodite or Mylitta. The violation of women and children was almost universal in the case of towns sacked by armies of the earlier heathen and even of the later Christian days. In later days the severities of the period of Joshua find many parallels in the bloodshed and lust which marked the steps of the victorious barbarians who destroyed the Roman power. Goths, Vandals, Huns, Bulgarians, and Turks frequently surpassed Joshua in their pitiless cruelties.¹ The conduct of the Duke of Alva, acting in the Netherlands in harmony with Philip II. of Spain and the Pope of Rome, was vastly more abominable, in its varied forms of atrocities, than were the conquests of Joshua over the Canaanites. How could God permit these barbarities in later and more enlightened days? How could God even apparently, by providential opportunities, indorse the commission of these awful crimes? How could God permit the horrible cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition? We do not answer one difficulty by suggesting others, but we show at least that the problem is not peculiar to the time of Joshua or to the revelations given in the Bible. If the God of revelation be cruel, the God of nature must be considered equally cruel; for nature inflicts its wrath upon weak women and harmless children even in our own time.²

It ought to be remembered, also, that the punishment inflicted by Joshua was not intended to gratify a cruel disposition on the part of Israel. All students of history know that the institutions and principles of the Israelites were vastly more humane than were those of the surrounding nations. In punishing the Canaanites God was but expressing his stern indignation against abominable vice. These vices would, by the operation of natural laws, have brought upon any nation guilty of such practices a more cruel death than that inflicted by Joshua. We have only to turn to Leviticus³ to see the awful catalogue of abominations which, we are distinctly told, were committed by the men of the land.⁴ We are also told that God abhorred the defilements of the people.⁵ Some forms of their crimes were long punishable by death in Great Britain and her colonies, when the laws were strictly enforced. No words are too strong to express the abhorrence which all men ought to feel, and which pure men do feel, against the nameless crimes committed by these Canaanites. The power of the women of the land to lead Israel

¹ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

² John Stuart Mill, in his "Essay on Nature," accepts this position. See Bishop Butler's use of this argument.

³ Leviticus xviii, 20.

⁴ Leviticus xviii, 23-30.

⁵ Leviticus xx, 23.

¹ Matthew vi, 9

into sin was sufficiently and terribly proved; indeed, there seemed to be no means of preserving Israel in purity but by the destruction of these impure seducers. As a matter of fact, whenever Israel refused to destroy these panders of vice, she herself lapsed into the abominably idolatrous practices about her. In all such cases lust, cruelty, and bloodshed abounded, and soon innocent children were sacrificed on the altars of Moloch. Who will say that the utmost severity commanded by God and inflicted by Joshua was not, in the largest sense, the greatest kindness to the greatest number?

We ought also to remember, as has already been suggested, that the commands of God through Moses were greatly in advance of the moral education of the world at the time. We have often so dwelt upon the failure of the Israelites to carry out God's grand designs that we have not adequately appreciated their helpful influences. The history of the conquest of Palestine will compare favorably with the history of most other conquests throughout the world. Never was a leader of conquering armies less governed by selfish, personal, and ambitious ends than was Joshua. Placed alongside of Cæsar, Alexander, Charles V., Philip II., or even Napoleon Bonaparte,¹ Joshua appears conspicuous for his purity of heart, his unselfishness of aim, and his consideration for all the interests alike of conquerors and conquered. Men must always be judged with reference to the standard of morality of the times in which they lived. Moses and Joshua were far in advance of the moral standard of their age; they were the unworldly and the godly men of their time. The charge rightly made against Columbus is that he lived far below the highest standard of his time. The Jewish religion never introduced barbarism into the world; on the contrary, it greatly softened the spirit of cruelty wherever it was established.

It ought also to be observed that God had given the Canaanites repeated warnings of approaching judgment. Their religion, as we have seen, was impure and degrading almost beyond description. God was now to introduce the fullest manifestation of his kingdom yet made among men; and it was necessary that the foul heathenism of the nations should be destroyed. It was so abominable that when 1,500 years later it spread to Rome, the satirists of that day regarded its advent as an enormous calamity. The people of God in order to establish a purer faith and to develop a nobler race, required a territory from which such evil influences were absent, and in which they might have the opportunity of exercising their

noblest endeavors; but until the abominations of the heathen were removed entirely such development was an utter impossibility. God had given the Canaanites line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a great deal. When God has great purposes to accomplish in national life, he requires a properly prepared sphere in which to operate. Forty years had passed since the Red Sea was crossed. The people knew of God's wonders in Egypt, and of the victories over the kings of Gilead and Bashan. They knew how God claimed universal homage, and how he had opposed all forms of evil among the nations. They knew, also, how he had chastised the Hebrews for participating in the abominations of Baal-peor. Rahab distinctly informed the spies that she had known of God's mighty judgments, and of God's divine purposes regarding Palestine, and of God's sublime position as not only the God of Israel, but also "God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."²

It was the practice in that day among all the nations, to put to death prisoners of war. The humanity of our time, as seen in the customs of war, is the development of thousands of years, and a similar spirit could not be expected in that early day. Dr. Arnold² rightly teaches us that "the Israelites' sword, in its bloodiest executions, wrought a work of mercy for all the countries of the earth, to the very end of the world." Similar truths are illustrated in America. God had great purposes in the establishment of the American Republic. But in order that Pilgrim and Puritan fathers might have an appropriate sphere for planting and developing the great principles of American civilization and Christianity, the Indian had to be driven back from his former hunting grounds. The process has continued until this day. The Indian's territory was demanded for a higher civilization; and for that purpose, by various providential combinations, it was taken. The Indian has been driven back, and back, almost to the other edge of the continent. The process will go on until he is either civilized or exterminated. Doubtless great cruelties have been practiced against the Indian on our own continent; doubtless solemn treaties have been broken, and the white man has been guilty of much injustice toward his red brother. Nevertheless, there is divine justice and an inevitable necessity in the operation of the law that the nations that will not submit to the highest civilization of their time shall by that very civilization be destroyed. The greatest good of the greatest number necessitates the execution of this apparently severe but universal and eternal law.

¹ Introduction to Joshua, "Pulpit Commentary," p. 15.

² Joshua ii, 11.

² "Dr. Arnold's Sermons," VI, 35-37.

It ought, also, to be borne in mind that often apparent severity is the truest leniency in war. Instances are found frequently in modern times and in many lands. The conduct of the British armies in suppressing the Sepoy atrocities in the Indian mutiny is a case in point, although their terrible severity has sometimes shocked the world; but no doubt it contributed in the end to the decrease of sorrow and suffering, and to the speedy establishment of peace and prosperity. The same principle is illustrated in Cromwell's storming of Drogheda, in Ireland. He has sometimes been fiercely criticised for that terrible massacre, but Cromwell's act received justification not only in his own day, but in our time as well. Carlyle does not hesitate to affirm that, terrible as was Oliver's surgery, he believed that he simply inflicted the judgment of God, and prevented suffering by bringing the war to a speedy end, and so was more merciful than had he pursued a gentler course. Cromwell's own words are: "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future." As a matter of fact, his sternness speedily ended the Irish war. Had the Israelites followed up their first successes by similar crushing victories, they would speedily have made themselves the absolute masters of the whole of Palestine. But, unfortunately, they left their work half done, and they frequently and severely suffered as a consequence of their disobedience to God, and apparent sympathy with the Canaanites.

It ought still to be borne in mind, as already hinted, that the standard of moral character which is employed by some critics in judging of Joshua and these Old Testament heroes is derived from Christ and the New Testament. This course is manifestly unscientific, unphilosophic, and unhistoric; we ought not to carry back these standards of the New Testament and apply them to the conduct of Old Testament saints. Indeed, the tenderer men are, the more righteously indignant do they become against wrong wherever found. He is only a being of paste and putty whose anger does not flash out against crimes committed against God and men. Jesus was a terrible preacher of wrath against the hypocrites of his day. There are times in which the severest of the imprecatory psalms become the appropriate vehicles of the expression of the thought of the most righteous souls. The Psalmist could say of the enemies of God, "I hate them with a perfect hatred."¹ Christian charity may not use such language in our day, but the tenderest love can appreciate the element of moral indignation even in such language as this. We have come

to a time when we do not say, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"; Christ has taught that we are to turn the other cheek to him who smites us; that we are to love our enemies and bless them that curse us.¹ Attention has been called to the fact that during the Sepoy atrocities, in connection with the Indian mutiny, the Book of Joshua was read in the churches with a great sense of its appropriateness.² There is need to-day of the moral indignation against evil expressed in many of the psalms, and illustrated in the conduct of Joshua and the Israelites. There is an anger that is not sinful. Let us not be wiser than was God; let us be modest in passing judgment upon those who were brought into contact with the abominable cruelties and indescribable impurities which the Moabites committed in honor of Chemosh, and the Philistines in honor of Dagon. God had his purpose all through this bloody period. His people were struggling, not for themselves only, but for us most truly. They were fighting, not simply against the enemies of Israel, but against the enemies of humanity. They did God's work, and we to this hour are reaping good fruit from the seed of truth which they sowed, though often they sowed amid tears and blood.

Fuller attention must be called to the religion of the Canaanites, which was so terrible a snare to the Israelites at so many periods in their history. God intended his people to hold and to teach a spiritual religion. The Israelites from the earliest period of their history were under the tutelage of God, and were at the same time exposed to the dangerous influences of surrounding heathen nations. These nations found it difficult to rise above the modes of thought and the standards of morality of their time and environment. The religion of the Canaanites was the worship of misinterpreted natural phenomena, which, when so explained, ministered to the vilest moral impurity, and revealed itself in degrading rites and in cruel acts. Its gross conceptions dominated all Western Asia. The Israelites must have shrunk with loathing from the sensual passions of the Canaanites as contrasted with the nobler purity of the teachings of Moses. But those of weaker religious faith, we can readily understand, must have been carried away by the seductive influences of this sensuous and sensual religion. Baal was the chief god of the Canaanites; under different names he was worshiped. Now he was Moloch, now he was Chemosh; but he was always fierce, cruel, sensual, degraded, and degrading. Their female deity was Astarte or Ashtoreth, the moon and the planet Venus.

¹ Psalm cxxxix, 22.

¹ Matthew v. 38-44.

² Stanley, "Jewish Church," I. p. 281.

This goddess was worshiped with forms and rites degrading beyond description, and almost beyond conception. Some of the Israelites may have fallen into the neglect of all religion; but others occasionally adopted the faith and observed the rites of their idolatrous neighbors. There was a remnant, even in the most lapsed periods, still loyal to God; and even among those who had drifted into idolatry there was a latent religious life which responded to the call of God's servants for a spiritual faith and a purer life. Not until a much later period did idolatry secure a firm grip on the people of Israel as a whole. After the death of Joshua, frequently various social relations were formed with the people still in the land; and even many intermarriages occurred. It thus came to pass that the conquered were often in turn conquerors, because of their social and business relations with their Hebrew neighbors.

Palestine at the time when the Israelites entered the country was governed by a number of petty but independent kings. A great change had taken place in the condition of the soil, in the methods of its cultivation, and, indeed, in the entire state of the country since the time when the nomad patriarchs had wandered over the land. The pastoral life had, to a considerable extent, given way to agricultural pursuits; the vine and olive were extensively cultivated. Strongly fortified cities arose on the heights and dotted the plains. The Canaanites proved themselves to be a warlike people. Those who were heads of tribes in the days of Jacob were local kings in the days of Joshua. These local sovereigns represented various tribes who were united in a common alarm by the sudden invasion of the Israelites, for they came not as marauding tribes seeking plunder, but as a whole people with the avowed intention of making a permanent home in the land, and of reducing the country to subjection. The more fertile hills of the land were soon cultivated in artificial terraces; while on others orchards of fruit trees were planted, and the still more rocky hills were covered with vineyards. Even to the present time the soil of Palestine is naturally rich; and, were it not for the disturbing wars and the abominable misgovernment of many ages, Palestine would still be fruitful. Were it possible even now to drive out the present occupants of the country, with their poor agricultural methods and their poor systems of government, to introduce intelligent tillers of the soil, and to establish reputable forms of government, Palestine would again blossom as the rose. The land in that early day bore within itself all that was necessary for the subsistence and comfort of those primitive peoples. The climate was healthful and the seasons regular. The autumnal rains

began about the last of October and prepared the ground for the seed; and the spring rains prevailed during March and the beginning of April, causing the seed to spring up with great rapidity. Soon after the cessation of the rains, the grain rapidly ripened, and might be gathered in about the end of May. The first grapes ripened in July, but the vintage was not over till September. Although the summer months were dry and hot, the nights, as in so many tropical countries, were cool, and the dew fell copiously. Grains of all kinds grew abundantly, and might be gathered in about the end of May, yielding some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundredfold. Besides the vine, the olive, the almond, the date, and many sorts of figs, the orange, the pomegranate, and other fruit trees grew luxuriantly even in that early day.

The men who conquered Canaan were endowed with the noblest attributes of heroes, measured by the standards of their time. Every reader of Anglo-Saxon history is stirred by the story of its heroes in battle and its peaceful founders of enduring States. No American can read the early history of the American Republic without earnest appreciation of the "brave men and fair women" who crossed the stormy sea, who landed on the historic rock, and who struggled against savage foes, a barren soil, and a wintry climate to lay the enduring foundation of the American Republic. These Puritan and Pilgrim fathers were men of lofty motive, of high endeavor, of uncomplaining patience, and of heroic achievements. Doubtless, at times, they were stern as they were brave, severe as they were sincere; but they always meant to be loyal to God and helpful to man.

Men of this character were required to conquer the territory that lay west of the Jordan, and to establish a pure and theocratic people. Their wilderness experience was not without its helpful influence on mind and heart. It transformed them from a company of tribes into a solid and heroic nation. Its hardships were the messengers of God for the development of a great, brave, and wise people. Still, it is true that many of them lacked these noble qualities; true that some of them were not far removed from the barbarous spirit and practices of their heathen neighbors; true that they were disposed once to return to Egypt, and many times to lapse into idolatry. But the elements of a great nation were present, and God was developing those elements into the symmetrical character of a people called by him and consecrated to the ennoblement of the entire race. They did not literally obey the command of God to drive out the enemy from the chosen territory; for it was really two and a

half centuries later before the accomplishment of the divine purpose was secured. The mountainous districts practically yielded to the power of the invaders; there the Canaanites were slaughtered or made tributary; but the Israelites were unable to take some cities, and unable to meet the war chariots of the Canaanites on the plains. God was, however, developing the nobler qualities of his people, while he was restraining or eliminating their evil and idolatrous tendencies. This body of nomads became tolerably successful in gaining a home by conquest. They secured possession of many rich pastures and fertile corn lands; and marvelous things, in the providence of God, were eventually achieved by these invaders. The world of that day never saw a diviner man than was Moses; a more heroic and knightly leader than Joshua, and a more honest, blameless, and capable man as philosopher, statesman, prophet, and judge, than Samuel.

After the great victory which Joshua and his brave followers accomplished at Beth-horon, new work pressed upon his attention. He was now a man of about ninety, but capable to an unusual degree as a soldier on the field, or as a leader in council. Israel had achieved great things; great, goodly, and strong cities, which she had not built, were hers. Vineyards and olive trees which she had not planted, and houses full of all good things, she possessed. Consequently, the great work now awaiting Joshua was the division of this chosen land among the tribes of Israel. Part of the country was, indeed, still held by the Canaanites, but its complete conquest was assumed, and for purposes of distribution the whole land was considered as in the possession of Israel. But a little more than six years had passed since the crossing of the Jordan, and during that time great victories had been achieved. Joshua was still strong and heroic as when Moses had chosen him to be his successor. Great and pressing duties required the exercise of all the wisdom and influence which he had acquired during these years of public service. The division of the land among the tribes of Israel will not suffer in respect to equity and fruitful results, when compared with the wisest divisions of conquered territory in modern times. A great assembly of the people was held at Gilgal; Joshua, Eleazar, and the elders presiding over the people. We have already seen that two and a half of the tribes—Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh—had secured their tribal allotments on the east of the Jordan. Still nine and one-half tribes awaited their share. The tribe of Joseph was now divided into the two sections of Ephraim and Manasseh; and this tribe, because of its heroic history, and because of Joshua's connection with

it, claimed precedence. They demanded the best part of the country, the central portion, in which water abounded and whose soil was specially fruitful. They seemed to have acted promptly and to have secured their desire. Ephraim took possession of the country north and south of Shechem, with its beautiful valleys and gracefully rounded hills. In Shechem the bones of Joseph were buried, and there Abraham and Jacob had long dwelt. Naturally, therefore, because of its historic associations and central advantages, it became, in some sense, the capital of the land. In extent and importance no tribe surpassed it but Judah. Immediately north of this district the half tribe of Manasseh, which joined its fortunes with Ephraim, found a home; it extended north of Ephraim to the plain of Esdraelon and Mount Carmel.

Although they were embarrassed by the presence of the Canaanitish fortresses in the plain of Esdraelon, Joshua did not sympathize with their desire to secure the help of other tribes in driving out the Canaanites. He promised that the hill country and the forests should be theirs, and assured them that eventually they should drive out the Canaanites, though the latter were so strong with their horses and chariots. "The house of Joseph" was, therefore, obliged to content itself with its present possessions, and with these promises of future aggrandizement. The possessions of Dan consisted of certain cities within the original territory of Judea. On the seacoast it extended some distance above Joppa, and included a portion of the plain of Sharon. It included the cities of Lydda, Ekron, Beth-Dagon, and Joppa. Finally it was forced back into the hills and had not sufficient space for its 64,000 fighting men. Dan had no patron tribe as had Simeon and Benjamin; it had, therefore, to lead a sort of camp life. Its location was known even in later times as the "Camp of Dan"; this was near Kirjath-jearim, and a few miles west of Jerusalem. We shall see later that they conquered some Canaanites near Mount Hermon and changed the name of the town from Laish to Dan. Naphtali's possession ran up into the delightful valleys of the Anti-Libanus; it bends upward from the south of the Sea of Galilee to meet Asher. A long, narrow strip of land on the seacoast was assigned to Asher, reaching from Carmel northward. The territory of Zebulun was north of Issachar, west of the Jordan and a part of the Sea of Galilee. The tribe stretched across the land with one extremity on the sea of Galilee, and the other reaching to some part of the Bay of Accho. Issachar, one-half of Manasseh, and Ephraim occupied the territory extending from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. Issachar had, in some respects,

the finest part of the country; its home was in the rich plains of Esdraelon. It included the Mounts of Hermon and Gilboa. There was no more fertile or beautiful portion in Palestine. Ephraim's territory, as we have seen, was fertile, though uneven in some parts and in others mountainous. It extended from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. Samaria and the valley of Sharon were included in Ephraim. On its northern extremity rose Ebal and Gerizim, and in the south was Mount Ephraim, some of whose passes are associated with important events in the military history of Israel. Ephraim for four centuries was a dominant tribe; within its boundaries was the religious capital, Shiloh, and the political capital, Shechem. It was thus long the center of Jewish life; and after the death of Solomon it regained its former position, as such a center. Benjamin, the client of Ephraim, received the territory which included the fertile plains and rich groves of Jericho and spread over part of the valley of the Jordan, and the head of the Dead Sea, and extended westward as far as Jebus, afterward Jerusalem, but then a fortress in the possession of the enemy. The rest of the south, to the borders of Edom, became the opulent domain of the great tribe of Judah, with the exception of a district on the southwest about Gaza, which was assigned to Simeon. Simeon's possession consisted of certain cities rather than of a continuous territory. We have already seen that the best pastures were in the romantic regions on the east of the Jordan, but the most productive lands for grain were the central plains, while the best lands for the grape and the olive were the hills of Judah and Benjamin.

Distinguished men like Joshua and Caleb received special grants of estates; perhaps the heads of the tribes enjoyed somewhat similar privileges, but the whole land came under general laws of property. Houses and walled cities might be sold in perpetuity, if unredeemed within the year; but the law of the inalienability of estates was observed, so that land could be sold only for a limited period. At the time of the Jubilee, all estates reverted, without repurchase, to their original owners. The venerable Caleb, a survivor of the spies of forty-five years before, made a special claim to Hebron, on the ground of a grant made to him by Moses when he had explored the territory, and also as a gift from Joshua. Doubtless Joshua, with genuine delight, recognized this claim and cheerfully granted this land to his old and honored comrade. Caleb showed a superb spirit in the manner in which he claimed this territory. His heroic courage and exalted faith stir our blood as we read his brave words, remembering that he was so advanced in years. Joshua, with the self-abnegation always characteristic of his

desires and endeavors, took no inheritance for himself; but the nation honored itself by joyfully assigning to him as his possession Timnath-serah, in Mount Ephraim. Six cities of refuge were appointed in appropriate locations. There were three on each side of the Jordan at a convenient distance from each other. One who had accidentally caused the death of another might fly to one of these cities, as an asylum from the avenger of blood, until his case could be properly considered. On the west side of the Jordan the three cities were Hebron, Shechem, and Kedesh of Naphtali; on the east the three were Golan, Ramoth Gilead, and Bezer. The tribes were complete without reckoning Levi. This tribe was separated to the office of religion; it therefore had no specific territory, but constituted the priesthood and was to receive its support from the community at large. Nothing could be more beautiful than the spirit manifested by Joshua during all these important transactions. He was as wise in his methods as he was unselfish in his motives; he was as skillful a ruler in peace as he was a successful general in war.

The account of this division of the territory among the tribes forms the second part of the Book of Joshua,¹ the "Domesday Book" of Palestine, as it has been called. The laws that were established for the government of the people were eminently wise and patriotic. God was recognized as the "Lord of the Soil," and every fifty years he resumed possession of the territory and then returned it to the descendants of the original owners. It has been supposed that the suggestion of this plan was of Egyptian origin. The king of Egypt, during the administration of Joseph, was recognized as the proprietor of the land, and leased it out on a rent which is supposed to correspond to the tithes paid by the Israelites. The people were thus, in a sense, an independent body, cultivating their hereditary farms, whose boundaries always remained the same. A neighbor's landmark was not to be removed, and the attempt to remove it in later days was denounced by prophets with great severity. The law against usury was enforced. Loans, however, might be made as a charitable accommodation, and the only taxes were the two tenths, or tithes, and other religious offerings. The first tenth was given to the tribe of Levi for maintaining a learned nobility, and in remuneration for their surrender of a twelfth of the land; the second tenth was the tithe of the poor. The only public revenue of this theocratic commonwealth was that of the sacred treasury, and corresponding to this the only public expenditures were for religious worship. The commerce of

¹ Joshua xiii-xxiii.

the country was confined to the inland caravan trade. The people seem to have been blind at this period to the maritime advantages of their location. Their ports remained for a considerable time in possession of their enemies, and were the last places conquered. The manufactures of the people supplied their limited wants; they brought from Egypt the arts of weaving woolen, linen, and probably cotton stuffs, and also the art of dyeing and bleaching, of making vessels, of working in iron and precious metals, and of doing many kinds of ornamental work which were used mostly in connection with the altars and sacred vessels of their religious worship. It thus came to pass

that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob found a home in the land of promise; under his own vine and fig tree dwelt each man with his family. Until after the death of Joshua there was no serious disturbance of the harmony of the nation. The misunderstanding between the tribes on this and that side of the Jordan was peacefully adjusted. The tribes beyond the river, although they had raised a public altar to God, disclaimed all intention of doing violence to the honor of a single national place of worship. They raised the altar not to offer rival sacrifices, but with the laudable purpose of affirming to posterity that their tribes, also, were a part of the national confederacy.

CHAPTER VI.

JOSHUA AND JUDGES CONTRASTED.

WITH the conquest of Canaan the tribes entered on another era in their eventful history. They now found themselves a settled nation in the divinely appointed land. They were no more a wandering tribe, but a civilized and agricultural people. A feeling of repose and gratitude filled their hearts. The festivals of the harvest and the vintage were commemorations of this sense of comfort and possession. The country, as we have seen, had previously been inhabited by a remarkable people; and the history of the Israelites down to the Captivity was to give evidence of their proximity to the Canaanite peoples, with their peculiar social customs and heathen rites. It has been well remarked that their occupancy of the chosen land bears a somewhat similar relation to the entrance of the Christian Church into territories of the Roman empire, once possessed by pagan peoples. They, as a holy people, were occupying that territory as a holy land. Their land was peculiarly secluded by sea, by desert, and by river from the surrounding world. They were a people who were to dwell alone among the nations of the earth, and yet their land was so central, lying between Assyria and Egypt, that it already possessed present influence and the prophecy of subsequent enlargement. Like Greece, it was small and compact, and yet large enough to develop a legitimate rivalry among its own various tribes. It possessed a sufficient diversity of productions to stimulate the ambition of an agricultural people. It was peculiarly fitted by its conformation and its geographical position to give birth to a Bible for all nations, to be the home of him who was the Desire, and is to be the King, of all peoples, and to be the cradle of that Church which eventually is to fill the whole earth.

Remnants of the Canaanite people still remained in the land. One glance at this people, as we pass, will be instructive. Usually the remnants of a partially conquered people take refuge among the mountains. This was true of the Gothic people in Spain after the invasion of the Moors; this has been true repeatedly of the brave Highlanders in Scotland. But in Palestine the old inhabitants took refuge not in the mountains but in the plains. Their iron chariots and war horses enabled them to possess the plains, while the invaders were often driven to the mountains. Generally speaking, the Israelites possessed the hill country, and the Canaanites the plains. With only their infantry, the Israelites were no match for the cavalry and chariots of the Canaanites in the plains. Indeed, during the greater part of their sojourn in Palestine, they were not masters of their own plains, but were at one time at the mercy of the Canaanites, and at another of the Syrians. The battle of Merom forms an exception to the general rule in that Israel's victory was on the level ground against the cavalry of Jabin.¹ The old inhabitants also retained, for the most part, possession of their strong fortresses. Their cities were great and fenced up to heaven.² At the first onset the invaders, carried away by fiery enthusiasm, overcame some of these fortresses, but later the older inhabitants maintained their ground and held their walled cities. The Avites, and other aboriginal peoples, also remained in the land. Along the seacoast were the Phœnician cities. The Canaanites long remained in Gezer under tribute; possibly they became again independent. But they were finally dispossessed by the king of Egypt, who gave the place to

¹ Joshua xi.

² Deuteronomy ix, 1.

his daughter, the wife of Solomon. Bethshean, which was called the "Jebus of the North," remained a heathen city under the name of Scythopolis to the time of the Christian era. It was situated on the route from Jerusalem to Damascus. On the northern frontier, and in other parts of the land, there were races ruled by independent kings, which retained their independence until the time of David; and there were also friendly and tributary tribes, such as the Kenites who were related by blood; they had already settled in the far south on the edge of the desert. Saul spared them¹ when sent by Samuel to destroy the Amalekites among whom they dwelt. There were other tributary tribes who seemed to have maintained that relationship until the time of Solomon.

Judah had to struggle along for quiet possession of the territory it had chosen. At the conquest it boasted more fighting men than Ephraim; it also had a higher military reputation. Judah held the land on all sides of Jerusalem except the north. Soon, her territory being too small, she engaged in numerous wars in which Simeon gave valuable help. In these tribal campaigns Bezek was conquered.² Hebron next fell before the power of the invaders.³ The Canaanites had secured possession of it after its conquest by Joshua. But Caleb had claimed it and was determined to conquer it. Forty-five years before he had passed through it on his dangerous journey as a spy. Then he was full of manly strength; but now, though he was old, he was determined to lead the attacking forces. The finest grapes in Palestine grew on the slopes of its valleys; and as the site of the Cave of Machpelah, where lay the bodies of the heroic founders of the race, it was dear to the hearts of the Israelites. Descendants of the once-dreaded Anakim were its masters. But heroic determination inspired the hearts of Caleb and his men, and soon they were masters of the historic town. Henceforth, it was the capital of the southern tribes, amid the varied experiences of the nation, until David captured Jebus and made that town immortal as the Jerusalem of song and story. As we shall see later, Debir had formerly been called "Kirjath-sepher," the "book town." It was located about three miles west of Hebron. Its location and history invited conquest and enkindled enthusiasm. Caleb offered the hand of his daughter as a prize to the brave leader who should take Debir. Othniel, whose name meant "Lion of God," and a younger brother, or perhaps a nephew, of Caleb, became master of Debir and claimed Achsah as his bride. She, however, desired a south land in

which springs of water abounded, and her request was granted. In this way the Kenizzites came to possess the higher and the lower springs. Zephath was now destroyed, and its site received the name of Hormah, "the banned" or destruction. Judah also took Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, cities of Philistia, together with the land in which these cities lay; but again the chariots of the Canaanites were victorious and possession of these cities had to be given up and Judah retired again to the hills. Many of the foreign clans ranged themselves under the flag of Judah, and this tribe became very powerful.

The first national Sanctuary in Palestine would naturally have been established at Bethel; but at the early stage of the conquest it was still in the hands of the Canaanites. The Ark, therefore, found its seat at Shiloh, where it remained through the period of the Judges until it was carried to the fatal battlefield. At the first, the Ark was at Gilgal, but as the conquerors entered farther into the country, a more central situation became necessary. Shiloh was probably chosen, not because of the strength, beauty, or ancient associations of the place, but rather because of its comparative seclusion. Shiloh is supposed to have been nineteen miles north of Jerusalem, and eleven south of Shechem. During the period named it was the center of the worship of Jehovah. The name Shiloh was given probably because of the "rest" which now came to the weary conquerors in this quiet valley. Nevertheless, Shiloh was intended only as the temporary resting place of the Ark. The conquerors early fixed upon Shechem as the capital. This was the ancient city near which Jacob first encamped, when he returned from Padan-aram;¹ it was then a city of the Hivites. It was now the center of the great and haughty tribe of Ephraim to which Joshua himself belonged. Under an oak near Shechem, Jacob buried the amulets and teraphim of his household. His sons returned with their flocks to this fertile region. After the conquest, as we have seen, Joseph's bones were buried in his inheritance near Shechem. Alike because of its central position and sacred associations, it became a gathering-place of the tribes. Here were the two sacred mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, about which gathered the associations of the curses and blessings of the law. Here Joshua won the tribes to a solid engagement to serve Jehovah. Gerizim was the oldest Sanctuary in Palestine, reaching to the days of Abraham and Melchizedek; on its summit, according to Dean Stanley,² are still pointed out, in Samaritan traditions, the twelve stones which Joshua laid in order.

¹ I. Samuel xv, 6. ² Judges i, 4. ³ Judges i, 10-20.

¹ Genesis xxxiii, 18.

² Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, pp. 310, 311.

In their traditions he is enshrined alone of the Jewish heroes, after the time of Moses. He is "King Joshua," and he takes up his abode on the "blessed mountain," as Gerizim is always called. At Shechem, Joshua, as we shall soon see, appears as the representative of his tribe, checking its pride and warning it of approaching danger.

It is evident that now dark shadows were beginning to fall on the heart of Joshua. He saw the dangers to which the people were exposed because of the influences exerted upon them by their heathen neighbors. It is touching in the extreme to study the history of Joshua at this critical and pathetic period of his life. From their isolated strongholds in the land, the Canaanites were still able to hold the Israelites in check, and by the influence of their idolatry to weaken their faith. A reaction soon began, and the Canaanites were speedily recovering themselves so that they drove the Israelites from the lowlands to the difficult mountainous heights. Joshua was now stricken in years. He had lived quietly for some time at Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim. He knew that the end was approaching. He, therefore, ordered all Israel to assemble at Shechem.¹ This spot, as we have seen, was sacred in the history of the nation. Here Abraham erected his first altar in Canaan. Here was the first national burial place, although the sepulchers of some patriarchs were at Hebron. Joshua summoned the people to renew the covenant which had been made with Jehovah at Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. He delivered two solemn addresses, reminding the people of God's wonderful fulfillment of the promises he had made to their fathers. He then caused them to renew their covenant with God. Joshua was not a great poet like Moses; and he uttered no words of farewell in poetic strains as did his mighty predecessor. The prophetic spirit, however, rested upon him, and in his last exhortation he charged the people to serve Jehovah, and warned them against the evils, of whose coming he had sad forebodings. Here in Shechem, among his last acts, he set up² a pillar of stone, in harmony with the customs of the time, to remind the people of the solemnity of their vow to their God, and the God of their fathers. Then the brave soldier and knightly leader passed away. He, as truly as Moses, is called the "servant of the Lord."³ He died at the age of 110 years, and in his own city of Timnath-serah he was buried. Dean Stanley calls attention to the fact that on the summit of the Giant's Hill, overlooking the Bosphorus and the Black Sea, the vast tomb of Joshua is shown by the Mohammedans. But the Jewish

people cherished the remembrance of his sepulcher with fuller knowledge. In the same grave in Timnath-serah, according to an ancient tradition, were buried the stone knives used in the circumcision at Gilgal. These were long sought as relics by those who visited the tomb of Joshua. Thus he died twenty-five or twenty-six years after crossing the Jordan, full of years and full of honor, and in his death the light of Israel for a time went out.

Doctor Geikie¹ reminds us that the investigations of our own day have linked the present and the remote past by the discovery of what seems almost beyond question to be the tomb of Joshua. M. Victor Guérin has the credit of this remarkable discovery. And the same writer further affirms that in 1870 additional confirmation, that this was really the tomb of Joshua, was obtained from the discovery made in it by Abbé Richard. It is said in our Greek Bible that the Israelites when they interred Joshua buried with him the flint knives used at Gilgal. While examining the tomb with that thought in mind, and in company with a priest from Jerusalem, and the sheik of the village El-Birzeit, the Abbé actually found in it a great number of flint knives which had been hidden in the soil of the different chambers of the sepulcher. Some doubt has been thrown, however, upon this identification, and the value of these discoveries.

Thus died the successor of Moses. He was a superb example of a warrior, blameless, fearless, and devout. He was such a man as would kindle the imagination of poets who delight to describe the brave, tender, and pious knights of the Middle Ages. In him manly strength was beautifully combined with womanly tenderness. He led conquering armies and inflicted terrible judgments, because he believed himself to be an obedient instrument in the hand of God. He is certainly one of the grandest characters on the page of history, ancient or modern, sacred or profane. He appointed no successor. He left the people in the land of milk and honey, with many of the blessings of freedom and with marvelous opportunities for growth and progress, should they remain obedient to God. But their disobedience in not rooting out their ancient and implacable foes led to continual warfare, destroying their peace and freedom, and, before long, to a humiliating and degrading captivity.

We now breathe a new historic atmosphere. We are still in the time of the theocracy, and yet we enter a different realm as we pass from the rule of Joshua to that of the Judges. We have gone from an age of comparative law and of acknowledged authority into a period of

¹ Joshua xxiv, 1.

² Joshua xxiv, 26.

³ Joshua xxiv, 29.

¹ See "Hours with the Bible," II, pp. 433-435.

reckless rule and of lawless outbreaks. It is the heroic age of Hebrew history. It abounds in wild adventures, and in feats of wonderful valor. We have followed the nation of slaves until we have seen them become a people in the land promised to their fathers. All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for varied forms of instruction; but the period before us is disappointing as regards the moral and religious condition of Israel. It is, however, rich in varied interest, in romantic incidents, in rough heroism, and in the union of ancient manners with national evidences of true faith and religious devotion. It is also a period marked by tragical pathos and heroic deeds, as is no other period of Jewish history. Personal activity and individual daring, with corresponding craft, were necessary qualifications for office on the part of those leaders known as Judges. We pass at once into a realm where barbaric savagery is common, and where the gentler virtues are rare. We are conscious of a great change from the calm majesty of Moses and Joshua to the reckless daring and turbulent authority of Gideon, Jephthah and Samson. These men are great in a sort of barbaric chivalry as rulers, rather than as calm and dignified administrators of justice, as were Joshua and Moses. We have come into an atmosphere that is distinctly more human than divine. In some portions of the Hebrew writings the divine element so predominates that we almost forget that the actors and writers were men of like passions with ourselves; but in studying the period of the Judges we almost wonder that men of such earthly impulses and unholy passions could have been used by God as his instruments in carrying out high and holy designs. These leaders were often both barbarous and brutal. This book recalls us from the high ideals of a chosen people to the delinquencies, irregularities, and rugged wickedness of men and women who were of the earth and earthly. It is a part of the glory of divine revelation that it does not create or magnify the virtues of its heroes, and does not deny or minimize their vices. No part of the Bible gives so great pain as the Book of Judges. Idolatry, impurity, and cruelty abound; but the Bible nowhere sanctions any act of cruelty, treachery, or impurity. It merely states the facts, without comment, and leaves future generations to pass their own judgments. All admit that the moral tone of the time was bad, that the light was dim, that the standard was low. And yet men did not live up to this dim light, nor this low standard. The heroes of that day are not models for our day. They were ruthless chieftains, stern swordsmen, and rough rulers. Their very imperfections give the greater glory to the divine grace which

could use them. One finds it difficult in reading this book to understand how such barbarous men could become the deliverers of the children of God. Over against the Book of Judges, as we shall see later, is the Book of Ruth. The one is all wildness and roughness, the other all sweetness, tenderness, and beauty. We must not lay such undue emphasis, however, on the human element in this book as to neglect the divine purpose which underlies the history, and which controlled the events. In studying the book, as in studying the life of him who was, in the largest measure, the Word of God, we are to lay just emphasis alike on the divine and the human elements. God, if we may so say, did the best he could with the material in his hand. Often his laws were shaped to the exigencies of men's hearts. God takes men where he finds them, and deals with them on the plane whereon they stand. His purpose is to lift them to higher levels, and to make them noble. Even the best men are but men at best. God's chosen people as a whole were occasionally in rebellion against him; and even those who were chosen from the chosen people, as God's agents and the leaders of their race, were wayward and rebellious at times to a startling degree. There is a wild freshness about this period which is full of danger, and at the same time full of promise; it suggests freedom from restraint, and also inspires the hope that under proper guidance it may become an element of vast blessing to the race whom God is training for his service. In this period we move amid mountain and woodland scenery; we are thrilled by incidents of romance, and are inspired by evidences of chivalry. It has both its dark and its bright side. It is a time when liberty degenerates into license, and when freedom becomes violence and anarchy. In the atmosphere of this time, what is human too often becomes barbarous, savage, and even bestial. We have here no story of pastoral purity, idyllic simplicity, or personal righteousness; we have here no epic of knightly valor associated with personal purity, and no saintly bravery without its unsaintly and painfully human elements. Side by side, we find the pathos of tragedy and the fascination of romance.¹

Attention has been frequently called to the vein of humor, and even of drollery, which marks portions of this period. The men of Dan appear before us with a twinkle in their eyes, and a smile on their lips as they ask their conundrums. Samson is a rollicking, joking, dashing giant and hero. He makes a joke when in the last terrible scene of his life; for he then prays to be avenged "for one of my

¹ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

two eyes." No fewer than four times does the historian remind us that "in those days there was no king in Israel," but "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The result of this state of lawlessness was, as we are told frequently, that "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord." We are then told, again and again, that "the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." Here we have cause and effect; we have sin producing punishment, and punishment resulting in penitence, and penitence expressing itself in prayer, and prayer, earnestly offered, securing deliverance. We have in turn blessings leading to presumption, and presumption advancing to apostasy. There is thus here a regular cycle of cause and effect. We are in a period of transition. The restraining influences exercised by Moses and Joshua have ceased; and the authority later to be exercised by kings has not yet begun. The danger from hostile tribes has, in part, passed away, and the disintegrating tendency of peace without any controlling national bond, or religious principle, is fully manifested. There is danger, also, lest the conquered population shall make common cause against the invaders. These populations have never been fully expelled nor entirely subdued. They were to the Hebrews in the land what the Britons were to the invading Saxons, and what the Saxons later were to the Danes and to the Normans. These partially conquered tribes were biding their time and would some day mass their forces and perhaps conquer their conquerors. Nations outside of Palestine were also hostile to the Hebrews. There was danger that much of the work done by Joshua would be undone by these combined influences. Within were apostasy and division; without were seduction and hostility. At times there was danger lest the Israelites should be driven out of the Promised Land.

But the change from a wandering to a settled life had been made; the children of God had become the repository of a new religion, given amid cloud and flame on Mount Sinai. They had secured a foothold in the Promised Land. They had acquired familiarity with their new life, and they must cease to be herdsmen and become agriculturalists. In this advance from a nomadic to a settled life, there necessarily was retrogression as well as progression. Human progress is not a steadily flowing river, but rather a tide that ebbs and flows; but on the whole there is progress in the right direction. The Hebrews had received a partial training, even while in the Wilderness, for their settled life in Palestine. Their long halts gave them opportunity to cultivate fields, to sow seed, and to reap harvests. They were then in process of training for their great ca-

reer. They had become already, to a large degree, an agricultural people. Nothing but the persecutions to which they have been so cruelly subjected, with a corresponding insecurity of property, have transformed the Jews of to-day into a mercantile rather than an agricultural race. The Hebrews in Palestine were ceasing to be a hermit nation, and were taking their place among the nations of the world.

They were also to enter into certain commercial relations with the other nations who inhabited the seaboard of Palestine; these were especially the Phœnicians and Philistines. Tyre and Sidon were already strong and prosperous towns; and these and other towns were only too glad of the opportunity to do business with the Israelites. The Philistines were most hostile in their spirit, and less willing to enter into commercial relations. The Philistines had, themselves, at a very early day, been immigrants like the Israelites. They were probably descendants of Ham's son, Mizraim; and probably migrated into Canaan from Caphthor, which is variously understood to be Crete, Cyprus, or Egypt. Without doubt they were the Caphthorim who supplanted the Avim and other early settlers. The Philistines who formed treaties with Abraham and Isaac were a pastoral people, but with a king and warlike organizations. They were still, in the time of the Judges, a warlike rather than a commercial people; and they still possessed a vigorous military organization. The five confederate cities of Philistia, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, were sufficiently strong to dispossess Dan, to conquer Judah, and to make their power felt by other tribes as well.

This condition of hostility, and the change from a nomadic to a settled life were among the forces which were controlling the children of Israel at this time. Unfortunately, they showed at times great rivalry among themselves. Deborah complains of the apathy of Reuben, Dan, and Asher during the oppression experienced by Zebulun and Naphtali. Judah and Ephraim are always more or less hostile. Judah is seldom mentioned, and the silence is suggestive of indifference to the welfare of the tribes as a whole, and of a selfish regard for its own interests. Only one, probably, of the many Judges belonged to the tribe of Judah — Othniel, the Kenizzite, who was the first of the Judges. As a southern tribe, Judah had less need of these remarkable and providential deliverers. Although Judah did not entirely escape the oppression of the Amorites and of the Philistines, still they were not so continually under the heel of oppression as were some of the other tribes. The fuller glory of Judah came in connection with the brilliant career of David. Ephraim lost no opportunity

of asserting her superiority; and the seed was already sown which brought forth fruit in the subsequent division of the kingdom. The tribes east of the Jordan were not only separated from their brethren on the west, but were not even fully united among themselves. Reuben's isolation was far from honorable, and the tribe finally sank into permanent obscurity. This tribe gave the people no judge, no hero, no prophet; and Deborah, with scorn, rebukes Reuben for indifference or cowardice. Gad and Manasseh had a more honorable record. We have not, therefore, a very hopeful picture of the tribes at this period. On the west bank we have Judah and Simeon in comparative isolation, but, because of purity and discipline, the strongest of the groups. But the remainder of the tribes we see disunited, and submitting with more or less grace to the superiority claimed by Ephraim. On the east bank Gad and half Manasseh are on fairly good terms with each other and with the western tribes, but separated by the Jordan from intimate fellowship; while Reuben, as we have seen, remains in ignoble seclusion. Fortunately for Israel their foes were also divided among themselves. The league hastily formed against Joshua came to naught, as we have already seen. A similar fate awaited subsequent leagues formed against the Hebrews. The accounts of their attacks and their defeats in detail will come before us later.

We have thus seen that the period of the Judges was one of liberty, degenerating into license. We have seen that the people were rapidly passing from a pastoral to an agricultural state. We have seen that, both inside and outside of Palestine, the Israelites were coming into closer contact with their heathen neighbors. These neighbors, while superior in culture, were vastly inferior in morality. We have seen that the tribes were falling apart into selfish groups, or equally selfish isolations, when the pressure of a common danger was removed; and we have also seen that there was a strong tendency to apostasy from God, and to the adoption of the abominations of prevalent idolatries.

The tendency toward idolatry was the saddest of all the drifts observed at this time. This tendency was held sharply in check while Israel wandered in the Wilderness; there, as has been well said, they lived in a religious hot-house. They did not breathe the common atmosphere, but dwelt in a world of their own. Their religious faith was the result of spiritually favorable conditions. But without trial there can be no real virtue; mere innocence is not robust virtue. When the test came they were not equal to its severity; and when temptation surrounded them they threw aside for-

mer restraints and too often yielded to the fascinations of idolatry. Those who lived at a distance from the tabernacle at Shiloh might go up to it once a year for the most attractive of the feasts, that of the Tabernacles; but absent from the tabernacle, the duties of religion were largely forgotten. The law was not read, religious ceremonies were not observed, and many grew up ignorant of the past glorious history, of the present important duty, and of the sublime future possibilities of the race. Superstitious observances soon crept into the worship of Jehovah. Images were introduced; God's name and worship were profaned; and Jehovah only became one of many gods, and in some instances his worship was entirely abandoned and that of Baal and Ashtoreth substituted.¹

Israel experienced great dangers in mingling with the surrounding populations. Had Israel been true to God, the dark scenes in her history, at this time, would never have been enacted, and the record would be bright and beautiful. Israel was now planting the seed which was to bring forth in distant centuries her two captivities, with their painful experiences and enduring results. It is easy to trace the causes which led to these captivities, in the intercourse at this time with the Canaanites.

Some writers have compared this period to the heroic age in Greece; and there are points of analogy between the two periods. There was in both cases an invasion of the new territory; and in both, also, the bravery of heroes in resisting invaders and of invaders in seeking possession of desirable dominion. There was in both the painful mingling of virtue and vice, of heroic self-sacrifice with savagery and sin; but in the case of the children of Israel there was a strain of heavenly music even amid the wildest and most sinful revelries. There was some consciousness of a divine mission even in the commission of sinful acts, and there was some reliance on God, even while there was a recklessness in evil. The conscience of Israel was at times active; and such a conscience the pagan heroes did not and could not possess. An analogy has also been found between this period and the age of Christian chivalry in connection with the Crusades. This analogy is much more accurate; for over parts of this same territory in its later age went the crusaders to rescue the tomb of Christ from the hand of the infidel. These crusaders illustrated many of the qualities, both of nobility and of baseness, found in the earlier period. They were at times brave and noble; at other times mean, selfish, abominable, and brutally cruel. There was thus a startling mixture of good and

¹ See Introduction in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 14.

evil in both movements; often the evil triumphed, and the good was overthrown. But, even in their ignoble motives, there were times of high and noble purposes; and in both cases the invaders contributed directly or indirectly to the progress of the race.

The writer of the Book of Judges is unknown. Some have ascribed it to Samuel; it may have been written by him or some other prophet who lived early in the reign of King Saul. The frequent expression "in those days there was no king in Israel," seems to imply that the book was written after the kingdom was established. It seems clear, also, that it was written before the kingdom fell to David, because we are told in the first chapter that "the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem, unto this day"; but we know that one of the first acts of David was to expel the Jebusites from Jerusalem. The book traces the steps by which the people departed from God. It shows at the same time God's patience with their wanderings, while he mingled long-suffering with timely chastisement. On four occasions the Angel-Jehovah, the Jesus of the Old Testament, appeared for the deliverance of the people.¹ The chronology of the period is involved in obscurity. Clear marks of time are wanting; different writers vary in their estimate as to the number of years covered by the book. It is thus extremely difficult to arrive at the exact facts. Sometimes the narratives of the Judges run parallel to one another, and no great reliance can be placed upon the recurring numbers of twenty, forty, and eighty. The aggregate of the years of alternate oppressions and deliverance gives no satisfactory result. There are no quotations in the New Testament from the Book of Judges; but in Acts xiii, 20, and Hebrews xi, 32, there are references to the history narrated in the book; and in the Psalms and in the Prophets there are frequent references to the book.

The deliverers, who were called Judges, are an interesting class of men. They were a very different class of men from the ordinary administrators of justice among the Hebrews. They were specially raised up by God to deliver his people from powerful foes. Their rank was not hereditary, and the selection of Judges was not limited to any one tribe. They were the unique rulers of Israel during the theocracy from Joshua to Saul. The name by which they are called, "Shophetim," is derived from a word signifying "to judge." This word bears a close resemblance to that which designates the governors or Suffetes of the Carthaginians, a colony of the Tyrians, who carried the name

from Phœnicia. Their rulers, in the time of the Punic War, Livy, the Roman historian, named Suffetes. The Hebrew Shophetim were military dictators rather than regularly constituted magistrates. Their authority was extraordinary and exceptional, growing out of the emergencies of their time, reminding us of that of the Roman dictators, as it was often military rather than judicial. Eli and Samuel were exceptions, they being only civil rulers. The Judges have been not inaptly compared to Arab Sheiks, or Indian Sachems. They were not kings, for Jehovah was king; neither were they heads of tribes. In some features of their work they remind us of the chieftains of the Scotch Highlanders and of the heads of clans in the very early days of Russian history. They wore no badges of office, had no salaries, and their rule was not hereditary. They were to be reformers in peace and leaders of armies in war. We have already seen that the Hebrew people were semi-barbarians, and in this lawless and anarchistic period, they needed rulers of exceptional character and authority. These Judges exercised their authority within the limits of their own tribes. The case of Deborah may be an exception, as we are told that she sat under her palm tree and judged the tribes of Israel.¹ But even in her gallant enterprise to break the organized confederacy of the Canaanites, some of the tribes took no part and did not apparently recognize her authority. The Judges were of different tribes and came forward as the necessities of the hour demanded. The dignity of the Judge was for life; but the succession was irregular. There were periods during which the people were without rulers; and long periods of foreign oppression occurred while the Hebrews groaned without deliverers. God sometimes, in marked ways, called men to the office of Judge; but the people usually chose, under providential guidance, the man most likely to lead them successfully against the common enemy. Fifteen Judges are named during a period sometime after Joshua to the coronation of Saul. Othniel, the first of the number, was probably of the great tribe of Judah. He delivered the people from the tyranny of the king of Mesopotamia, and he ruled in peace for forty years. Shamgar's tribe is uncertain. Ehud was of the tribe of Benjamin. He delivered Israel from the Moabites, by slaying Eglon, their king, at Jericho, and then raising an army and defeating the foe in battle. Deborah and Barak were of the great northern tribe of Ephraim. Gideon was of Manasseh. Tola of Issachar; Jair and Jephthah of the transjordanic region. Elon was of Zebulun. Samson was of Dan, and his enemies

¹ Judges ii, 1, v, 23, vi, 11, xiii, 3.

¹ Judges iv, 5.

were the Philistines on the southwestern frontier.

These were rough times in the history of Israel. One cannot help wondering what the condition of things would have been if Israel had not yielded to the idolatry of surrounding nations, but had remained loyal to Jehovah, establishing a strong federal government with its center the Sanctuary of Jehovah. We

should then have had a united people instead of an assemblage of jealous and sometimes hostile tribes. Then the whole land might have come into the possession of Israel; then no enemies of alien blood and faith would have remained within their borders; then they had gone on conquering and to conquer, with God as their Leader, and with his service as their dominant motive.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIFTEEN JUDGES.

WE have seen that, after the death of Joshua and the elders, there was a succession of Judges who exercised authority over the nation. Some of these Judges, however, were placed over only a portion of the nation. There were, as already stated, fifteen of them in all. In the Book of Judges twelve of them are named. Abimelech is not mentioned there, and the names of Eli and Samuel are omitted as they are recorded in the First Book of Samuel. With the exception of Eli, and possibly Samuel, none of them were taken from the tribe of Levi, and no notice is taken of any military service performed by Tola, Ibzan, Elon, or Abdon. During the time that they filled this office, the land seems to have enjoyed a condition of comparative peace. Jephthah and the three Judges who succeeded him seem to have limited their authority to northeastern Israel, beyond the Jordan, while the scene of Samson's exploits was southwestern Israel. Some have supposed that he was contemporary with Eli who judged Israel at Shiloh. These Judges did not constitute an organic part of the government; their authority was exercised by the common consent of the people. The general affairs of the several tribes were managed by their elders, partly according to rules contained in the Mosaic law, but still more largely according to various ancient usages. The tribes were not bound by any permanent civil head; they, therefore, acted each one by its own decision, or a few in concert, and often independently of the nation as a whole.

It may be well, at this point, to have a definite statement regarding the order of the succession of these Judges, together with the length of service of each one. The dignity was conferred upon the Judges for life. There were, however, periods when there were no Judges, and the commonwealth was without appointed rulers. There being no central government, each tribe acted for itself, and, indeed, "every

man did that which was right in his own eyes."¹ East of the Jordan, Ehud, Jephthah, Elon, and Jair delivered the people from foreign foes and governed the tribes. Barak and Tola governed the northern tribes, Abdon the central, and Ibzan and Samson the southern. These Judges exercised an authority but little inferior to that of kings. They were the protectors of the people, the defenders of religion, the avengers of crime, and particularly the opponents of idolatry. They received no salary for their service and they lived without the splendor of palaces, equipages, or attendants. We give the names of the Judges and the time of their service, with the length of service of each, as far as these facts can be discovered in the mass of vague and sometimes contradictory statements accessible:

	YEARS.
Othniel.....	40
Ehud.....	80
Shamgar.....	unknown
Deborah and Barak.....	40
Gideon.....	40
Abimelech.....	3
Tola.....	23
Jair.....	22
Jephthah.....	6
Ibzan.....	7
Elon.....	10
Abdon.....	8
Samson.....	20
Eli.....	40
Samuel.....	about 12

According to this the period from Othniel to Saul, including the years of oppression, is about 490 years. But according to other chronologies it is only about 310 years, of which period 111 were under the oppression of foreign foes. But, doubtless, some of these periods overlap each other, and perhaps it is impossible to be certain regarding the length of the period, or to reconcile the statements in different books of the Old and New Testaments. Doubtless, there are facts with which we are not familiar, which, if known, would make all this entirely

¹ Judges xvii, 6.

clear. We are also able to give a tentative table of oppressors and deliverers:

OPPRESSORS.	YEARS.	DELIVERERS.
1. Mesopotamians.....	8	Othniel.
2. Moabites.....	18	Ehud.
3. North Canaanites....	20	Deborah and Barak.
4. Midianites.....	7	Gideon.
5. Ammonites.....	18	Jephthah.
6. Philistines.....	40	Samson.

All are agreed that the time from the death of Joshua to the election of Saul was at least a period over 400 years, although the exact time is variously estimated by different authorities.¹ The recollection of the wonderful story of God's deliverance from Egypt, and of his protection during the Exodus and the sojourn in the Wilderness, was never effaced from the minds of the people of Israel. Although they often wandered far from God, they still retained memories of these remarkable displays of power for their protection and for the destruction of their foes. They were still surrounded by warlike neighbors, anxious to reconquer the fair land; and there was constant need of the heroic men raised up by God to be the deliverers of Israel. The Phœnicians and other Canaanites, it was to be expected, would be in a state of constant rebellion against the victorious invaders; but had the tribes remained united under brave leaders, they would have driven out their foes and have possessed the land in peace. But with the death of Joshua and the dispersion of the tribes to their respective territories, the golden opportunity was lost forever. The Phœnicians, in Joshua's days, still paid tribute to Egypt as they had done for 400 years previous; and Egypt, in turn, gave the Phœnicians great trading advantages. The flag of the Phœnicians, it is said, waved at once in Britain and in the Indian Ocean, they having made an extensive immigration from Palestine to escape the sword of Joshua. The Israelites must long have coveted the wealth of Sidon and other seaport towns; but they seemed unable to secure their possession. The long spears and the terrible iron chariots of the lowland races were too much for the valor of Israel. But their own hills commanded the passes by which commerce flowed into Egypt, Arabia, Babylon, and Assyria.

The first cry of distress, however, came to Israel from new foes. An invader from the distant banks of the Euphrates spread consternation through Israel. A Mesopotamian king, Chushan-Nishathaim, invaded the land, and for eight weary years kept Israel under the yoke of bondage. National life and primitive faith had largely disappeared in Israel. The people intermarried with the remnants of the

heathen races remaining in the land, and too often joined with them in the worship of Baal together with that of Jehovah, or in the worship of Baal to the exclusion of that of Jehovah. Of this invader, the only one from the far East during the period covered by this book, we know but little. Trouble brought forth its proper fruits in Israel by leading the sufferers back to the God of their fathers. God raised up for them, when they honored his covenant and experienced a revival of faith, Othniel—"the Lion of God." He was a powerful prince or lion of the tribe of Judah. He drove the oppressors from the district in which he ruled, and forty years of peace were secured by his bravery and loyalty to God and Israel. During his administration Israel was true to God; but after his death the people fell back into their old sins, and again suffered the punishment of another bondage. Othniel was probably the only Judge connected with the tribe of Judah. He is first mentioned on the occasion of the taking of Kirjath-sepher, "the town of the book," or Debir, as it was afterward called. This town was in the mountainous territory about three miles west of Hebron within the border of Judea, and was assigned to Caleb, the Kenizzite. As we have seen, Caleb promised to give his daughter Achsah to him who should capture the city.¹ Othniel was the victor, and with the promised bride he received, in addition to her previous dowry, the upper and nether springs in the neighborhood. When the spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel victory over this foe was secured, and Israel had rest for forty years.

We are now brought into contact with a new enemy, the king of Moab, whose name was Eglon, meaning "the bullock." This was a name of contempt which was probably given him by Israel. Associated with him were the Ammonites and Amalekites. With their help he smote Israel, and secured possession of Jericho, which he made his seat of government. For eighteen years he exercised authority over the people. Once more Israel was brought into a condition of penitence, once more cried unto the Lord, and once more secured deliverance. These Ammonites and Amalekites were the old enemies of Israel. They overpowered Benjamin, doubtless after a bitter struggle, and took Jericho, which had been partially rebuilt, possibly on another site. The years of Eglon's possession were years of great oppression. Then arose Ehud. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, and was a young man of more williness than honor. Ehud was chosen to superintend the payment at Jericho of the tribute of his people; but he prepared himself for a dif-

¹ Acts xiii, 20.

¹ Joshua xv, 17; Judges i, 13, iii, 9, 10.

ferent service. Hiding his dagger, a cubit long, on his right thigh under his mantle, in which position his rank entitled him to wear it, he determined to end the king's life. The tribute was paid to the king in person, and an opportunity was thus afforded Ehud to notice the details of the house and all its domestic arrangements. The tribute bearer was dismissed to his home; he then went to the graven images which were set up at Gilgal, returned soon to Eglon, sending him a message of his desire to see him. The king commanded silence, and all withdrew. He was in his summer apartment on the roof of the house for coolness, and there he awaited Ehud's communication. Ehud intimated that his message was from God. Eglon arose, perhaps to defend himself, or perhaps in a spirit of reverence for the God of the Hebrews. He was thus exposed to the blow of the dexterous Ehud, who, being left-handed like many of his tribe, snatched from under his cloak the dagger, and plunged it to the hilt in Eglon's body.¹ After the assassination, Ehud hastily passed through the anteroom, locked the doors, and quickly and quietly left without exciting suspicion. Not until some time later did the servants of the king learn of his sad fate. Ehud, in the meantime, had escaped to the woody slopes in the southern part of the hill country of Ephraim. With his trumpet he summoned the men of war, and soon a multitude of armed men were about him. Thus supported he rushed to the fords of the Jordan,² and soon 10,000 men of valor fell before his fierce attack;³ being intercepted at the fords of the Jordan, they were slain to a man. The enemy was thus slaughtered or driven from the land and eighty years of peace followed.⁴

We now come to the Philistines who made the next inroad on Israel. They are to appear often in the history from this time onward. They were long the bitter foes of Israel; yet it is a curious fact, bitter though their enmity to Israel was, that their name is forever associated with the promised land, for the word Palestine is only another form of the name Philistia. They went from the maritime plains to make their raids into the Hebrew uplands. Their name from this time on, for many years, was the synonym of all that was cruel in opposition to Israel, and all that roused Israel to oppose their oppressors. Their attack brought into the history one of the strongest characters of this unique period; for the Philistine invasion brings before us the huge warrior Shamgar, with his great ox-goad. He was the son of Anath, and was the third Judge of Israel.⁵ His judgeship began in a time of great insecurity

and distress. The highways became impassable.¹ The people were obliged to creep about in the night, avoiding the beaten paths and the open country. They dared not partake of the water from the public wells lest the water might be poisoned, and at times they could not even approach the wells, as the enemy had made them inaccessible. The tributary Canaanites were in league with their independent kinsmen, the Philistines. The people of Israel were finally obliged to hide themselves in the mountains. It would seem that their arms were taken from them in harmony with the policy clearly adopted later by the same people. The whole nation was in alarm and despair. Then arose the rough and heroic Shamgar. He seems to have been plowing when the Philistines made their approach. He had no time to get better weapons, if such weapons were to be had. The ox-goad, however, in the hand of a man with strong arms and brave heart, was a powerful weapon. It was often a shaft eight feet long and six inches in circumference at the larger end. On the one end was a sharp prickle to keep the oxen in motion, and on the other end was a paddle used to remove from the plow the clay which naturally clung to it. With this weapon he made his desperate assault, and slew 600 of the Philistines.² Perhaps we are not to understand that he slew them with his own hand, but rather that he put himself at the head of a band of peasants, also armed with ox-goads. It is still common to ascribe to a leader the victories achieved by his followers. This remarkable victory struck terror into the hearts of the Canaanites and Philistines, and gave Israel at least a temporary respite. This deliverance could not, in the nature of the case, be permanent. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that the country continued still to be oppressed until after the deliverance which resulted from Deborah's great victory. Israel was her own greatest enemy. She constantly tended toward the idolatrous practices of the surrounding tribes; she constantly relapsed into the habits of her heathen neighbors, and so brought upon herself the displeasure of Jehovah.

We now enter upon one of the most famous of the many deliverances of Israel. A formidable confederacy was formed by Jabin, a northern king of the Canaanites.³ He subdued God's disobedient people, and for twenty years held them in apparently hopeless bondage. The years of peace mentioned often are limited only to certain portions of the country, while in other portions the oppressor was present and the people were crushed under his iron heel. Jabin's military power was great; his general,

¹ Judges iii, 15-22.² Judges iii, 26-28.³ Judges iii, 29.⁴ Judges iii, 30.⁵ Judges iii, 31.¹ Judges v, 6.² Judges iii, 31.³ Judges iv, 2.

Sisera, commanded 900 war chariots,¹ and Israel did not have even one. He, or his allies, held strong forces at Taanach, and Megiddo, and Beth-shean, on the south of Esdraelon, and these strongholds prevented the southern tribes from giving help to their brethren in the north in their great distress.² The whole country was reduced to a sad state of despair; all forms of trade practically ceased, and again the people hid themselves in mountains and valleys, or behind the strong walls of their towns. Elders and people alike lost heart and hope, and no one seemed called of God or man to be the deliverer in this trying hour. The population seemed utterly paralyzed in the presence of the overwhelming numbers and superior equipments of the Canaanites. There was scarcely a spear, shield or sword to be found among the 40,000 men.³ At this critical hour a woman came forward to be the deliverer of the people. She was the Joan of Arc of that early day. A lofty patriotism and an unquenchable religious enthusiasm filled her soul. She pondered long over the misfortunes of her people, and while she mused the fire burned in her brave heart. Then, at last, her heroic soul burst into a flame of zeal for the overthrow of Israel's foes. This brave woman's name was Deborah. The word means "the bee," and she certainly was worthy of her name in her power to give a sting to the foes and honey to the friends of Israel. She was a prophetess, and was used by God as his instrument to rouse the depressed nation and to strike the haughty enemy. No narrow tribal loyalty bounded her national faith, hope, and love. For a while she lived in the south in the hills of Ephraim, between Ramah and Bethel. She knew of the sorrows of the northern tribes and sympathized with them with a tenderness as marked as her bravery was great. She was the wife of Lapidoth, and under her solitary palm tree she judged Israel.⁴ She sent for Barak, or Barca — "the thunderbolt," or "lightning" — and directed him to attack Sisera, assuring him of victory. He, however, refused to make the attempt unless she accompanied him in the expedition; he seemed to be much less resolute and heroic than Deborah.⁵ Bravely she went forward, but faithfully and somewhat sarcastically she reminded him that the expedition would be victorious, but the glory would be a woman's and not a man's. It is interesting to know that the palm tree under which she judged was near the place where the nurse of Rebekah, another and earlier Deborah, was buried under an oak. Beautiful is it that that early record, in which there is scarcely found a

place for the deeds and graves of statesmen and kings, gives mention of the burial of the nurse of Rebekah. Barak was a northern warrior of the tribe of Naphtali which was near to the fortress of King Jabin, and which suffered much at his hand. To Barak she gave the command of the God of Israel that he should lead an army of patriots against the hosts of Sisera. Her presence roused Zebulun and Naphtali to join the conquering army; but Dan and Asher, on the seashore, failed to respond to her stirring summons. Reuben came not up to the help of the Lord and Deborah and Barak against the mighty foe. The dwellers in Meroz, a town at the head of the pass to Beth-shean, did not listen to the divine voice, and have been stigmatized forever on the page of the inspired history.¹ Behold Barak with his 10,000 infantry, marching to the battle!² He has already gained a reputation for bravery and loyalty, as his name clearly shows. His fame has already reached the distant confines of Benjamin. Messages were sent far and near, and 10,000 men gathered from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun to the gathering-place at Tabor. Issachar sent bands of volunteers; and the Ephraimites came from their hills, and the valiant sons of Benjamin, the most warlike of the tribes, skilled in the bow and famous with the sling,³ using either the right hand or the left with equal skill, came to do battle for God and Israel. Manasseh, east and west of the Jordan, sent loyal men and brave chiefs. For the first time since the early days of Joshua, the national spirit had been roused to a high pitch of patriotism and enthusiasm. The refusal of Meroz to participate in the stirring scenes in this historic hour brought down a curse which seems to have resulted in the destruction of her homes, if not the extermination of her people. Unfortunately the discussion by the brooks of Reuben ended in its clans leaving their brethren to fight unaided, while they remained among their hills and pastures. Gad also refused to come. Dan would rather remain, with cowardly indifference, with his boats at Joppa and Asher in the bays of Acre.⁴ The great tribe of Judah, and the tribe of Simeon seem to have kept aloof, jealousy of Ephraim probably being the cause. All honor to Zebulun, who busily and bravely enrolled the volunteers! All honor to Naphtali, dwelling among her hills! These tribes imperiled their lives; these tribes won immortal victory.

Up the sides of Mount Tabor, rising 1,500 feet from the plain of Esdraelon, the hosts of Israel climb. On its top, which is treeless and which forms a comparatively level circuit of

¹ Judges iv, 3.

² Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 466.

³ Judges v, 8. ⁴ Judges iv, 4, 5. ⁵ Judges iv, 6-9.

¹ Judges v, 23. ² Judges iv, 10. ³ Judges xx, 16.

⁴ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 470.

half an hour's walk, they meet in battle array.¹ No more advantageous location could have been chosen; for here Israel could not be attacked by the chariots of the Canaanites, and had, moreover, a lofty watchtower from whose summit all movements of the Canaanites could easily be seen. Sisera knew that the tribes of Israel were assembling for battle. With him as allies were the Kenites, who, though now on terms of peace with Jabin, had hitherto been frequently friendly with Israel. This Arab tribe was in a sense the kinsmen of Israel, because of the marriage of Moses to the daughter of Jethro, one of their sheiks. But now they betrayed Israel, and soon the wife of their chief was to betray Israel's arch enemy. The word Sisera means "the Leader." He was brave and heroic, and worthy of a better cause than that in which he was engaged. He collected his forces in Esdraelon; for he needed the open space which this plain afforded for the movements of his 900 chariots. His headquarters were at Taanach, a Canaanitish town and fortress on the southwestern side of the plain, on a spur of the Carmel range, "now clad with olive trees and marked by a stone village still called Taanach." To the northeast, sixteen miles away, rose Tabor. Its top was visible above the hills of Little Hermon. This plain, many writers have reminded us, has in all ages been the battlefield of Palestine. It lies north of the range of Carmel and the mountains of Samaria. It is twenty miles long from east to west, and ten to twelve in width. The Bay of Acre constitutes its western boundary, and the mountains of Gilboa, Little Hermon, and Tabor define its eastern boundary. It also sends arms down to the valley of the Jordan. It presents an undulating surface of great beauty and equal fertility, with an average level of 400 feet above the sea. For thousands of years it has been both the highway of travel and the battlefield of nations. The history of what has occurred on this plain would be, in no small sense, the history of the world. Perhaps no territory of the same size under the heavens has so often been fattened by the blood of the slain, of so many nations. Here armies in many wars have encamped. Here fought Thothmes III.; here Rameses II., and Rameses III. Here Pharaoh-Necho won the sad battle of Megiddo in which the beautiful King Josiah was slain, and so terrible was the slaughter of this great battle that the prophetic conflict mentioned in the Book of Revelation is called, because of the name Megiddo, "Armageddon."² Here have fought, in turn, Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Arabs, Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Turks, Crusaders,

Druses, and French. On this historic plain they pitched their tents, and their banners were moistened with the dews of Hermon and Tabor. Napoleon Bonaparte, on his disastrous march from Egypt into Syria, amid all his experiences of the horrors of battlefields, was touched by the tender memories which came to him of Tabor and Christ, while marching or camping on this plain. In the vicinity, on the mountains of Gilboa, the fierce battles were fought in which Saul and Jonathan so tragically perished.

The signal for the fierce attack was given by the brave Deborah. Calling to Barak she said, "Up! this, this and no other is the day!"¹ Her stirring words met with an instant response. Barak took the field with his 10,000 infantry. The ill-armed host bravely poured down from the security of the mountains and rushed upon the chariots of the enemy drawn up in the terrible plain. A terrific storm of hail and sleet from the east burst over the plain, beating on the backs of the Hebrews and in the faces of the Canaanites. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera;"² the rain descended in torrents, the wind blew with fury, and the flood came with resistless might. The deep red soil became a quagmire in which the chariots sunk, unable to move. The water-courses which had been dry were now filled with rushing torrents, and in the terrible confusion the Canaanites were routed, overwhelmed, and destroyed with fearful slaughter.³ The marshy ground, and the swelling of the river Kishon, were divine instruments to punish the foes of Israel and of Israel's God. Sisera leaped from his chariot and fled for his life to the northeast, among the slopes of Tabor.⁴ He fled from death on the field of battle to be murdered in his sleep, by the Kenite woman in whose tent he sought food and repose. We follow the flying general as he hastens for his life over the plains. The tents of the Arabs are to-day much as they were in that day; they are large and held up by nine poles on which rest the coverings of camel's-hair cloth, or the hides of oxen. The ropes were fixed to pegs driven into the earth by a huge wooden mallet.⁵ The tent is divided into a part on the left for the men, and the part on the right forming the chamber for the women. The bed is only a mat on the ground, and the cloak worn by day serves as a cover by night. In the chamber for women are gathered the cooking utensils, the water skins, the milk, and the butter. Such, probably, was the tent of Heber at this time. At its entrance Sisera in his haste found Jael, the wife of the sheik, and,

¹ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 472. See Stanley, and Smith's "Bible Dictionary."

² Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 473.

¹ Judges iv, 14. ² Judges v, 20.

³ Judges v, 21. ⁴ Judges iv, 15.

⁵ See Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 475.

as there was peace between this Kenite tribe and Jabin, he asked for shelter. Graciously, but treacherously, she received him. What her purpose at the first was we cannot tell; but her subsequent acts indicated her determination to betray her guest. She brought him a preparation of curdled milk called "lebben," which, while refreshing to the weary traveler, tends soon to produce deep sleep.¹ Instead of giving him the water for which he asked, Jael brought him the lebben in a special dish.² Probably she knew the effect which it would induce. The wearied man, broken in spirit because of his defeat, eagerly partakes of the welcome beverage. Soon he is wrapped in deepest slumber, feeling perfectly safe in the tent of Heber. Carefully Jael covers him with a cloak. It is a thrilling moment in her life! Shall she violate her repeated assurances of Arab hospitality? Her tribe is now an ally of the host of Jabin; but she cannot forget that Israel is a race of her own blood. Strange thoughts come to her as she gazes on the sleeping Sisera, the foe of Israel now so unconscious and helpless. Shall she strike a deadly blow and deliver Israel from the oppressor? See her silently, restlessly moving about her tent! Great thoughts, cruel thoughts, murderous thoughts, but, withal, patriotic thoughts, stir her soul. Now she takes up one of the tent pegs, and now with mallet in hand—the mallet used to drive the pegs into the ground when the tents are erected—she stealthily creeps to the side of the sleeping general. She lifts the mallet with one hand, and holds the peg with the other just above his temple. What a moment in a woman's life! Down comes the heavy mallet with a crushing blow, and through the temples of the sleeping man the tent pin is driven with such force that it pierces the ground on which the unconscious victim is lying! Convulsively he leaps, violently he groans in agony; a moment more and all is over, and now lifeless he lies in the tent in which he sought food and shelter. See her standing over him as he sinks dying, and then as he lies dead!³

The results of this battle were immediately great and far-reaching. The Israelites learned a lesson of national union; a lesson which they never fully forgot in their subsequent history. The Canaanites learned memorable lessons from the heroic courage of Israel, and the resistless might of Israel's God. This was the first great victory which Israel had achieved since the days of Joshua. With a handful of men and God on their side, they overcame the mighty hosts of trained warriors. They saw that their national humiliation was because of

their neglect of religious duty; they could not forget the lesson, that when they abandoned their idolatry they gained the favor of God, and, at the same time, found national deliverance.

Deborah was the possessor of poetic genius, as truly as of martial valor and national loyalty. On this grand occasion she embodied her patriotic thoughts in rhythmic verse which delighted the hearts of Israel then, and which still sings in glowing notes on the page of sacred history. Her song is one of wonderful poetic fire; it is a lyric which only a great soul, under the inspiration of a great occasion, could sing. It inspired the hearts of all the tribes, and gave them hope for national unity and glory. No wonder that Deborah secured wide and enduring fame for wisdom and bravery; and no wonder that she became the center of moral and judicial power over the people whom she had so triumphantly delivered. Joyously did the children of Israel come up to her for judgment. It is an interesting fact that this "Song of Deborah" is the only example of the outpouring of a poetic and prophetic soul recorded in the sacred history from the death of Moses to the times of Hannah and Samuel. This glorious song gives God the praise for the victory achieved; this thought is, indeed, its keynote from its beginning to its close. No one can read a literal version of the lyric without appreciating its poetic genius, its patriotic spirit, and its divine inspiration. Other nations have given the world great women in time of great need, and in the history of other nations, also, thunder and rain, lightning and hail have contributed to defeat of enemies and to the triumph of national valor; but perhaps in no nation was there a braver leader among women than Deborah, the mother of Israel, and perhaps in no nation did patriotic valor and divine benediction more fully unite with the stars in their courses in opposing the enemy and in securing victory for the national cause.

No one can give unqualified praise to Jael for her violation of Arabian hospitality, in the treacherous murder of which she was guilty. But we must not judge the acts of that rude time by the standard of morality established by Jesus Christ, and observed, partially, at least, even in warfare by civilized nations in modern times. Jael thought only of the relation of this cruel deed to the freedom of the people whose blood flowed in her own veins. All of us, however, are conscious of the stirring sentiment evoked by the closing words of Deborah's magnificent song: "So perish all my enemies, O Jehovah; but they that love thee are as the sun, when he goes forth in his might."¹ So the land had rest for forty years.

¹ See authorities referred to by Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 475.

² Judges v, 25. ³ Judges v, 26, 27.

¹ Judges v, 31.

CHAPTER VIII.

GIDEON, "FAINT, YET PURSUING."

AFTER the great victory won by Deborah and Barak over Sisera, forty years of peace ensued. This was a welcome repose after a time of great national excitement. Peace was necessary to the development of this new territory, and to the stability and prosperity of the people. They were now more fully united as a nation than they had been since the days of Joshua. War against foreign foes is often necessary to prevent the fomenting of dissension on domestic soil. Many a ruler in modern times has favored a foreign war in order to prevent a civil uprising. This condition of things often will explain the declaration of foreign war in European countries. Indeed, the war now (1895) raging between China and Japan is doing much to unify the latter country, and perhaps to prevent outbreaks against the government in the former. The victory over Sisera left the people of Israel comparatively united, heartily enthusiastic, and more generally loyal to God and country than they had been for many years. But now, at the end of the period named, new enemies arose—enemies who were fierce and terrible, wild hordes from the desert. They were also old foes of Israel, foes whom Israel had fought at Sinai, foes who defeated Israel at Hormah, when they first attempted to enter Palestine, and foes whose land in central Canaan Ephraim claimed as her own. These were the Midianites, Amalekites, and other nomadic tribes, known as the sons of the East. It is difficult for us to be sure of our dates while stating the incidents recorded in the Book of Judges. As we have before intimated, some of the events were probably contemporaneous; but it seems quite certain that the rise of Gideon, the greatest of all the Judges, belonged to a period very much later than that of Deborah. Unfortunately, the very blessings of providence in the peace and prosperity which Israel had enjoyed after Deborah's victory were misused so as to lower the moral tone of the people. All blessings are closely akin to curses. Privileges unused become evils of an exaggerated character. The tribes forgot the abhorrence of idolatry which Deborah had cherished and manifested. Once more they became indifferent to their national interests, and to the claims of God, their true king; and so they became the easy prey of vigorous foes ambitious of conquest. These tribes of Israel once more repeat their too familiar history of disobedience and consequent punishment; then of penitence toward God and deliverance wrought by God. As a

scourge for the punishment of his people, God used these wild sons of the East. The home of these Arab tribes had been in the east and south of Palestine; they were Midianites who had gradually spread northward from the Peninsula of Sinai. The rich plains and valleys of Palestine had always possessed peculiar attractions to these children of the desert; and they now swept with resistless power over large parts of the land. They banded together in a host of more than 120,000 men, capable of bearing arms.¹ Passing the fords of the Jordan with households and herds, they invaded Palestine, so that their coming was compared to a flight of locusts, both in numbers and in destructiveness. They pitched their tents and fed their camels in the rich cornfields of Israel. The people were reduced to the most general and humiliating servitude ever experienced by Israel. They are obliged to flee to the mountains and to hide themselves in obscure caves.² All over the land the soil remained uncultivated, the cattle were neglected or destroyed, a grievous famine ensued, and disease stalked through the land. The inroads of these invaders were thus on a gigantic scale; and they were repeated summer after summer. Whenever grain was growing it was trampled under foot or eaten by flocks and camels. Crops that were threshed were carried off, as were also sheep, oxen, and asses wherever these marauders could find them in mountain, valley, or plain. Two emirs, Zebah, "the man-killer," and Zalmunna, "the pitiless," with two subordinate chiefs, Oreb, "the Raven," and Zeeb, "the Wolf," came arrayed in scarlet cloaks³ with chains of gold and crescent shaped ornaments adorning their camels and their own persons. A most vivid picture is given in the Book of Judges of the dazzling splendor of these primitive chiefs, as well as the gorgeous raiment, ear and nose jewels, of their wives and daughters.⁴ They came up from the depths of the Jordan valley, past the meadows of Bethshean and finally pitched their tents on the east end of the great plain of Esdraelon. Dr. Geikie quotes Leslie Porter as having seen a similar host, though on a smaller scale, in the spring of 1857, when the Bedouin Sheik, Akeil Agha, assembled his men in Esdraelon to divide the plunder secured in the massacre of the Kurds at Hattin. He represents them as spreading over the plain, countless as locusts, and their camels like the sand on the seashore

¹ Judges viii, 10.

² Judges vi, 2.

³ Judges viii, 26.

⁴ Judges viii, 26.

for number; and, as he gazed on the fierce crowds of this disorderly army, he was reminded of the great invasion of the Midianites in the days of Gideon.¹

Israel was finally led, in her terrible distress, to call upon God for succor. The people had long refused to listen to the voice of prophets, urging them penitently to return to God and so avert the terrible calamity from which they were suffering. When the tale of bricks was doubled, then was Moses born; when the knell of liberty was sounding, the trumpet of hope was heard; so once more man's necessity was God's opportunity. Marvelous are God's displays of grace and power to those who return in penitence to him. God always has the man for the hour. To-day in humble cottages in quiet valleys God is training up boys who will be the leaders of the Church in the next generation—boys who are to be founders of republics, and leaders of kingdoms, and pillars in the Church of the living God. So in the dark days of Israel did God mercifully furnish deliverers for his penitent people. In one of the poorest, or at least feeblest, clans of western Manasseh, that descended from Abiezer, was born in the house of Joash at Ophrah, probably near Shechem, the future deliverer. Gideon, the fifth Judge of Israel, was a man of noble person, and of a worthy family line. Joash might boast of magnificent sons, "each like the son of a king."² But there was deep sorrow in the father's heart, for all his brave boys save the youngest—the heroic Gideon—had fallen on Mount Tabor in the numerous and terrible fights with the fierce Midianites.³ The years of submission were marked by outbreaks on the part of the sons of Joash and others who hated the oppressor and loved their native land. We look with gratitude and delight upon this youngest son, Gideon, the "hewer" or "tree-feller," who had already hewn down Baal's altar and the image of Ashtoreth. He had already proved himself to be "a mighty man of valor";⁴ already, it is evident, the Midianites had felt the power of his strong arm and brave heart. His fields were at Ophrah, on the very scene of the invasion. When he comes before us he has grown sons, and seems to have been a man of considerable wealth, as he had his own body of servants and was accompanied by his armor-bearer.⁵ But he was modest as he was brave; and he had no thought of heading a revolt until he was summoned by God to lead his followers against the foe. His call by God is an illustration of God's adaptation of his methods to the spiritual infancy and primitive manners of the time. Gideon's tal-

ents had hitherto been latent, for the most part; but God now appeared to him in a vision. In order the better to conceal his wheat from the Midianite marauders, he was engaged in threshing it in a cave. He hardly dared to allow the wheat to become ripe lest it should be stolen from the field; and he did not dare thresh it in the open field, but in a cave. There would be less danger of discovery by threshing it with a flail on the earth than on a wooden floor, especially if it were trodden in public by the feet of oxen or threshed with a roller. We see him, then, thus engaged on the ground by the rock-hewn winepress.¹ Interesting preternatural signs convinced him that his strange visitant was a celestial being. Subsequent facts seem to show that this visitor was none other than he whom we have come to know and adore as Jesus. Gideon offered his heavenly guest a present appropriate to a superior being—a kid and a small portion of flour.² These he laid on a rock. The mysterious visitor touched them, and immediately fire arose from the rock which consumed them as a divine sacrifice;³ and immediately, also, a new spirit from God came upon Gideon. The narrative tells us that he was clothed with this spirit.⁴ He signalized the occasion by building an altar on the spot made sacred by the visit of the angel; and this altar he dedicated to Jehovah-Shalom, "Jehovah-peace," Jehovah who will bring days of peace and prosperity.⁵ This name is itself a benediction and a prophecy. Gideon proceeded to prove his faith by his works, and at once made war on the idolatry of his own neighborhood, throwing down the altar of Baal at midnight.⁶

It would seem that his father, Joash, had yielded to the evil tendencies of his time so far as to have built this altar to Baal on the top of the cliff in which the winepress was located; he seems, also, to have had an Asherah, or "grove," which was really a wooden pillar and was intended to symbolize the goddess of fertility, near the altar to Baal. But if an altar to Jehovah was to be built, all other altars must be cast down. So Gideon bravely threw down the altar of Baal, and with the help of his servants cut up the Asherah for fuel. He then laid it on the altar to Jehovah, using it as fuel to consume, in sacrifice to him, the bullock which his father seems to have consecrated to Baal.⁷ This was a daring deed. The people were fearful lest they should incur the wrath of their deities, and they were likely to stone Gideon when they discovered what he had

¹ "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 486.

² Judges viii, 18.

³ Judges viii, 18.

⁴ Judges vi, 12.

⁵ Judges vi, 27.

¹ Judges vi, 11.

² Judges vi, 19.

³ Judges vi, 21.

⁴ Judges vi, 34.

⁵ Judges vi, 24.

⁶ Judges vi, 27.

⁷ Judges vi, 28. See Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 488.

done in the darkness of midnight. Joash, however, by his ironical question saved his son, rebuked the people, and threw contempt on Baal. "Will ye plead for Baal?" asks Joash; and he answered his question by saying, "Let Baal plead for himself."¹ Because of this circumstance Gideon was called Jerubbaal, meaning "let Baal plead." The irony which Joash used as an argument against a god who could not defend himself was a common argument with the worshippers of the true God against the deities of all false religions.

Stirring events now await our consideration. Great numbers of invaders are encamped on the plain of Jezreel, and the Arab hosts have come to make their annual invasion, and to revel in their annual depredation.² Gideon has been called of God to lead the hosts of Israel; but he demanded a sign from heaven which God mercifully granted him. He shows a boldness in speaking to God which came perilously near being guilty unbelief; he asked for signs after God had given direct promises. But the trying circumstances in which he was placed may justify the otherwise culpable caution which he manifested. He asked that the dews, which fall so plenteously in that land, might one night fall only on a fleece which he had spread; and the next morning the fleece was saturated with dew, and the ground was dry. The next night the ground was steeped with moisture and the fleece was perfectly dry.³ Some have found in this double sign illustrations of Gideon's own character, he at times being warm and zealous while the people were indifferent or cold, and he at times calm and cool while all about him were stirred with excitement.⁴

After this test he was prepared for the invasion of the foe. He sounded the war trumpet through his own district, and his own clan of Abiezer responded with enthusiasm to his patriotic call. Messages were immediately sent through western Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and these tribes promptly and enthusiastically obeyed their leader's summons. All doubt was now removed by the signs that had been given by God, and the response made by the tribes. No fewer than 32,000 men gathered about him ready for battle. Strangely enough the army was too large to achieve a victory which God designed to contribute to his own glory; an army of this size would claim the victory for itself and deny God the glory which is his due. Proclamations were therefore made that all who desired to return home—all whose valor could not be relied upon in trial—should have the oppor-

tunity to leave the field and go to their homes. At once 22,000 men in a cowardly spirit withdrew.¹ Poor Gideon! Happy Gideon! Heroic and triumphant Gideon! Even the 10,000 remaining were too many for the victory to be achieved. These were again to be reduced by a singular process, whose meaning it is not easy to fully understand. Near Mount Gilboa flows a copious spring, known as "the Spring of Trembling," because of the striking event which then occurred in Gideon's history. It forms a great pool of pure water, semi-circular in shape, and large enough to permit many to drink at the same time. Gideon's men were now led to this pool to drink.² Those who, with a desire for their own comfort, knelt down to drink, were dismissed; but those who, in their haste and earnest desire to engage with the foe, stood up, lifting the water to their lips in the hollow of their hand, as is still the custom in oriental lands, were retained.³ The Hebrew word that is here employed, and which is translated "lapped," is a word formed from the sound which dogs make when their tongues assume the shape of a spoon, and when they hurriedly satisfy their thirst. In Eastern lands, men passing through streams throw the water so rapidly into their mouths that the hand is after the second supply before the first is fully swallowed. Only 300 men lapped. Surely Gideon was now to be pitied. But God promised him that, with the 300 that lapped, he would save Israel, and deliver the Midianites into his hand.⁴

With these 300 Gideon resolved to assail the numerous hosts of the foe, in a night attack which was as marked by ingenuity as by daring, by stratagem as by courage, and by a victory as glorious as the attempt was heroic. An additional augury was given the leader to encourage him in his great undertaking. When the quiet and security of the night had come, he and his armor-bearer, Phurah, resolved to make matters doubly sure by going into the camp of the Midianites below. Stealthily they crept down the hillside unnoticed by the camp, which, according to the custom of its people, was without sentinels. Thousands of Arabs lay wrapped in slumber, while their innumerable camels lay also about them in peaceful repose. One of the sleepers was awake, as Gideon and Phurah approached, and they had the joy of hearing him tell his comrade of a strange dream which he had dreamed.⁵ How earnestly Gideon and his armor-bearer listened; and how joyously do they hear the dream and the interpretation thereof!⁶ The dreamer had seen a thin, round barley cake, such as was common to the people and the time, rolling

¹ Judges vi, 32.

² Judges vi, 33.

³ Judges vi, 40.

⁴ Ewald, referred to by Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 489.

¹ Judges vii, 3.

² Judges vii, 5.

³ Judges vii, 6.

⁴ Judges vii, 7.

⁵ Judges vii, 13.

⁶ Judges vii, 13, 14.

into the host of the Midianites. It ceased not its progress till it reached the royal tent, in the center of the camp, and when the tent was reached it fell flat upon the ground. The comrade, to whom the dream was narrated, immediately replied, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel; for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." With a joy which we can better imagine than describe, Gideon listened to this explanation of the dream. All was again quiet in the Midianite camp; sleepers and dreamers, unconscious of danger, sweetly slept to be waked a little later by the blast of horns, the crashing of pitchers, the flashing of torches, and the shouts of the Israelites. We watch Gideon and his companion as, with thankful and excited hearts, they return. We see them climbing back to their companies. Soon he sends the three companies to their respective posts, and each man is provided with a horn, a torch, and an earthen pot, and about eleven o'clock at night, as it is believed, the preconcerted signal is given. Instantly the crash of 300 pitchers is heard, the blaze of 300 torches is seen, and the terrible shouts of Israel are heard, breaking the stillness of the midnight hour, the voices all joining at once from three opposite quarters, shouting "the Sword of Jehovah and Gideon."¹ A terrible panic seizes the disorganized Midianite camp; it is encumbered with herds and camels as well as with women and children; and in a moment all are rushing hither and thither in darkness, confusion, excitement, and alarm. The dissonant cries, still characteristic of the Arab race, are heard, adding much to the excitement of this terrible experience. The Arab soldiers know not friend from foe, and so, drawing their swords against one another, they flee headlong for life, the vast multitude pouring itself down the descent toward the fords of the Jordan in wildest disorder.² Gideon was keenly alive to the importance of the moment. He followed up his first success with the utmost energy, enthusiasm, and courage. The northern tribes, who had come to his help, were sent in pursuit of the flying foe, whose design was to cross the river at the fords of Bethbarah. Messengers were sent through all the hill country of Ephraim to rouse the men of that great and haughty tribe to cut off the flight of the defeated foe.³ Some, however, had already escaped over the ford; but the men of Ephraim reached the lower fords in time to prevent the escape of the great body of the flying host. Although the two greater chiefs had already crossed, the two secondary leaders, the sheiks Oreb and Zeeb, were caught and slain, one at

a winepress, afterward known as the Winepress of Zeeb, or the Wolf, and the other at a rock which, in like manner, took its name from the slain chief, and was called the Rock of Oreb, or the Raven.¹ So great a part of the battle took place about this rock that the battle is called, in Isaiah, "The slaughter of Midian at the Rock of Oreb."² In this connection Isaiah expresses the common opinion as to the greatness of the slaughter by ranking it with that of Egypt at the Red Sea, or the destruction of the host of Sennacherib. The author of the Eighty-third Psalm has this incident in mind when he describes the enemy as driven over the uplands of Gilead like chaff blown from the threshing floors, or like the flames as they leap from tree to tree among the mountains, when in the dry season fire has been placed on the wooded hills.³ The Ephraimites dashed onward, passing the Jordan, and soon overtook Gideon and presented him the severed heads of these fierce sheiks.⁴ They remonstrated with Gideon for not having earlier called them to participate in the heroic struggle, and their rebuke of him was as characteristic of the pride of their haughty tribe as his gentle and tactful answer was characteristic of his wisdom, forbearance, and self-control.⁵ He impressed upon them the fact that their gleanings, in having secured the heads of the slaughtered chiefs, was of more value than the full vintage of the slaughter of unknown multitudes in the previous part of the battle.

Gideon, "faint, yet pursuing," pressed forward with his men.⁶ He had gained two battles, but a third was needed to make the victory overwhelming. He pressed closely in the track of Zebah and Zalmunna, the two greater chiefs of whom we have already spoken. They exercised authority over all the host. The words, "faint, yet pursuing," beautifully describe Gideon's weariness on the one hand, and his energy on the other. These words have found an appropriate place in the religious experiences of many Christians in all ages of the history of the Church. On, on he dashed, notwithstanding his exhaustion! Two halting places in his hasty journey are full of suggestion to all readers of this thrilling narrative — Succoth and Penuel, names which remind us of two great scenes in the earlier life of Jacob.⁷ Far into the desert he pressed with haste until he reached Karkor, beyond the usual range of the nomadic tribes, and there he overtook the Arabian host, perhaps near Kenath. The remnant of the army thus defeated numbered 15,000;⁸ these he scattered, and the two princes

¹ Judges vii, 19-21.

² Judges vii, 22.

³ Judges vii, 24.

¹ Judges vii, 25.

² Isaiah x, 26.

³ Psalm lxxxiii, 11, 13, 14.

⁴ Judges vii, 25.

⁵ Judges viii, 1-3.

⁶ Judges viii, 4.

⁷ Judges viii, 8.

⁸ Judges viii, 10.

of all the host he captured alive. We now have an account of his triumphant return, and of the fierce vengeance which he inflicted on two cities because of their indifference to the weal of their brethren. The elders of the two towns—Succoth and Penuel—were beaten to death with the thorny branches of the acacia, and the tower of Penuel was thrown down, because they had refused to give food to his men when they were so wearily pursuing the common enemy.¹

The two sheiks are brought before Gideon on their richly adorned dromedaries, and with other evidences of the state of royal Arabs. These defeated chiefs still possess the brave spirit of the noblest men of the Arab race, and Gideon is moved as he gazes on their present degradation, and remembers their former splendor. He is almost disposed to yield to his tenderer emotions; but when he remembers how his brothers had been slain on Mount Tabor his heart becomes steeled,² and he commands his boy Jether to inflict the decreed punishment on the Arab chiefs.³ The boy, however, shrinks from so terrible a task, and Gideon, at the request of Zebah and Zalmunna, with his own hand strikes the deadly blow, and secures their gorgeous robes and glittering ornaments, and other spoil which their camels carried.⁴

The memory of this deliverance remained long in Israel. It gave names, as we have seen, to the spring of Harod, to the Rock of Oreb, and to the Winepress of Zeeb. Gideon was modest as he was heroic. His magnificent triumph raised him at once to the highest place in the leadership of the people. They offered him kingly rank for himself and his family,⁵ but the time had not come for a monarchy. Few men were more fit for royal honors and authority than Gideon; his very appearance was kingly. But, instead of accepting the honors offered him, he asked simply for the golden rings taken from the Arab host, that he might dedicate them as an offering unto Jehovah.⁶ He combined, as did David in a later day, elements both of sacerdotal and regal authority; but dark superstitions mingled with his religious devotions. The gold thus procured reached the great weight of 1,700 shekels, which was thrown as a grateful gift on his cloak which had been spread upon the ground.⁷ Strangely enough we find him making, out of this Midianite spoil, a sacred ephod to be used by himself in his house at Ophrah.⁸ This ephod was an unauthorized imitation of that of the high priest at Shiloh, and the act of Gideon tended to take from Shiloh its honors as the

center of the northern tribes. The ephod became an object of idolatrous worship, leading the people away from the service of the true God. This is a sad ending of the glorious victory which Gideon had achieved. We all are conscious of the gentleness, sweetness, and nobility of his character; and we also see how these qualities were harmoniously blended with heroic courage, earnest faith, and national loyalty. It has been well said by Dean Stanley, that we have in Gideon "something of the past greatness of Joshua, something of the future grace of David." He was not a perfect man, but, on the whole, an admirable leader of Israel, and we are not surprised to learn that under him "the country was in quietness forty years."

He had many wives, and left seventy-one sons, one of whom proved to be a great curse to Israel. The sad story of Abimelech is in strange contrast with the heroic and romantic events in the life of Gideon; but even this story has lessons of its own to teach the students of this early and troublous period. Abimelech, the son of a slave woman of Shechem,¹ eagerly snatched at the sovereignty which his noble father had declined, and he cruelly put his father's sons to death, with the exception of Jotham, the youngest, in order that he might secure the throne and reign without a rival. The story of Abimelech shows us, among other things, the great danger of polygamy, and the terrible jealousies which inevitably result among the children of numerous wives. Abimelech lent himself most willingly to the jealous hatred of the haughty tribe of Ephraim. He plotted with his mother's family in Shechem that the city should choose him for king. He led them to believe that it was better to be ruled over by one man than by seventy, referring to Gideon's other sons.² He also begged them to remember that he was their "bone and flesh." This only unworthy son inherited the daring of his father, but without his father's sense of justice and self-control. There was, at the time, a tendency toward a monarchical form of government, but his most powerful appeal was to the common element of race between him and the people of Shechem. The people were caught by this appeal; they said, "he is our brother."³ The slaughter of his brothers is the first recorded instance of the horrible practices of oriental monarchs, in slaying all the members of families lest they should interfere with the authority of the ruler. Abimelech retired in triumph to Shechem, his birthplace, the city so famous in the previous history of Israel. Beside the oak under which Joshua addressed the nation in solemn assembly, and

¹ Judges viii, 13-17.

² Judges viii, 19.

³ Judges viii, 20.

⁴ Judges viii, 21.

⁵ Judges viii, 22, 23.

⁶ Judges viii, 24.

⁷ Judges viii, 24-26.

⁸ Judges viii, 27.

¹ Judges viii, 31.

² Judges ix, 1-6.

³ Judges ix, 3.

where, in later times, the princes of Israel were inaugurated, Abimelech received the title of king.¹ This was the first time in sacred history that the title was given to any man. It was the critical moment in the history of the entire nation. Jotham, one of the numerous brothers, had escaped when the others were slain. At the time that the people were hailing Abimelech as king,² Jotham, with the practical wisdom and wit of his father and grandfather, appeared on one of the rocky spurs that project from Gerizim into the valley. Standing amid these rocks he was safe from the anger of the multitudes below. He then broke forth in a remarkable address to the astonished people. He uttered a parable, the earliest parable recorded in the history. He spoke, no doubt, in the chanting and lamenting style—the recitative—common to eastern story-tellers. His parable turned on the vegetable world. He described the vine, the cedar, and the thistle as endowed with human instinct and speech, as in the fables of India and Greece. "The trees," he went on to say, "once sought a king, and came in turn to the olive, the fig tree, and the vine, asking each successively to reign over them." Thus he enlarged upon the thought, affirming that the olive declined to leave its fatness and to wave over the trees; so the fig tree, with its broad and green shade, declined; but the worthless thorn eagerly grasped at the proffered dignity and boasted its willingness to rule over its faithful subjects. He then reminded the people that if they chose Abimelech, the worst of all his father's sons, they might find joy in each other. But he suggested the possibility that a fire might come from the worthless thorn bush, and perhaps, also, from themselves, that would destroy both them and him.³ He then disappeared, going, it is supposed, to the far-off tribe of Benjamin. This was a strange interruption to the jovial pro-

ceedings of the day when the worthless Abimelech was crowned.

Abimelech was the bramble king who undertook to rule. A frightful policy was inaugurated—a policy which was afterward repeated by Jehu in the extermination of the family of Ahab,¹ and by Athaliah in the massacre of the children of Ahaziah,² and a policy that prevailed in Turkey, also, until a recent time. Abimelech left a viceroy, Zebul, in charge of Shechem, while he himself lived in Arumah.³ Abimelech's tyranny was unendurable. Robber bands from Shechem plundered all connected with him, and even tried to capture him. The people became utterly weary of their king, and attempted to throw off his yoke. Gaal, a Canaanite of Shechem, made a treasonable speech at a vine harvest in the temple of Baal, proposing to dethrone Abimelech and himself to rule over the people. Zebul reported this speech to Abimelech, who defeated Gaal and his men and expelled them from the town. On the following day, in another battle, the men of Shechem were overthrown, and Abimelech, after putting to death all whom he could reach, destroyed the town and sowed the ground with salt.⁴ Many who had taken refuge in the temple of Baal were destroyed by fire, Abimelech and his men having piled the fuel about the temple, burning about 1,000 men and women.⁵ The tyrant then went to Thebez determined to destroy its inhabitants in like manner. But while he was pressing close to the tower piling fuel about it to burn it, a woman cast down on him a great millstone, seriously wounding him;⁶ and, disdaining to die in so ignoble a manner, he commanded his armor-bearer to pierce him through with his sword that he might escape the shame of dying by a woman's hand.⁷ With his strange death ended the premature attempt to found a monarchy over a portion of the tribes of Israel.⁸

CHAPTER IX.

JEPHTHAH AND SAMSON.

THE Judges who now followed were men of undistinguished names, and without heroic fame or enduring achievements. The first was Tola, of the tribe of Issachar, and possibly a connection of Abimelech, who secured, in the confusion of the times, the leadership of Israel. It may not be too fanciful to see in the meaning of his name—"a worm"—a suggestion of his insignificant personality and unimportant official service. He dwelt at Shamir, in the mountainous country of Ephraim. We know but little of his deeds, either in peace

or in war. It is believed, however, that for twenty-three years he defended the northern tribes. Later came Jair, a Gileadite of Manasseh, who was the eighth Judge. He had thirty sons, who were masters of thirty cities, and,

¹ II. Kings x, 1-7.

² II. Kings xi, 1.

³ Judges ix, 41.

⁴ Judges ix, 45.

⁵ Judges ix, 49.

⁶ Judges ix, 53.

⁷ Judges ix, 54.

⁸ For facts in detail, see Judges ix, 46-57. See, also, for fine descriptions, Stanley, "Jewish Church," I, Lecture XV; and Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, xvi. See Smith's and other Bible Dictionaries under the names discussed. Also, see on Gideon and Abimelech, "The Bible for Learners," by Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuonen, I, xvii and xviii.

¹ Judges ix, 6.

² Judges ix, 7.

³ Judges ix, 7-20.

like princes, rode on thirty ass colts.¹ His name means "God will enlighten." The Gileadites, on the east of the river, were enlarging their boundaries. The Midianites had invaded their territory, but had received a decided check by the strong hand of the brave Gideon. Jair seems to have been a vigorous and successful leader. His thirty sons, as has been intimated, maintained something of royal estate. New territories were won during his administration, each territory seems to have had one of his sons as its ruler, and the towns were known as "Jair's Villages" — Havoth-Jair. But comparatively little is known of his judgeship.

But a new invasion of the territory was made by the Philistines who attacked the western border; and the Ammonites, a more formidable enemy, gained victories over the tribes beyond the Jordan, and also challenged the combined forces of Ephraim, Judah, and Benjamin. The present was dark, and the future was growing darker. The patriarchal government had now lasted 300 years, but disaster and anarchy were everywhere dominant. The national spirit had largely died out, and the national faith was constantly decreasing. On the north the idols of Syria replaced the worship of Jehovah, or divided the veneration of the people. On the southwest the gods of the Philistines, and on the east those of Moab and Ammon, had numerous devotees.² There was no strength, no union, no courage, and but little hope among the tribes. All felt the need of a monarchy.³ The enemies of Israel were under the authority of kings; and these enemies had grown strong while Israel had become weak. The Ammonites, whom the forefathers of the people had crushed, had now, as we have seen, so increased in number and power as to become formidable foes. The country on both sides of the Jordan was thus harassed by enemies seeking plunder and inflicting destruction.

God now raised up a deliverer after this fifth conquest by the Ammonites and their allies, who for eighteen years had held the country east of the Jordan in subjection. Once more the people turned in penitence unto Jehovah; once more he heard their prayer and sent them deliverance. The deliverer at this time was Jephthah, an illegitimate son of a Gileadite of the tribe of Manasseh. A rugged chieftain, a reckless freebooter, but a daring deliverer was Jephthah. His strange history and contradictory character are vivid illustrations of these troublous times. His brothers had driven him from home, and he then lived a marauding life on the borders of the tribe, at the head of such roving bands of reckless men as could be easily collected in that unsettled period.

But when his kindred were groaning under foreign oppression, they looked to this lawless compatriot for deliverance. They sent for him and made him their leader; and he did not disappoint their hopes. His fame had spread over Gilead and his haughty soul deeply felt the humiliation of his expulsion. He consented to come only on the solemn oath sworn at the Sanctuary at Mizpeh that, if he drove out their enemies, he should be their ruler for life. He at once sent an embassy to the king of the Ammonites remonstrating with him on his unprovoked aggressions; but this king demanded the formal surrender of the trans-jordanic provinces. Jephthah saw that negotiations with this king would be fruitless; the spirit of the Lord, as a spirit of strength and bravery, came upon him; and he at once prepared for war, and burst on the enemy with such fury that he drove them before him, capturing twenty towns from Aroer on the Arnon to Minnith and to Abel Keramim. His creed was strangely made up of correct notions of God, mixed with dark rites of heathenism borrowed from the worship of Chemosh. While the prospect of battle was before him, he vowed to devote, as a burnt offering to God, whomsoever should come out of his household to meet him on his triumphant return.¹ He doubtless was familiar with the offering of human sacrifices to Chemosh; possibly, also, he expected that some slave, or, perhaps, an animal would be the first to greet him on his return. He gained, as we have noticed, a superb victory over the Ammonites, and the news of his victory preceded his own return to Mizpeh; but, instead of being met by an animal, or by a slave, his only daughter, filled with pride because of her father's splendid conquest, came forth dancing in the gladness of her heart, and with instruments of music to welcome him home. The sight was enough to freeze his blood in his veins, and to stop his heart in its beating. What can it mean? The joyous music ceases. The maiden draws near in silence. The hero of the hour is the picture of despair. The wretched man rent his clothes in agony, but the noble young woman insisted that he should not disregard his solemn vow. Her life is the awful price of his great victory. The bearing of both is equally striking in this sad calamity in their family life. Must she die—she, his only child, and so young and beautiful? The greatness of the sacrifice he must make almost crushes his life; but the brave-spirited maiden rises with a noble grandeur above her own sorrow, and above her father's grief, with her mistaken conception of

¹ Judges x. 3-5.

² Judges x, 6.

³ See Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 502.

¹ Judges xi. 31. The word "whatsoever" in the Authorized Version may be rendered, as given in the text, "whomsoever," as it is without distinction of gender.

God and duty; she glories in her father's and her nation's victory, even though it be at the price of her own beautiful young life. She is calm while rough-cheeked warriors turn pale and quiver with sorrow. She merely asks for a short period to be given her, which she will spend in the lonely depths of the mountains bewailing her sad fate—bewailing, as did the Antigone of Sophocles, in her special grief, that she must die without the hope of becoming a bride or mother in Israel. No doubt all eyes were turned in admiration on the heroic girl. Then came the last sad scene, for "he did with her according to his vow."

We need not be surprised that this story lingered long in the memory of all the people, and that for generations after the maidens, in sympathy with the self-sacrificing spirit of Jephthah's daughter, bewailed her fate. The story brings us into the atmosphere of classical times; there is often a close likeness between the Hebrew story and the heathen nations of nearly contemporaneous days. It was an age of rash vows. This truth is illustrated in the vow of the whole nation against the tribe of Benjamin; in the vow of King Saul which so nearly cost Jonathan his life. Jonathan would have been slain but for the interposition of the army; but here there is no mention of interposition on behalf of this heroic but misguided maiden. It seems almost certain that the darker view of this tragedy is the correct one. Jephthah lived in Gilead, and Gilead adjoined the countries of Moab and Ammon, where human sacrifices were not uncommon. This was the first and last human sacrifice offered in a mistaken interpretation of the will of Jehovah. Human sacrifices were not permitted in Israel, and this immolation could not have been offered on the altar at the tabernacle. It is not, therefore, surprising that many learned writers have labored to relieve the sacred history of this sad story. They have supposed that Jephthah's daughter was consecrated to some form of religious service, and was devoted to perpetual virginity. But such forced interpretations do not harmonize with the reckless spirit of a fierce freebooter and ignorant worshiper of God as was Jephthah. We must, also, take into consideration the times of anarchy, of ignorance, and of cruel superstition in which he lived. Indeed, serious objections can rightly be made to the idea that this maiden was dedicated to any form of religious worship. Vows of celibacy were then entirely unknown among the Hebrews; they belong to a later period, and to a different condition of society. The maiden could not be dedicated to the services of the high priest, for he and the Ark were then at Shiloh in the territory of Ephraim, and Jephthah was at deadly war with that

tribe, which, with its usual haughty and overbearing character, had resented his failure to summon it to leadership in the war. Two months after his victory over the Ammonites he fulfilled his terrible vow. Crowned with flowers, the brave girl was led with music and song to the altar. If the vow meant perpetual virginity, there was no need that the maiden should ask for two months of preparation; she would have all her life in which to bewail her maidenhood. Nothing seems more certain than that she was offered as a sacrifice. The act was the result of a false principle and a foolish vow. It was an act hateful to God; and, but for a natural repugnance to associate so terrible an act with a man whom God in certain ways honored, probably no commentator on the narrative would ever have doubted the reality of the horrible sacrifice.¹

Jephthah's judgship thus marks the first outbreak of civil war in Israel. Unlike Gideon, Jephthah had no soft words, to turn away the away the wrath of the haughty Ephraimites. Blows followed hot words. At the ford of the Jordan, Jephthah defeated the Ephraimites, distinguishing them by their peculiar pronunciation of Shibboleth, meaning "water streams," or "harvests," which they pronounced as if it were spelled Sibboleth. All who thus betrayed themselves, even to the number of 42,000, he put to death without mercy. For six years he ruled as Judge, conquering all his foes and being the undisputed lord of Israel. In Gideon we have the highest type of ruler of the time; in Jephthah and Samson the lowest. The Bible does not commend the cruel and superstitious acts of Jephthah. In the Epistle to the Hebrews he is mentioned among the heroes of faith;² but commendation for one worthy quality does not imply indorsement of his entire character and career. He was succeeded by a number of leaders of comparatively little importance—men of whose actions the record is silent. They were Ibzan of Bethlehem, who judged seven years; Elon of Zebulun, ten years; and Abdon, an Ephraimite, who ruled eight years.

Another remarkable character comes before us for consideration at this point in the history of Israel. Like Jephthah, Samson was a man of mingled good and evil: he was a reflection of the contradictory elements of the time in which he lived. A new enemy to Israel had arisen, and a new oppression from that enemy was now experienced. In her eastern territory Israel had sunk to a low point; in her south-

¹ Jonathan the paraphrast, Rashi and Josephus, Origen, Chrysostom, *et al.*, are quoted in Smith's "Bible Dictionary," as taking the view of a real sacrifice. Joseph Kimchi, *et al.*, the other view. See other authorities quoted by Smith. ² Hebrews xi, 32.

western dominion an equally humiliating condition was reached. The new enemy that had now arisen was destined to give great trouble in the future, and had given some trouble in the past. The Philistines on the southern border were among the most dangerous and implacable foes of Israel. They were not disposed to retire within their own borders, as some of the other enemies of Israel had done. They came before us as early as the distant days of Abraham; they had also formed a confederacy of five cities in the Maritime Plain in the time of Joshua; but now they had risen to remarkable power and were impelled by corresponding ambition. In the later period of the Judges these newcomers pressed very heavily on the small tribe of Dan, and so out of this tribe came the deliverer. Gaza and Askelon were in their power, and they pushed their possessions to the territory of Dan. The word Philistine, as already pointed out, is supposed to mean "strangers or immigrants," and it is barely possible that it stands related to the name Pelasgi. They were sometimes called in Scripture Cherethites,¹ which by some is supposed to be derived from the island of Crete, which may have been their original home. Others think that they went from Cyprus to Palestine, the name of that island having been akin to the word Caphtor, which place is given in Genesis as their former home. Successive arrivals came into the land in the time of Ramesses III., who reigned about the time of Jephthah.² Ramesses III. had driven back an attack on Egypt by the Philistines and other tribes; but many of the invaders entered, as it is supposed, the service of their conquerors as mercenary soldiers. But the Philistine part of these invading hordes obtained permission to settle among their brethren of earlier immigration in the southwest of Palestine; in that position they were to guard Egypt from attack on the north.³ This territory commanded the pass to the mountain home of Israel. The five cities of Philistia—Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath—have come before us already in this history; but now they appear to be dangerously strong. Several rulers of Egypt kept garrisons of Semitic mercenaries at Gaza. The Avites, dwellers in the lowlands, had adopted the language and religion of their fierce masters. In Joshua's day the cities of the Philistines were not included among the cities held by Judah, although that territory was given to Judah.⁴ Israel did not wish to arouse Egypt, nor to test the strength of the Philistines. As a result, the Anakim—meaning the "long-necked"—and the Amorites found a refuge in

these cities, whose military chiefs were called kings. These five cities formed a confederation; they united in their religious rites, and in their frequent wars. They had a strong force of chariots and also archers of proverbial skill.¹ They were distinguished for the strength and variety of their armor. The panoply of the Philistine warrior gives a remarkable list of weapons, offensive and defensive.² The Philistines were an uncircumcised people. They stood on a low level of civilization. They were intellectually stupid, and soon became the victims, when they were not the laughingstock, of men of the humor of Samson and of the mental brilliancy of David. Their chief deity was the fish-god Dagon. Against this fierce foe Israel was to wage war for the next 100 years, and at this critical moment a child was born, who, under the providence of God, was to rouse his countrymen, to destroy his foes, and to make for himself an immortal name. It is not too much to say that the birth of Samson marks the dawn of a new era, which continued until it found its superb culmination in the brilliant reign of the immortal David. This era belongs partly to the gloomy age which it closed, and partly to the glorious period which it opened.

The word Samson has been explained to mean, "little sun" or "sunlike";³ but according to some authorities it means "strong," and according to still others it means "awful," in the sense of exciting astonishment or awe, either in the minds of the father and mother who looked upon the angel who announced Samson's birth, or in the minds of those who saw his feats of heroic valor. As we have frequently had occasion to remark, God always has the man in training for the hour that has come or is coming. Samson was the son of Manoah of the tribe of Dan, and of the town of Zorah on the border of Judea. He was a child of miraculous birth. He served his nation as a judge, filling the office for twenty years. He was also a Nazirite, and was endowed with special power by the spirit of the Lord.⁴ As a result of this clothing of the spirit, and the other elements entering into his life, he became a man of prodigious bodily strength. This strength, however, he often displayed in the wildest feats of personal daring, and sometimes in amusements which involved him in perils from which only his

¹ See authorities quoted by Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 508. ² I. Samuel xvii, 5-7.

³ See discussion in "The Bible for Learners," by Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuenen, pp. 411 to 414, as to whether the name means "Sun-god" and is a survival of sun-worship, a worship prevalent among the Canaanites and all nations issuing from barbarism, and a worship suggested by such a name as Beth-shemesh.

⁴ Judges xiii, 25, xiv, 6, xv, 14, xvi, 20-28.

¹ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," II, p. 506.

² *Ibid.*, 507. ³ Maspero, to whom Geikie refers.

⁴ Joshua xv, 12.

remarkable power was able to extricate him. His opposition to the common foe was not displayed in consistent methods of defense; for he never appears at the head of an army, but his campaigns are the result of his remarkable strength and his strangely constituted nature. He has often been compared to the Grecian Hercules, and sometimes to the Arabian Antar. We shall see that a broad vein of humor runs through all the early exploits of this stout-hearted warrior; we shall, also, see that foolish and often sinful love of women, as well as the slaying of his Philistine foes out of mere recklessness, constantly marked his life. He was in many respects the most remarkable man in all this troublous history; but the life that began in miracles ended in fierce tragedy. As a Nazarite he was dedicated by vow to the Lord, and so allowed his hair to grow, and so, also, lived a life of rigid abstinence. We have in his case the first appearance in this history of the ascetic vows which finally found a permanent manifestation in the religion of Israelites, as in all the religions of the East and of the West, and eventually in Christianity, Mohammedanism, and other faiths of more modern times. Mohammedanism is still Nazaritish in its abstinence from wine, and even to this moment some of the Arabian tribes never permit their hair to be shorn; and the hierarchy of the Greek Church cherish their long beards as evidences of their priestly character. We have already seen that at the time of Samson's birth the Philistines were the masters of the Israelites; and Judah and Dan were subject to their dominion during the whole period of Samson's judgeship. His term of office must, therefore, be included in the forty years of the Philistine possession. He is distinctly spoken of in Scripture as especially endowed by the spirit of the Lord; frequent mention is made, in different connections, of the general fact that at times "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax burned with fire." The other side of the truth is brought out by the statement that when his locks were shorn, and his strength was taken from him, "he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." The phrase "the spirit of the Lord came upon him," is applied to Othniel and Gideon as well as to Samson; but to him there was special supernatural strength in connection with his keeping of the Nazarite vow. His whole character is without a parallel in Scripture. His history was intended to teach the Israelites, among other things, that their only hope of possessing national strength was in their separation from idolatry and entire consecration to Jehovah. He only could give them power over their foes and unity among themselves.

When Samson was grown up to young manhood, his first demand was that he might marry a Philistine woman. This woman he had seen at Timnath and at once, with a strange mingling of innocent affection and inordinate desire, he fell in love with her. His parents reluctantly gave their consent to his desire, thinking that he intended some form of opposition to the common oppressor. On his way to Timnath a young lion roared at him, and immediately Samson displayed his remarkable strength by tearing the lion asunder with his hand. When next he passed that way he discovered that the bees had made a hive in the carcass of the lion, and with that tendency to drollery which was characteristic of this great and reckless man, he made a riddle from this curious occurrence for the thirty youths who attended him at his bridal feast. If his friends discovered his riddle he was to pay each a sheet and a garment; if they failed they were to pay the same to him. The riddle has become familiar through all the generations. It is quaint in itself, and is striking in its expression, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." As a result of the urgency of his wife he betrayed the secret to her, and she in turn gave it to her countrymen. After rebuking his companions, he immediately slew thirty Philistines. His reckless disposition showed itself again when, after spending some time at home, he revisited his wife and found her married to another man. This time he secured revenge by catching 300 jackals, tying them tail to tail, placing a firebrand between them and turning them loose into the dry cornfields of the Philistines. Their cruelty was shown in burning his wife and her father, thus putting both of them to death. Samson's wrath was gratified, as he fell upon them, slaying them in great numbers, and finally taking refuge in a rock called Etam. The Philistines were assembled in a pass and into their hands the tribe of Judah, utterly discouraged and disheartened by the oppression so long endured, cowardly determined to surrender Samson. With this thought in mind he was seized, bound, and brought to the Philistine camp. Once more the spirit of the Lord came upon him in mighty power. In his gigantic strength he burst the bonds that bound him as if they had been ropes of flax or sand. He then seized the jawbone of an ass, which chanced to be within reach, and, rushing upon the hated foe, with this unique weapon he slew 1,000 men. The ground was suddenly cloven at his feet, and a spring of water flowed forth to satisfy his thirst in his exhaustion. It is likely that the water was found in the pass, which probably bore a resemblance to the jawbone of an ass, and, therefore, the supposed miracle of the springing up

of the water from the jawbone in his hand is a mere misinterpretation of the narrative. When the spirit of God came upon him in this remarkable way his strength was so great that he could carry away the gate of a city, and, as we shall see, throw down the pillars of the house of Dagon. We next find him visiting a woman of disrepute in Gaza. This city was the capital of his fierce enemy, the Philistines. His going was an evidence of recklessness and of uncontrolled desire which we rightly criticize as utterly unbecoming a Judge in Israel and an instrument in the hand of God. His enemies were quick to learn of his presence. They promptly closed their gates, and silently waited for the opportunity to secure their strange, and now apparently helpless, foe. But at midnight Samson arose, lifted the gates from their hinges, swung them upon his shoulders, and carried them, as if they had been the playthings of a child, to a hill twenty miles distant.

We find him again falling into the more dangerous snares of Delilah. This was a fatal step for the man who should have been God's instrument and the deliverer of Israel. Immediately the Philistine chiefs bribed her, that she might, by all her seductive arts, learn the secret of his supernatural power. Once he eluded her fascinations; twice he avoided the trap laid for his feet; but with the third trial of her artful influence he permitted himself to be betrayed into her power. He frankly told her that his secret lay in the maintenance of his Nazarite vow, part of which vow was that his hair was never to be shorn. Then he foolishly and wickedly slept in the lap of sin, and in his guilty sleep she cut his hair, and robbed him of his great strength. Immediately the Philistines seized him, cruelly put out his eyes, firmly bound him with brazen fetters, and humiliatingly made him grind at the mill. We see in this case the blinding, binding, and grinding power of sin. Wonderfully did the great Milton seize upon this part of Samson's history, and grandly does he dress the ending of this foolish, brave, sinful, and contradictory life, in the nobility of heroic patience and patriotic resignation. The cruel Philistines, in their untamed joy, insulted him in the prison, and, like the fierce savages they were, made a public exhibition of their long-dreaded but now defeated foe. They obliged him to contribute to their amusement in a sort of primitive theater. In this area they placed their illustrious captive. The roof formed the seating place of the structure. Great crowds of spectators gazed with barbarous delight on the humiliation of Samson. He asked that he might lean upon the pillars which supported the house of Dagon; his request was granted. He seized these two pillars; once more the

power of the Omnipotent One came upon him; he leaned forward with his limitless force; the pillars yielded to his prodigious strength, and in a moment more the whole building fell, burying Samson and all his enemies in a common and terrific ruin. Thus wretchedly perished the unique man, raised up by God for the deliverance of Israel from its Philistine foes.

It is easy to trace points of similarity between this story and that told by Herodotus of the captivity of Hercules in Egypt; and they are numerous and marked. It is not impossible that Phœnician traders carried to Egypt, and other countries, especially Greece and Italy, stories of the great Hebrew hero. These stories would take the color of the national characteristics and the local tastes of the various countries in which they were repeated. Samson is a rare example of human strength and human weakness. His character partakes both of the elements of nobility and of weakness and wickedness, characteristic of that rude time. At one moment he is swept by wild and ungovernable passions; at another we see him in a noble indignation and true patriotism worthy of a hero and a Judge. But while we discover these coincidences between Samson and Hercules, we still see that, while the story of Hercules is allegorical that of Samson is historical. The Word of God nowhere gives unqualified indorsement of this strangely contradictory life. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions Deborah, Barak, Jephthah, and Samson, but not to indorse all the acts of the semi-barbarous lives of the latter two. The Word of God nowhere indorses evil; God often uses men not wholly good for the carrying out of his divine plans. Samson is, in many respects, the most remarkable man in all this history. In him weakness and strength, playful humor and tragical suffering were strangely combined. His ending is a solemn warning to all men against the dangers of fleshly indulgence. The voice of Delilah may be soft and sweet; but it only woos that the Philistine may destroy her victims. The pleasures of sin, at longest, are but for a season. Sin smites while it smiles, and leads evermore to the dungeon of blindness, to the bonds of captivity, to the grinding of degradation, and to tragical destruction. We give Samson credit for delivering Israel; we recognize his faith as we do that of Gideon, Barak, and Jephthah. He weakened the power of the Philistines and poured, at the last, utter contempt on Dagon, their god. We may say, as we close the vivid and romantic history of the son of Manoah, in the words of the immortal Milton,

" Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroically hath finished
A life heroic."

The Book of Judges properly closes with the sixteenth chapter. There are, however, two appendices which give us an account of the case of two Levites. What follows, beginning with the seventeenth chapter, is probably an account of what occurred long before the events recorded in earlier portions of the book. A true chronological place for these chapters would seem to be between the second and third chapters. The history found in chapters xvii and xviii is obviously closely related to chapter i, 34. There the reasons of the immigration of a part of the tribe of Dan to the northern quarter of Canaan are stated; for the Ammonites forced the children of Dan into the mountain, and would not suffer them to come down to the valley. The result was that the children of Dan were greatly straitened in this only available place, which was quite inadequate to the wants of a community of 64,000 fighting men. Unlike Simeon and Benjamin, Dan had no sharply defined tribal limits. It was forced, therefore, to lead, for a considerable time, a camp life, being crowded together in a spot long known as the Camp of Dan,¹ which was near Kirjath-jearim, the Forest City,² a few miles west of Jerusalem. Desiring a more enlarged inheritance, for their condition was intolerable in their limited possessions, 600 men, with their wives and children, wandered to the foot of Mount Hermon, overcame some Sidonians living there, took possession of their fertile land, and changed the name of the conquered town from Laish to Dan. The detached Canaanite communities in the north became an easy prey to the marauding Danites. In connection with their possession of this territory the events related in these chapters took place. Idolatry was established in that tribe; and the sad story of the Levite's concubine and the war with Benjamin occupy the remaining portion of the appendix. It is expressly stated that

these incidents occurred while Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, was high priest.¹ The only connection of these events with the history of Samson is that this portion also is concerned with the tribe of Dan. It is certainly one of the darkest and saddest narratives to be found in the Bible. It brings the blush to the cheek and saddens the heart with genuine sorrow. It is very certain that the events took place when there was no king in Israel, and when every man did that which was right in his own sight.² The history of these two Levites abounds in romantic incidents. The first part of the history may be read aloud; but the second is to be read in secret—perhaps it is scarcely to be read even in secret.³ But it is a history which ought to be fully comprehended. We see here that terrible vengeance was dealt out to those who inflicted a scandal upon Israel. It is not necessary to go into details in these chapters of surprises, contradictions, and humiliations. How strange it is that a layman should consecrate a priest, as did Micah! Idolatry is here seen to have its pathetic side. Man's attempts to make gods and altars illustrate his deep need of the true God and the only method of approaching his august presence; the soul cries out for the divine-human Priest. We see here that a converted thief elaborated a religious system.⁴ We have here, as one of the greatest surprises of this strangely contradictory history, an idolater appealing to the true God.⁵ It is not surprising that anarchy becomes dominant. When men enthrone wrong they experience grief; when they yield to sin they experience sorrow, for sin and punishment are inseparably associated. They are related to each other as surely as are shadow and substance. One gladly turns away from the sad details of this sinful history; and yet even here we can see how God can bring light out of darkness and good from evil.

CHAPTER X.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

FROM the wild and stormy scenes with which the Book of Judges closed, we pass into the idyllic peace, feminine gentleness, and domestic piety with which the Book of Ruth abounds. This book gives us the bright and gentle side of the dark and rude picture presented in the Book of Judges. The story leads us into the primitive simplicity and the delightful harmony which were so strikingly absent during the preceding generations. It introduces us into a quiet, green, and gentle

corner of history. The starting point of the story is Bethlehem, and we are glad to pronounce the name of the town, which means "House of Bread," and which is prophetic of the life of Christ and his disciples. We are glad to part from stories of wickedness and cruelty and listen with quiet and comforted hearts to this sweet pastoral tale. We are grateful that the noise of strife and confusion, the hoarse shouts of victors and the grating

¹ Judges xiii, 25, xviii, 12.

² Joshua xix, 47; also, Judges xviii, 27-29.

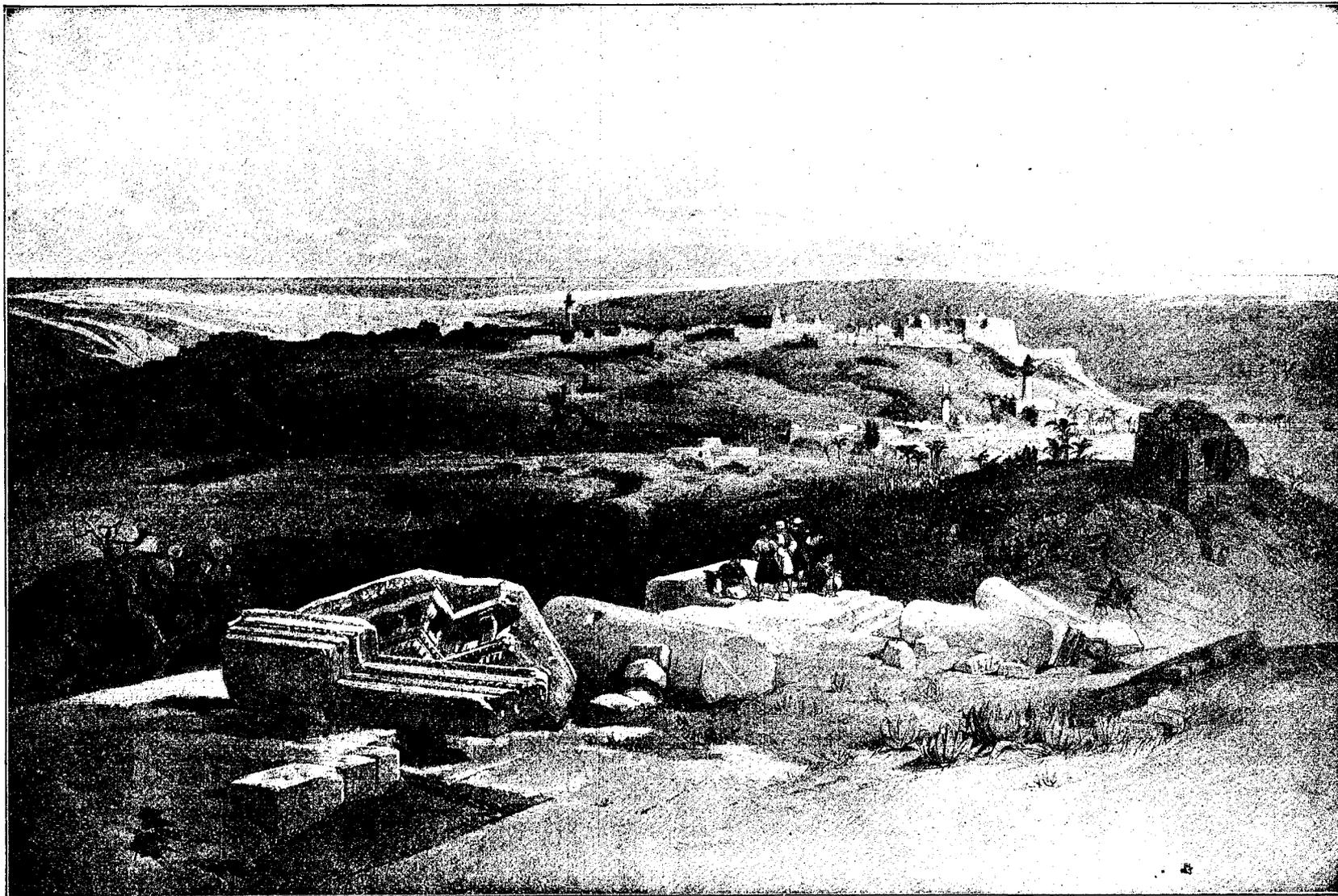
¹ Judges xx, 28.

² Judges xvii, 6.

³ Parker, "People's Bible," VI, p. 125.

⁴ Parker, "People's Bible," VI, p. 125.

⁵ Judges xvii, 13.



DAVID ROBERTS.

GAZA.

groans of the vanquished, have ceased; and for a time we wander in the quiet cornfields and hear the salutations between the reapers and their master, "Jehovah be with you," "Jehovah bless thee."

This story presents to us the brighter side of Hebrew life. It shows us how the Hebrew faith tended to lighten the burden of poverty and to comfort the heart of sorrow. It introduces us to the simple customs and affectionate duties of that ancient time; indeed, it reminds us of customs which were becoming obsolete when it was written, but which were "the manners of Israel in former times." It is a sort of appendix to the Book of Judges; and the effect produced by the Book of Ruth is all the more marked because of the sharp contrast between them. From the hideous deeds of the men of Gibeon we turn with joy to the beautiful devotion of Ruth the Moabitess, and from the rugged uplands where roamed invaders and defenders, we turn with gratitude to the sunny plains of Bethlehem. The book also contains the genealogy of David from the time of the patriarchs onward to Jesse the Bethlehemite. This genealogy is of great value, especially in connection with that of the Messiah; it is also a guide to the chronology of the period. Salmon, the husband of Rahab, father of Boaz, and the first proprietor of Bethlehem, is the grandfather of Obed, who is the grandfather of David. This genealogy may have been one of the sources from which the evangelists drew their materials. We know that the book is also typical in its character, in its connection with the lineage of the Messiah. In the marriage of Ruth the Moabitess with Boaz, a man of the tribe of Judah, we have a prophecy of the union of Jew and Gentile. In the comingling of nationalities among the ancestors of Christ, we have an idea of the far-reaching and world-including nature of the kingdom which he came to establish. Some persons, doubtless, are startled at the thought that Gentile and, as we might say, tainted blood is found among the ancestors of Christ; but there was a divine purpose in having in that list the sinful Tamar, the harlot Rahab, and the virtuous Ruth.

It seems fitting that before taking up the story in its detail, and learning the lessons which it so fully and beautifully teaches, we should say something about the book as a whole. The authorship of the book is entirely unknown; probably it never will be certainly known. Some have attributed it to Samuel, some to the writer of the Book of Joshua, others to Hezekiah, others to Ezra, and still others believe that David himself was the author.¹

¹ Dr. James Morison in Introduction to Ruth in "Pulpit Commentary."

One reason leading to the selection of David is that it is supposed that any other writer would, in the genealogical table at the close, have given royal honor to David's name. It is useless to hazard conjectures as to the authorship of the volume. We may be sure, however, that the striking and peaceful incidents of this story were preserved in the family of David, and must often have been narrated in his family circle. In the English Bible the book is found in a position according with that of the Septuagint, being inserted between Judges and First Samuel. This is a natural position; the book is, in a sense, a supplement to Judges and an introduction to Samuel. It is thus found between the ermine of the Judges and the crowns of the Kings, and forms an appropriate link between the period of the Judges and that of the monarchy. In the Hebrew Bible Ruth is placed between the Song of Songs and the Book of Lamentations. Ruth there appears with joy on the one hand and grief on the other. In the Vulgate the book appears, as in the Septuagint, at the close of the Book of Judges. It thus appears as a sort of biographical addition to that book; several of the Fathers formed one book of the two.

The date of the composition it is impossible to determine. It seems, however, to have been written after the birth of David,¹ and perhaps during his reign. The genealogy at the close of the book implies that he had attained, at that time, to a considerable degree of historic importance—an importance which suggests that he had at least partially completed his career as warrior, king, and prophet. In the opening sentence the writer comes down beyond the age of the Judges; for he speaks of what occurred "in the days when the Judges ruled." It seems certain, therefore, that these days were over and that another era had begun. He also, as we have already remarked, calls attention to customs which in former time obtained in Israel regarding the transfer of property and the surrender of rights.² A considerable period must, therefore, have elapsed between the time when these events occurred and the date of their record. The genealogy, at the close, is also carried down to the time of David.³ It is true that this statement may have been added at a later time, but until that fact is ascertained we are warranted in giving the natural interpretation to the words recorded. Some writers have pointed out words and grammatical forms in the book which they affirm belong to compositions of a later period; some would even bring it down to the time of the Chaldaic period of Jewish history; but arguments based on verbal examples of this sort

¹ Ruth iv, 17.

² Ruth iv, 7.

³ Ruth iv, 22.

are necessarily of doubtful authority. The number of peculiar words and phrases found in the book is not large; they are also, certainly for the most part, the language not of the author, but of the persons who are presented as the speakers. They may, therefore, be the colloquial expressions of an earlier period—the period perhaps of the Judges.¹ We are safe in saying that no arguments based upon the language of the book can carry with them any great weight as to the time of its composition.² The earlier origin of the book, it has been pointed out, is suggested by the intermarrying between Hebrews and foreigners without arousing the repugnance which would have been felt at a later day; and no apology is offered for the marriage with Ruth, which does not seem to have given offense. In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah such alliances would have called forth indignation and protest.

We may conclude, therefore, that the book belongs to the time of David. We know that that was a literary period in the history of the Hebrew people, and that David himself was as truly a poet as he was a soldier or a king. Men of like tastes would naturally gather about his palace and throne; for he was a man of broad sympathies and generous impulses. This tender and beautiful incident in the life of his ancestors would doubtless arrest his thought and evoke his admiration. All the details would be familiar to him and to his household. But few generations had passed since the events occurred, and every step in the connection between generation and generation he could clearly trace; even the words which formed the substance of conversation between Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz could readily be remembered, and would be frequently repeated. The intense Hebrew feeling of the time of Ezra and Nehemiah was such that a book like this could not have been written; but David and the men of his time were broader in their sympathies, and were more ready to appreciate God's relationship with all the peoples of the earth. David would not be ashamed of this Moabitish strain in the national blood; he would not forget that, during a most critical period in his own history, he enjoyed the friendship of the king of Moab. When he fled for his life from the presence of Saul and took refuge in the Cave of Adullam, he brought his father and mother before the king of Moab and they remained under his protection while David was

in the hold. This period seems as appropriate as any that can be named for the composition of this beautiful story of the ancestors of David, and of him who was both David's son and David's Lord. Had the book been written in an earlier time, the custom of pulling off the shoe in connection with the making of contracts, which was common in the days of Boaz, would not have been spoken of as having passed away; and we can hardly believe that it was written at a time much later than that of David, for the incidents are narrated with so much particularity that we cannot believe that many generations had passed since their occurrence. It is noticeable, also, that the genealogy at the close of the fourth chapter stops when it has been carried down to King David.

The object which the writer has in view has been differently interpreted by different students. Some have supposed that his chief purpose was to emphasize the authority of the levirate law which required a brother-in-law to marry his brother's widow. But it must be borne in mind that that duty is assumed and mentioned only as an incident in the history; and it is also to be borne in mind that Boaz was not the brother of Ruth's husband, but only a distant kinsman. Neither can we suppose that the object was merely to trace the genealogy of David's family. We may well believe that that object was not forgotten in the preparation of the book; but the aim of the writer is deeper than either of these purposes would suggest. Because of the differences of opinion as to the author's purpose, different titles have been given to the exposition of the book. Some have said that its main purpose was to set forth the rich reward which piety, sooner or later, will secure. The book sets forth the earnest theocratic spirit which is found in the conduct of all the actors in this archaic and idyllic story. We may believe that the writer was influenced, in no small degree, simply by the charm of Ruth's character, by her devotion to her mother-in-law, and by the reward which, in the providence of God, she secured. She had gone to an unknown people; she had taken refuge under the protecting wings of their God, and she found him able and willing to grant her present blessings and to permit her to have a place among the ancestors of David's house. There was a charm merely in the delineation of such a character; and we may well believe that the writer was under the influence of that charm. There is a sense in which we must judge Bible literature simply as literature. We may, therefore, well suppose that in the spirit of literary enthusiasm, in part, at least, the writer began, continued, and completed his task. But he teaches at the same time lessons

¹Ewald thinks that we occasionally have an echo from the Book of Job, *Geschichte*, Vol. I, p. 155. But he makes Job belong to a comparatively late period. He would put Ruth in the exilic epoch, and Bertholdt inclines to the post-exilic.

²See excellent discussion in Introduction in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 11. There is often, in discussing such questions, a vast amount of learned childishness.

of trust in God, and gives proof of the reward of religious devotion. The theology of Ruth is simple and beautiful. She had come to Bethlehem to put her trust "under the wings of the God of Israel"; she believed that he was the rewarder of them that diligently sought him. Her love to Naomi, her mother-in-law, is worthy of all praise. Christ was not only the son of David and the son of Boaz, but also the son of Ruth the Moabitess. In ascending the genealogical ladder to Abraham, we see that there were other Gentile rounds therein, showing the relation of the patriarch with outlying families of the earth, and foreshadowing the glory of Christ who was to be the Kinsman of men of all nations and times.¹ This writer does not apologize for finding commendable qualities among the Gentiles. There is in the book a beautiful absence of Hebrew bigotry, so often elsewhere found, but so conspicuously wanting in the spirit and form of the Book of Ruth.

The book, as literature, is worthy of high commendation. It is partly history, and partly biography. It might be more correctly described as a biographical episode in a continuous history. It abounds in matchlessly interesting touches of oriental life; and they are described with the striking vividness expressive of reality. In the vicinity of Bethlehem, at the season of the year described in this volume, women and children may still be seen gleaning after the reapers. All the particulars given regarding the fields, the threshing floor, the gleaning, the parched corn, and the vinegar in which the eaters dipped their morsel, which was sour wine mingled with oil, are still a part of the local features of the country. It is still the custom for even a rich proprietor to sleep at night as Boaz is described as sleeping. The danger from robbers, and the unreliability of hired laborers necessitate the personal watchfulness of such a proprietor as was Boaz. Husband, wife, and family often encamp at the threshing floor until the harvest is over. The veil in which Ruth carried home the six measures of barley was a mantle as well as a veil, and was such as Eastern women wear to this day. Doctor Thompson tells us that he often has seen this veil used "for just such service as that to which Ruth applied hers." It is rare that barley is used for food in Syria except by the very poor; the fact, therefore, of Ruth and Naomi being glad to secure barley is in perfect harmony with the great poverty ascribed to them in the narrative. The scene at the gate is in thorough accord with oriental customs; for the gate was the place of concourse where the people meet to hear the news, to dispense jus-

tice, and to perform all acts which pertain to the good of the community. The story has on its face every evidence of truthfulness; one cannot help feeling, as he reads the book, that it is a narrative of facts. Its perfect simplicity, its crystalline clearness, and its unconscious sweetness all give evidence of its perfect reality. Had it not been true history, its untruthfulness could readily have been discovered and proclaimed. The events narrated are of so deliberate and sensitive a character that their falsity would have been inevitably revealed, were they false. The existence of the connection of David's family with Moab must have been known in his time; and, as we have suggested, this Moabitish connection must often have been the subject of comment in the royal palace. The writer of this book, therefore, must have felt the necessity of conforming the narrative to the absolute facts in the case. The introduction of purely imaginary events would have been discovered and quickly denounced by the supporters of the royal family. We have here no historical fiction; no "family picture painted on a canvas of romance."¹ While any literature is read and loved the story of Ruth will maintain its place among the idyls of this ancient time and of this remote land. It will sing its song of family life and love in all the ages to come; it will tell the story of the widow's grief, of a bride's gladness, and of a master's sweet joyousness. But the book is far more than an interesting and touching story. It abounds in spiritual instruction. It suggests the Gospel concerning him who is the Kinsman and Redeemer of all men who will trust him, both Jew and Gentile, and it is sweetly prophetic of the union between the Church, as the Holy Bride, and Jesus Christ, the descendant of Boaz, as the divine Bridegroom.

We are now prepared to look at the story itself, and to learn the lessons which it distinctly teaches. The time of its occurrence was during that stormy period when the Judges ruled in the land. It was, also, a time when a famine prevailed over large districts, and the people were reduced to great suffering; there was "cleanness of teeth," in many parts of the land. This famine penetrated even to the most fertile districts. If Bethlehem, "House of Bread," suffered, then less fruitful sections of the country must have suffered even more severely. The story of this olden time begins at Bethlehem-Judah, or Bethlehem-Ephrathah, "the fruitful." This small town was distant but two hours' journey from Jerusalem. This

¹ See Introduction to Ruth in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 8, where is reference to section 551 of "Einleitung," by Bertholdt, which is entitled "Das Buchenthät Dichtung."

¹ Introduction to Ruth in "Pulpit Commentary," p. 6.

is the town so tenderly mentioned in connection with the death and burial of Rachel; and near it David fed his father's flocks. This town has become immortal, not simply because Ruth gleaned in its fields, but rather because there Christ was born who was "made of the seed of David, according to the flesh." Our attention is directed especially to one family among the many sufferers. This was the family of Elimelech, who was a proprietor in the locality and lived with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. The name Elimelech means "God is King." After suffering much, this family determined to emigrate to the adjoining country of Moab. The famine may have been caused by one of the many ruthless invasions recorded in the Book of Judges; and it has been supposed that it was at the time of the occupation of the land by the Moabites under Eglon. We, therefore, see this family of four starting from their impoverished home and going to sojourn in the land of Moab, the hilly region southeast of the Dead Sea, where the descendants of Lot dwelt. Was Elimelech justified in leaving the people and altars of Jehovah to dwell among the Moabites in a land of idolatry? We must not pronounce too severely on a family dying by hunger. Doubtless he intended to remain there but a short time and then to return to the land of his fathers. But being, as it would seem, afflicted with some constitutional weakness, he soon died in this strange land; he left Bethlehem to save his life, but soon lost it among strangers. Great sorrow was in the heart of Naomi, now widowed and in a strange land. Attention is called both to her loneliness and comfort when we are reminded that "she was left and her two sons." They did not immediately return to the land of Judea; for after the father's death the two sons married in the land of Moab. Their wives were called Ruth and Orpah. Perhaps the young men had become attached to that land and to its people; perhaps, indeed, they went thither when quite young and so grew up with their heathen neighbors, and so became, in many respects, sons of Moab more than sons of Israel. We do not know whether or not their mother gave them careful instruction regarding the wives they should marry.¹ It would seem that there was no music of children in either home. The years passed from the time of their entrance into the land of Moab, and both Mahlon and Chilion, possessing by inheritance, as it would seem, delicate constitutions, sickened and died. Surely this family life is peculiarly sad. There in the land of Moab are three widows, desolate and without wealth and its comforts. Naomi

hears that there is plenty again in Judea; and she determines to return. But she does not wish to interfere with the prospects of her widowed daughters-in-law. They, however, resolve to accompany her on her journey. It is beautiful to see how unselfish was the spirit of the mother-in-law on the one side, and of the daughters-in-law on the other. Naomi feared she could not make them comfortable in her old home; she, therefore, gave them the opportunity, after they had accompanied her for a little way, to return to their early home, expressing her earnest hope that soon they might have restful and affectionate homes of their own. Probably she never was in love with Moab as were her husband and sons. Certain it is that God gave her a noble spirit, and, although afflicted so severely, she still claimed God as her God, and the land of Israel as her home.

The conduct of the daughters-in-law, leaving their native land and journeying with her, is also worthy of commendation, but the time is now come when she must prove them. She gives them the opportunity to return, and suggests the possibility of a second husband and a second and perhaps happier home. Her purpose was to test the genuineness of their determination in following her to the land of Judea; and both seemed loyal in their resolution to return with her to her people. So they journeyed, until, perhaps, they had reached the border of Moab, when Naomi paused and renewed her suggestion that they return to their own land. Orpah yielded to her pleading and returned to her own country; but Ruth instantly rejected the proposal. Orpah loved her mother-in-law, but she did not wish to leave Moab and its idols and journey to Judea to worship Israel's God. Beautiful is the picture of these three widowed women standing, perhaps, on the borders of Moab; the daughters kissing the Hebrew matron and all three shedding tears of grief for the dead and of sorrow at the thought of parting from one another. The hour of decision has come for them, as come it must for us all at critical moments in life. Orpah kissed the mother, but went back to Moab—returned to the vile groves of Chemosh. But Naomi and Ruth will journey to Judea, and will worship Judea's God. Ruth's mind was unchangeably fixed to accompany her beloved mother-in-law. All that was best in her soul as woman, as daughter, and as widow, rose into a heroic and poetic mood; and in a spirit of beautiful and poetic pathos she expresses the deepest feeling of her heart in words which will live forever, because of the circumstances of their first utterance, because of their unconscious rhythm, because of their intrinsic beauty, and especially because of their

¹ Donald Fraser, "Books of the Bible," p. 97.

loyalty to Jehovah. Often as they have been repeated and sung—sung in strains of lofty and tender music—they come to us still with all their original beauty, pathos, and power. Our readers will be glad of having the words of Ruth given in a form¹ which brings out more fully than a prose translation, the original measure and movement:

"Insist not on me forsaking thee,
 To return from following thee;
 For whither thou goest, I will go;
 And wheresoever thou lodgest I will lodge;
 Thy people is my people,
 And thy God my God:
 Wheresoever thou diest, I will die,
 And there will I be buried.
 So may Yahveh do to me,
 And still more,
 If aught but death part thee and me."²

The trial is over. Orpah has yielded to the attractions of Moab, but Ruth goes with Naomi to Judea, and thus to the home and heart of Boaz, to her place in Israel, and to immortality on the page of history, and in the speech of all civilized nations in all ages. Had Ruth gone back to Moab, her name would have been unknown in the history of the world, and she would have died in that idolatrous land without honor, without glory, without immortality. He who decides for God decides for all that is best and noblest on earth, and for all that is most glorious in heaven. Naomi yielded to the meek insistence of Ruth, and the two widows journeyed on, their hearts bound together with cords of love which no disaster could ever break.

Their weary journey is nearing its end; they, travel-worn and heart-sore, are pressing along the streets of Bethlehem looking for some humble home. All is new to Ruth, and there must have been strange joy in her heart as she journeyed through the land which Jehovah had blessed, the land of which Naomi had so often spoken. Groups of women are gathered in the streets; and the news of the return of Naomi accompanied by the beautiful young widow is reported from house to house. The name "Naomi," meaning "Sweetness of Jah," suggests painful memories and contrasts to the mind of the more aged widow. The people scarcely know her as they ask, "Is that Naomi?" In her sorrow she urges them to call her not Naomi, but Mara, because the Lord had dealt bitterly with her.³ The return is at the beginning of the barley harvest. The need of the two widows is great. It is a trial for both that they should begin their new life in such poverty. It is especially a trial for Naomi, as she has permitted Ruth to go with her to Judea. But Ruth is equal to the situation.

She secures permission from Naomi to go out to the fields that she may glean for the support of both. Beautiful is the picture as we see the young widow passing out of the city gate looking over the broad and golden fields ripe for the sickle, and in some of which the reapers, binders, and gleaners are already at work. Divine Providence causes her "hap" to light on the field of Boaz, a wealthy proprietor and distant kinsman of her father-in-law, Elimelech.¹ Perhaps the story of her kindness and faithfulness to her mother-in-law is partially known in the vicinity of Bethlehem, and so all who know her are the more ready to give her a hearty welcome. Ruth, at the moment, knows nothing of the relationship of this substantial yeoman to her late husband and his family. Beautiful are the salutations which pass between the proprietor and his workers as he reaches them in the field during the day.² The simple dignity and almost knightly courtesy of these reciprocal greetings are worthy of hearty appreciation. Boaz is not long in catching sight of the beautiful and earnest gleaner in his field. He is struck at once by the air of gentleness and nobility in the beautiful widow—an air which he has never before noticed in gleaners in his fields.³ In reply to his question, the overseer gives him considerable information regarding her, and especially praises her modest bearing and her industrious gleaning. Boaz promptly urges the young men to treat the stranger with becoming consideration, and upon approaching her informs her of the instructions he has given to the young men, and further tells her that she is to partake of the water which is drawn for the workers in the field.⁴ To be openly acknowledged by a chief man in Israel, such as Boaz is, fills her heart with equal surprise and gratitude, and, falling on her face, she bows herself to the ground.⁵ Boaz permits her to continue gleaning in his fields, and to share with his handmaids at mealtime, and he also instructs the young men to let handfuls of barley drop in her path. Upon her return she tells Naomi of the generous treatment which she has received from Boaz, the owner of the harvest fields. Naomi then gives her full information regarding the relationship between Boaz and her family, urging her to go out with his maidens and not to glean in any other field.⁶ And so, as the harvest goes merrily on, day after day, Ruth continues to glean in the fields of Boaz, sharing in the midday meal, with its bread and vinegar, and its delicious parched corn, gleaning even among the sheaves, and receiving now and then stalks which have been pulled out of the bundles for her special benefit, collecting her

¹ Translation in Introduction to Ruth in "Pulpit Commentary." ² Ruth i, 15-17. ³ Ruth i, 19-21.

¹ Ruth ii, 3.

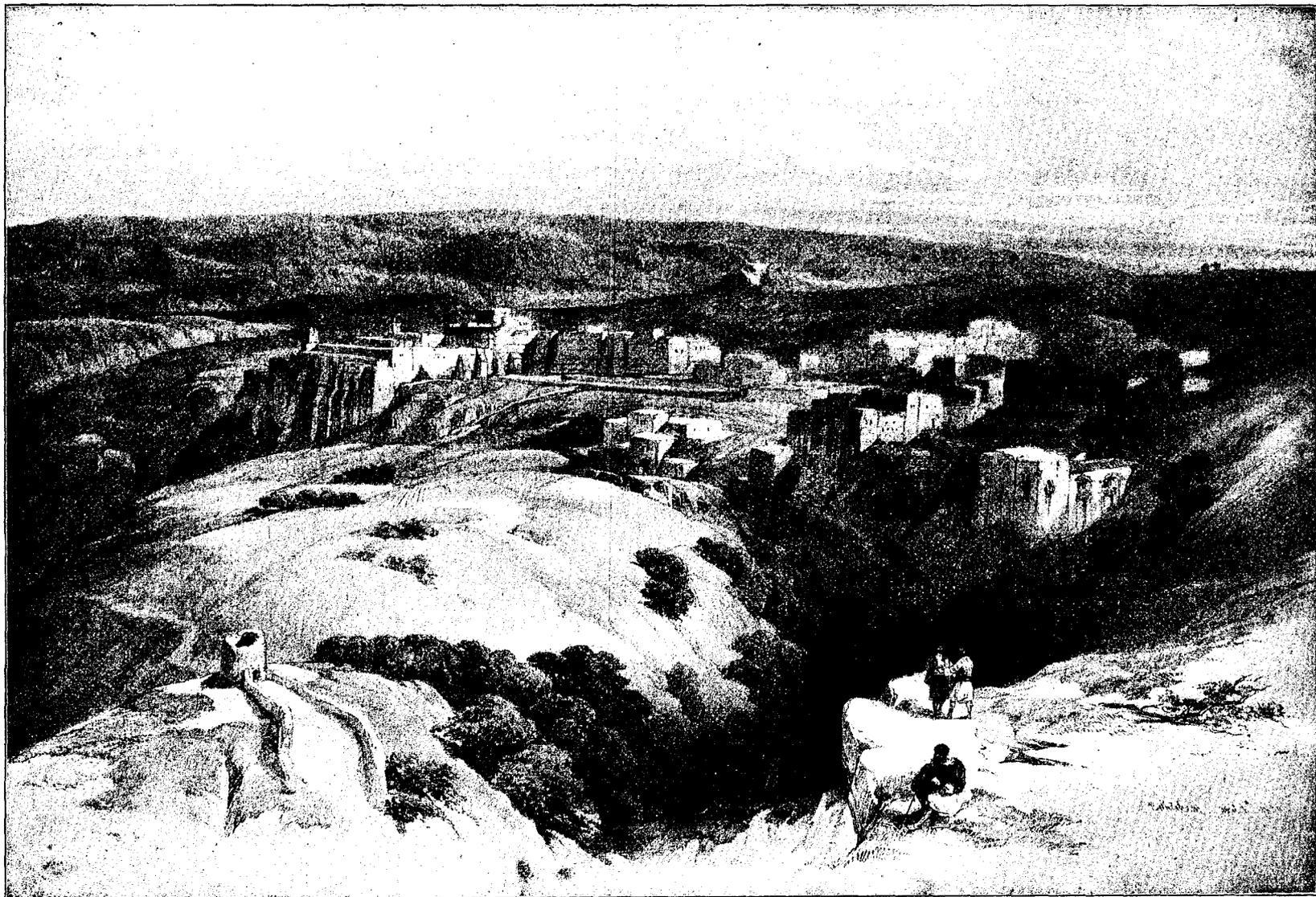
² Ruth ii, 4.

³ Ruth ii, 8.

⁴ Ruth ii, 4-9.

⁵ Ruth ii, 10.

⁶ Ruth ii, 18-23.



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gatherings, refreshing them, taking home the load, and telling her long and joyous story to the sympathetic Naomi.

The harvest was over and enjoyment out of doors ceased; then it was that her mother-in-law discovered the desolation and loneliness of Ruth's life as compared with the happy days spent gleaning in the fields. Naomi quickly perceived that an attachment had sprung up between the noble proprietor and the hitherto lonely young widow. Boaz, however, was silent. Naomi must arrange and execute the plan which shall remove the seal from his lips, that he may tell of the love that is in his heart. She contrived a plan which could be carried out only where oriental customs prevailed. We need not be disturbed because of this plan, for we may be quite sure that it needs no apology, strangely though the story may read to us in our different social conditions and with our different domestic manners. To those who are pure, all things are pure; to those who are impure nothing is pure. There was on the side of each absolute confidence in the incorruptible honor of the other. The levirate law gave Boaz the opportunity of marrying the widow of the deceased Mahlon. Naomi's plan was in entire harmony with the moral ideas of the time, and she had perfect faith in the religious integrity of Boaz and the virtuous simplicity of Ruth. Ruth followed the suggestion of her mother-in-law, and laid herself by night at the feet of her kinsman while he slept.¹ Tender thoughts were in the hearts of both. True, he was comparatively old, and she comparatively young; but, although the disparity in their ages might not be an objection to their marriage, there was an obstacle in the way. That obstacle was in the person of one who was nearer of kin to the deceased than was Boaz. According to the old law this unknown kinsman had a prior claim, and his rights must receive full consideration before Boaz could press his suit. Already Ruth began to rest in the certainty of the love which Boaz felt; but now Boaz could not rest until he had ascertained the intention of this unknown kinsman, and had made the effort to secure the beautiful Ruth as his bride. The anonymous kinsman must first have the opportunity of redeeming the inheritance for himself. After the night was passed Ruth returned home, received the salutation of Naomi, and further instructions from her.² The next day dawns and Boaz is in his place at the gate of the city.³ We have here a peculiarly interesting picture of old Hebrew life; and we have a striking illustration of the operation of the old Mosaic law concerning inheritance. Local courts were held at the gate of cities, even

during the troublous times in the period of the Judges. There is excitement, we may well believe, throughout the whole town. The people know something of what is passing between Boaz and Ruth, and what the careful and skillful Naomi is designing for both; for these things could not take place without arousing the interest of all the villagers. We see the primitive court in the presence of the elders and the people at the gate of the city. On one of the stone benches, set for the accommodation of the people of the town, sits Boaz in his quiet dignity, the gateway in the East corresponding to the forum or market-place in the West. He may well believe that his kinsman will soon be passing out to his fields, or in from his threshing floor, and in any case he may soon go through the gate of the city. Just now he is seen passing. We hear the call of Boaz, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here."¹ And then we read that "he turned aside, and sat down." If Boaz called his kinsman by name, the writer does not record the name. The language is colloquial and demonstrative to an interesting degree—so much so, indeed, that a literal translation is well-nigh impossible. The opportunity is given to the anonymous kinsman to secure the inheritance; but when he learns that with it goes also the widow, he objects. We know not why he objects to the beautiful Ruth; it may be that he already has a wife. He assigns as a reason, "lest I mar mine own inheritance."²

The world has always rejoiced that this kinsman did not desire this widow, because the world has fully sympathized with the noble spirit and pure-hearted love of the gentle and generous Boaz. And now in the presence of the elders and others Boaz informs his friends that Naomi has returned from Moab and has determined, because of her poverty, to sell the property that belonged to her deceased husband. He then says, "Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people."³ The heart of Boaz must have throbbed strangely within his bosom. Great possibilities and disappointments or realizations are hanging in the balance! Great historic events are trembling on the answer of this anonymous kinsman! Boaz then adds that the property must be purchased from Ruth as well as Naomi, and that Ruth is to go with it as an inalienable part thereof, in order that the name of her deceased husband may be raised up on his inheritance.⁴ The kinsman will not have the widow; and his decision gives joy to Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi. He at once pulls off his shoe and hands it to his friend, indicating that he resigns all his rights in that friend's favor.⁵

¹ Ruth iii, 5-7.

² Ruth iii, 14-18.

³ Ruth iv, 1.

¹ Ruth iv, 1.

² Ruth iv, 6.

³ Ruth iv, 4.

⁴ Ruth iv, 5.

⁵ Ruth iv, 7, 8.

All the people gathered about are witnesses to the refusal on one side, and practically to the acceptance on the other.¹ Boaz, in the presence of the elders and the people, secures the estate and with it the beautiful widow as its most valuable possession. All the people shout "we are witnesses." Then all lift up their voices and hearts, praying that the richest blessings of heaven may come upon Boaz and Ruth now joined in hand, as they had previously been joined in heart.² Thus Ruth becomes the wife of Boaz; and thus we have the first mention of a nuptial benediction in the sacred history. That benediction carries us back to patriarchal times in the simplicity, naturalness, and beauty of its family life. Ruth becomes the mother of a son who is called Obed by the matrons who give their congratulations and benedictions, and Naomi takes this boy to her heart and cares for him with a gentleness and tenderness beautiful to behold. This boy, thus born, was the lineal descendant of Judah, was the head of the royal tribe, was the lineal ancestor of great David, and of David's greater Son who was both David's son and Lord. Well may art, poetry, and music unite to narrate the incidents, paint the beauty, and sing the charms of this sweet idyl which so beautifully tells the story of Naomi, of Ruth, and of Boaz, and which so impressively suggests the glory of David, and the glory of great David's greater Son.

We cannot but remark, as we read this story, on the characteristic frankness of Scripture, which, in tracing the origin of this earlier holy family, gives us the domestic stain upon its lineage, for both Tamar and Rahab are in the line from which David came. Ruth's story is without a stain, but she took her place in that family, a striking trophy of the wonderful mercy of God, which snatched her from the doomed people of Moab and caused her to shine forevermore as a star of undimmed brightness in the resplendent firmament of Hebrew history. As the story closes we see Naomi cherishing her little grandson, the women of the neighborhood rejoicing with her, and her own heart sweetly resting in the comfort of this new family life, and joyously trusting in the God of Israel. Thus we reach the close of this delightful book, the curtain falling on the peaceful family, the love of God being in their hearts, and the peace of God in their lives.

In studying the Book of Ruth it is impossible not to see great spiritual truths under the veil of the sweet and beautiful story.³ A greater than Boaz is here. Christ, the Lord of the Harvest, supplies the wants of men and is the

true Goël and Redeemer of man's lost inheritance. He is the true Kinsman, the true Bridegroom. As Ruth came to Boaz with nothing but her own needy self, so the Church and individual souls bring nothing but their need as they lay themselves at the feet of their divine Lord. And as Ruth soon became rich with all the possessions of Boaz, so the individual soul and the divinely-saved people become rich in all the unsearchable riches and glory of their divine Lord and King. There is also a sweet personal application of this book to individual souls. If Moab represents the condition of alienation from God, Naomi and Ruth's return represents the coming of longing, hungry, helpless souls to Jesus Christ. Happy are they who choose in the great crisis of life to go to the true Canaan and to receive as the heart's Lord, its divine King. There comes a time of trial for every man and woman—a time when the decision must be made between self and the world on the one side, and duty and God on the other. Happy are they who, in that crisis, shall choose God and his service, leaving the world and its beggarly elements! Unfortunately when that time of trial comes, Orpahs abound; there are those who start encouragingly for Canaan, for duty, for heaven; but they are governed by transient emotions rather than by abiding convictions of truth and duty. They follow for a time, but soon the dividing line between Moab and Judea is reached; and then the absolute and final decision must be made. The Lord Jesus would prove all who would come to him. They must leave all; they must take up the cross and follow him. Having put their hand to the plow, they are not even to look back, for looking back leads to going back, and going back is perdition. Only the pilgrims who persevere unto the end are saved. A solemn moment was that when these sisters-in-law were standing side by side on the border-line of decision! One chooses life; the other death. One chooses human immortality and eternal honor; the other, human reprobation and eternal silence. Beautiful was the decision of Ruth, when she determined to make Naomi's God her God forevermore—determined to live, to die, to be buried, and to rise in glory with God's redeemed children. A lesson, too, may be learned from the manner in which Naomi and Ruth were received in Bethlehem. As Bethlehem was glad with their return, so ought the Church to be, when men and women come with joy to its gates. There ought to be a glad welcome for all returning prodigals. Ruth's experience, also, when she came to Bethlehem is not unlike that of many a Christian in the first stages of Christian experience. There is trial in the effort to adjust one's habits and thoughts to the new life; but

¹ Ruth iv, 9-11.

² Ruth iv, 11, 12.

³ See Donald Fraser, "Books of the Bible," pp. 104-107.

soon there comes the sweet trust under the wings of the Almighty. There comes the time of going forth and gleaning, as we read the Word of God and seek his service; and we never go forth at such times in vain. He meets us evermore with handfuls of grain, and permits us to be refreshed at mealtimes with his children, dipping our morsel in the sauce prepared for his beloved. Every day when we go forth we may expect God's presence, sympathy, companionship, and inspiration. He is our near Kinsman. In the person of his Son he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He is our Goël. Then comes the sweet and assured confidence of conscious relationship with the divine Kinsman. The gleaning gives place to resting in his love and rejoicing in his presence. Taking nothing in our hand, we lie down in submission and trust at his feet. He does not treat us with doubt and hesitancy, but he gives a warm welcome and a joyous as-

urance. We may thus repose until the morning when more glorious things shall be in store for us. Then there will come our marriage with the heavenly Bridegroom; there will come our death, our burial, our glorious resurrection with him; there will come our indissoluble union with him, even as the branch is united to the vine; there will come our enthronement with him and our ineffable and inseparable communion in eternity.

For the unique and very full Bibliography on the Book of Ruth, see Introduction to Ruth in "Pulpit Commentary," pages 14-17. For a discussion of "Levirate Marriage"—levirate from the Latin *levir*, "a brother-in-law"—and for a fresh setting of the story, with light on the ancient customs, see "The Bible for Learners," by Drs. Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuenen, Volume I, pages 424-433. The characterization of the story by Dean Stanley is brief, but interesting—"Jewish Church," Volume I, page 336. See Introduction and Comments by Keil and Delitzsch in "Commentary on Joshua, Judges, and Ruth." For excellent expository, practical and homiletical work, see Parker, "People's Bible"—Book of Ruth—Volume VI.

CHAPTER XI.

ELI AND SAMUEL, THE LAST JUDGES.

WE have studied the history of Samson, and have seen him wasting his prodigious strength in reckless exploits, and sometimes in sinful indulgence. His life, however, as a Judge in Israel was not spent in vain. His name struck terror into the hearts of the bravest Philistines, and greatly retarded the progress of their conquests. It also, in a corresponding degree, cheered the hearts of discouraged Israelites. But it must be admitted that his life was without permanent advantage to his countrymen. It was largely spent in vain; his preternatural powers were not regulated by prudence, and his moral nature was not under proper control.¹ A wiser and more moral ruler was needed, in order to secure permanent liberty for Israel and to hold her foes in constant check. Such a leader was then growing up, with many tokens of the divine presence, within the sacred precincts of the tabernacle.

We now come to the discussion of the last two men who held the office of Judge of Israel. It is not a little singular, at first thought, that the history of these two Judges is not included in the Book of Judges. In order to study that history we are obliged to turn to the beginning of the books which in the Vulgate are called the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Books of Kings. The titles of these books, with which we are more familiar, are less appropriate than those just named. The First and Second Books of Samuel are incorrectly named. Only a part

of the first book tells us of Samuel, and the remaining portions are occupied with accounts of the reigns of Saul and David.¹ It is, therefore, with some surprise that the student finds that the history of Eli and Samuel is in the first of these books rather than in the Book of Judges. This fact is the more remarkable if we suppose, as some authorities do, that all these five books were compiled about the same time, and possibly by the same hand. A closer examination, however, shows that there is wisdom in the present arrangement. The judgeship of Eli and Samuel is an altogether different office from that filled by Gideon, Samson, Jephthah, and other Judges whose histories are given in the Book of Judges. The true mission of Samuel was not so much in his closing the list of the Judges, as in his opening the way for the kings. He stood in special relation to David who was the most distinguished ancestor of the Messiah. The judgeship of these two men was priestly, and was intended, in some sense, to be hereditary. These two characteristics are not found in the judgeship of any of the other men who filled this office. Their work was exceptional and temporary, and it had no connection with the priesthood. None of the earlier Judges were of priestly descent. It is true that Abimelech, the son of Gideon, strove to inherit the powers and honors of his father, but he signally failed. Probably even the most earnest student of this history finds it impossible to explain satisfactorily how the judgeship

¹ Dean Milman, "History of the Jews," I, p. 305.

¹ Introduction to Joshua, "Pulpit Commentary," p. 17.

changed its character so completely as we find it under Eli. There is a blank in the history between Samson's overthrow of the Philistine temple at Gaza, and the Philistines' overthrow of the Sanctuary at Shiloh. How came it to pass that Eli, who was of the family of Ithamar, Aaron's second son, became high priest? The line of Eleazar, the eldest son, was not extinct. How came it to pass that Eli should have been both high priest and Judge?¹ Various answers have been given to these questions, but at most they are only conjectural. It may have been that Eli was elected Judge for exploits against the Philistines early in life, and, as a descendant of Aaron, the prominence he had acquired as Judge might have led to his obtaining the high priesthood. It is difficult to think of the kind-hearted old man, whom we find sitting at the entrance to the Sanctuary at Shiloh, as the successor of Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson; and it is almost impossible to think of him as obtaining the office of Judge by fraud or force. His gentle spirit brings sadness to the heart of every reader who thinks of his sons going into sin and bringing ruin upon the family.

The conduct of the sons of Eli shows clearly the degradation of the people in the time of the Judges. Even in the priests, in the very Sanctuary, we find most abominable wickedness. Hophni and Phinehas have often been described as the prototypes of sensual and degraded ministers of religion in all centuries and in all countries. The word "Eli" means "Ascension." He was the first high priest in the line of Ithamar; and he was also Judge of Israel for forty years. He was eminent for piety, but criminal because of his neglect of family discipline. His neglect of his duty in restraining his iniquitous sons brought upon his house the judgments of God.² Instead of setting an example of godliness, the sons of Eli used their office simply as a means of gratifying their sensual passions. The Mosaic law required that burnt offerings should be consumed by fire on the altar; the sin offerings were eaten by the priests. The fat of the inside of the peace offerings was burned on the altar, the breast and the shoulder were the property of the priest after he had waved it before the Lord, and the rest of the victim was returned to the offerer and was eaten by him and his family and friends. But Eli's sons cared not for this divine arrangement; they cared neither for the claims of God nor the rights of the people. They sent their servants to places where the offerer's share was being boiled, and with the flesh hook, they drew out for their masters whatever it caught. They

also demanded a share of the raw flesh before the fat had been offered on the altar. They thus desecrated the sacred offerings, and took away the sacred food from those to whom it rightly belonged. Their influence led to the casting of the entire service into disrepute. Many women were employed outside the tabernacle in preparing the sacred bread, attending to the holy garments, and leading the sacred songs and dances. These women the sons of Eli made their victims. Their quiet, gentle, and humble father did not use his authority as Judge, priest, and father to rebuke, with appropriate severity, such abominable conduct on the part of his sons. He merely gave godly counsel to these offenders against the laws of God and man. A prophet, and the first mentioned since the days of Moses, brought Eli the terrible message that Jehovah would inflict punishment upon his family. The details of this terrible prophecy are given us in full.¹ He also foretold that Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's two sons, would perish in one day, and that the priesthood would continue, not in his line but in the elder line, while his race would sink to obscurity and want.

A new character, and one of the most glorious in all sacred history, comes before us at this time in connection with the life of Eli. Like Moses, this remarkable man is made known to us from his birth. We once more see how God in times of depression and iniquity raises up the fitting instrument for deliverance. In Ramathaim-zophim, in the south of the mountains of Ephraim, lived the family to whom we are now introduced in the sacred story.² The name of the husband was Elkanah, meaning "whom God created;" the name of one of his wives was Hannah, meaning "grace or favor," and the name of the second wife was Peninnah, meaning "coral." Two wives are one too many in any home, however large. This double marriage did not add to the husband's happiness. Elkanah, however, was a worthy man. He was a Levite, and, even in those wild and wicked times, he went up yearly with his whole family to Shiloh at the Passover.³ Peninnah was the mother of his sons and daughters, but Hannah had neither son nor daughter. Peninnah, therefore, rightly claimed a share of the offerings for her sons and daughters, but the childless Hannah had only a single portion, although she had the larger and warmer place in his heart. We have before us the sad picture of Hannah at the door of the tabernacle, where Eli used to sit, after the family rejoicings. Her soul was bitter because of the taunts of her rival. Most beautifully is

¹ Introduction to Joshua in "Pulpit Commentary."

² I. Samuel iii, 11-14.

¹ I. Samuel ii, 27-30.

² I. Samuel i, 1.

³ I. Samuel i, 3.

the story told of her longing and praying for a son. She vowed that if God granted her this honor and blessing she would consecrate the infant boy to him as a Nazarite. Vows in oriental lands, in contemplation of the birth of a child, are still common. The birth of a son is especially a cause for joy; but the birth of a daughter often brings such humiliation to the father that he refuses to see or speak to the mother; and her friends and relatives, especially the women, upbraid her and condole with him. Indeed, the birth of a daughter is sometimes given as a reason for sending the wife away in dishonor. In due time a boy was born to Hannah. He was named Samuel, meaning "heard of God," because of the divine response to her wifely longing and her earnest prayer. This mother was endowed with a prophetic spirit. She poured out her thankful heart in a hymn which takes rank among the finest Hebrew lyrics. This song anticipates the song of Mary, the mother of our Lord; it directly suggested to her many of her noblest thoughts and some of her sublimest expressions. The joy of her heart knew no bounds; it was as great now as her sorrow had previously been. Beautiful was the devotion of Hannah to her son, and great her gratitude to God. Year after year, when Elkanah went up to Shiloh to offer sacrifices and to pay tithes, she staid at home with the boy till he should be old enough to go with her to the tabernacle.¹ When that time came she loaned him to Jehovah and entrusted him to Eli in the Sanctuary, where he "ministered to the Lord in a linen ephod."² It was his mother's great joy, year by year, when she came up to the feasts, to bring him this simple garment made by her own loving hands.

Every child knows the story of Samuel waking at night and hearing his Maker's voice while he waited on the high priest in the sacred tent at Shiloh. It was difficult for Eli to realize that the Lord spake unto the child. In the stillness of the early dawn, while the seven-branched candlestick gave its light, the soft voice of the child was divinely chosen to announce to Eli the doom of his house, because his sons had reviled God and their father had not restrained them. The word Hophni means "the fighter," and Phinehas "the brazen-mouthed." Once more the implacable Philistines are invading Israel. They drive back the people of Israel to a spot between the western entrance of the pass of Beth-horon and Bethshemesh. The Philistines were accustomed to bring images of their gods into the battlefields. The superstitious leaders of Israel supposed that the victory of the Philistines was due to that cause. Therefore, they went across the

hills to Shiloh and brought back to the camp the solemn symbol of the presence of God, with Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, as its priestly attendants.¹ As the Ark approached, the "earth rang again" with the shouts of joy on the part of the Israelites in anticipation of victory. The Philistines, learning the cause of this shouting, determined not to be the slaves of the Hebrews, but to fight with the desperation of despair, and to "quit themselves like men."² Terrible was the defeat of Israel—30,000 perished. The iron chariots of the Philistines triumphed. That day, or the next, up the steep path to Shiloh ran a Benjamite. He accomplished the distance of nearly thirty miles before night. All through the villages of the tribes the people were anxiously waiting for news from the army. In the Sanctuary town from which the Ark had been taken the anxiety was intense. Two of the townspeople are singled out for special mention: Eli, now ninety-eight years old and blind, sitting, as was his wont, by the gate of the tabernacle on the road, and the other the wife of Phinehas. The darkness of evening is approaching, and the young man rushes up the valley to the gate of Shiloh. Dust is on his head, his clothes are torn, and all who see these signs of grief know his sad message. A loud wail runs all through the towns.³ He presses his way to Eli; the terrible story must be told. Israel is beaten, and Hophni and Phinehas are dead; but saddest of all, the Ark of God is taken. The old man's heart breaks with the terrible news. He falls backward from his seat smitten, as by the hand of God, and dies. The wife of Phinehas, in the excitement of the moment, becomes the mother of a living son; but the joy of this birth is almost forgotten because the Ark of God is in the hands of the Philistines. With her dying breath she calls that son Ichabod, "The glory is departed."⁴ These were terrible experiences. The nation never forgot that sad hour. Years afterward the echo of this sorrow is heard in the psalms. Indeed, this appalling calamity was associated on the part of Israel with a sorrow which no words could adequately express. The Philistines had, as they supposed, captured the chief god of their fierce foe. They carried off the Ark and placed it as a trophy in the shrine of their fish-god Dagon, in the temple at Ashdod.⁵ This was considered to be a victory over Jehovah himself. In later times various nations have captured the gods of their foes, and brought the statues and pictures to adorn their triumph. Silently the Ark was placed in the temple of Dagon, but when the next morning

¹ I. Samuel i, 22.² I. Samuel ii, 18.¹ I. Samuel iv, 4. ² I. Samuel iv, 9. ³ See description in Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 28.⁴ I. Samuel iv, 21. ⁵ I. Samuel v, 2.

dawned the image of Dagon was found lying on the ground, dust-covered, before the Ark of the Lord. It was raised again to its place, but on the second morning was found, not only cast down, but broken in its upper part. This sea-god was half human and half fish. The human part was dashed to pieces, while the fish half lay dishonored and in contempt on the threshold of the cell, on which thereafter no one would step, but all leaped over it—a custom which was found in Israel long years afterward.

Soon another humiliation followed the dishonor that was done to the Ark of God. A terrible plague broke out in Ashdod, which plague of hæmorrhoids, or some similar pestilence, was accompanied by mice and other similar creatures which attacked the crops and produced a deadly destruction. Innumerable field rats still produce terrible depredations on fields of wheat and barley in Asia Minor; they also destroy vines and mulberry trees. The Philistines were glad to send the Ark to Gath, and then to Ekron;¹ but in both these places its presence produced disaster; and so the foes of Israel, after seven months, were glad to send it back to the Israelites.² Images in gold, of the mice and the tumors which had afflicted them were made and sent back with the Ark, one for each city. The custom of hanging beside altars in the temples models of the parts of the body which had been healed was common in Greece, and is still observed in the Greek churches of Russia, in the Roman churches in Italy, in Switzerland, and even in America.³ But among the Philistines these images were not an offering for the recovery secured, for the plague was still raging; they were rather proofs that the plague had not come by chance, but had been inflicted by the God of the Israelites, because of the dishonor which had been done to the Ark of the Covenant. A striking picture is that presented to us in the sacred history when the Ark was returned. It was placed in a new cart. Two milch cows—cows never before yoked to a vehicle—their calves having been left at home, drew the cart. These cows thus laid aside their natural instincts. The cart was attended by the five princes of the Philistine cities, and with its solemn load was driven to Beth-shemesh.⁴ It was now the month of June; the reapers were in the fields when the strange procession approached, and their joy was great as the cart went slowly up the long valley. The Levites received the Ark with becoming reverence. They laid it, with the Philistines' offering, on a great stone, hastily built an altar, and, using the wood of the cart for

fuel, they consumed the cows that had drawn it as a sacrifice to God expressive of their grateful joy and their devout faith. Some, however, who were tainted with the heathenism of the time, refused to join in these glad ceremonies, and many of them were smitten because of their unbelief. The number given in our version of the Scriptures, 50,070,¹ is no doubt an error of the copyist; it is given in the Septuagint as three score and ten men. In a village the size of Beth-shemesh there could have been no such population as would have been implied in this larger number.

The Philistines followed up the success which they had won when they captured the sacred Ark. As far north as Dan the country felt the power of their hand. Shiloh, with all of its sacred associations as the religious capital, was burnt to the ground; but the Levites succeeded in carrying off the tabernacle in safety. Built on a hill, with a pleasant valley to the south, and surrounded with high hills, Shiloh was beautiful for situation, and was long the sanctuary of Israel. To Shiloh the faithful had come year by year, as did Hannah, to the great feast, to pour out their hearts before God. Near the Sanctuary the young men and maidens had held their merry-makings season after season. There, too, the *Te Deum* over great victories had often been sung. But now Shiloh was largely deserted and was sinking into insignificance and obscurity.² Even its site remained unknown until Doctor Robinson rediscovered it by following the exact details given in Judges.³ Its early associations are still tenderly suggested by the name Seilun, by which it was long known. It is said that a small village still crowns the hill, and some ancient stones are to be seen built into the modern walls.⁴ It is believed that the site of the tabernacle has been discovered in a part of the ground which has been leveled over a space 77 feet wide and 412 feet long, the rocks being cut into to the depth of 5 feet. On this spot, as Doctor Geikie suggests, in all likelihood, rose the sacred tent, the last memorial of the wandering life of the Desert, and the first real suggestion of the permanent Temple in Jerusalem. Here are the few memorials left that once marked the home of Eli and the tabernacle where Samuel spent the days of his boyhood. The tabernacle never again boasted of the Ark; and its history, after its removal from Shiloh, is wrapped in obscurity. With the building of Solomon's Temple, the tender memories which had gathered about the old

¹ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 35; I. Samuel vi, 19.

² Psalm xxviii, 60; Jeremiah vii, 12.

³ Judges xxi, 19; Robinson, "Biblical Researches," II, p. 269.

⁴ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 37, and his authorities.

¹ I. Samuel v, 8-12.

² I. Samuel vi, 1.

³ See Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 32, and the authorities he quotes.

⁴ I. Samuel vi, 10-12.

tabernacle perished, and it vanished entirely from history. After its return to Beth-shemesh, the Ark was removed to Kirjath-jearim, the "town of the woods." There it found a resting place in the house of a Levite named Abinadab for twenty years until David finally brought it, amid immortal songs of rejoicing, to its prepared habitation—to its home in Jerusalem.

Twenty years longer the Israelites must groan under the yoke of the Philistines. Samuel was now growing to manhood. He possessed not merely the authority of a Judge and the dignity of a prophet, but also the wisdom of a teacher and the functions of a priest. His influence was acquired not by warlike exploits, but rather by force of natural and spiritual character. He exercised vast authority as he judged Israel at Mizpeh. We have seen that he was possibly of Levitical origin and had been brought up in the tabernacle. He had, however, a more spiritual conception of religion than many in his time, for he allowed the Ark to remain twenty years at Kirjath-jearim. The duty of obedience to God he constantly enforced, showing the people that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."¹ His influence led Israel to abandon idolatry and to shake off the yoke of the Philistine oppression.

All through Samuel's life he maintained his lofty tone and his sacred influence. In his old age he was able to challenge Israel to point out any one instance in which he had used his great authority for personal or unworthy ends.² Unfortunately, his sons were not like their father.³ The elders of Israel saw the danger to the nation which would come from the assumption of power by these unworthy sons upon Samuel's death. Fearing that the country would relapse into disorder, they proposed that they should have a king like the nations about them.⁴ The proposal was not the result of true faith, and Samuel protested against it. He affirmed that it was disloyalty to God. The desire, however, was granted, and God overruled all its worst elements for the establishment of the kingdom and the manifestation of his own glory. In the kingdom, as in the commonwealth, Samuel was honored for his pure character, his unwavering faith, and his unquestioning devotion to God. He was permitted to anoint the first king and the second. Without a murmur he surrendered the great political power which he had wielded. He exacted from the monarchy constitutional guarantees that its power should be rightly exercised. Then Samuel retired from his prominent place in the history of the nation. His

last years were saddened by the unworthiness of King Saul; his worst misgivings when the elders asked for a king were more than realized. He died at Ramah, where he was born.

With the exception of Moses, he was the greatest man whom Israel had produced, until the days of David. He was a patriot and a prophet, a statesman, a teacher, a ruler, and one who feared the face of neither God nor man because he was conscious of his loyalty to God and to duty. In his childhood he declared the rejection of the high priest and his son; in his old age he declared the rejection of the king; but the sorrow of this declaration was relieved by the knowledge that God would raise up David, the Bethlehemite, to reign as king over Israel, in place of Saul whom God had rejected.

In the time of Samuel, prophecy appears as one of the established and recognized features of the national life. It is true that Abraham and Moses are vaguely called prophets; it is also true that the great age of prophecy was to commence with Elijah, and to continue through the line of poet-prophets during the later kings. A sharp distinction is to be made between the primary and secondary sense of the word prophet. Prophecy—the foretelling of future events—is, in popular estimation, the dominant attribute of the Hebrew prophet; but this is not the true thought of the Hebrew word *nabi*, and the Greek word *prophetes*. These words have a much more comprehensive meaning. The *nabi* is the man who speaks in the name and by the authority of God; he is, if we may so say, the voice of God to man; he is a foreteller, also a forthteller; but, still more exactly, he is a "forteller," a spokesman. The prophet was one known by his ecstatic utterances; the verb which we translate to prophesy was occasionally used in the sense of being raving mad. The word *nabi* is generally derived from a word meaning "to bubble forth" like a fountain. The prophet is discriminated from false prophets especially by the pure religious instincts in the heart of God's people. In the time of Saul this office was recognized as belonging to a class of men. There were schools of the prophets, in which a distinct and peculiar life was lived, and special training and discipline were given. The study of the law doubtless formed an important part of this instruction. The students, like Orientals generally, when they are, as they believe, under supernatural influences, were often wrought up to a kind of ecstatic excitement which expressed itself in wild dances and gesticulations. Samuel appears in the history as a Judge, as a prophet, and as a teacher in the schools of the prophets. He probably established the "Schools of the Prophets." We have seen that the high priesthood passed into the older

¹ I. Samuel xv, 22.

² I. Samuel xii, 3.

³ I. Samuel viii, 3.

⁴ I. Samuel viii, 5.

branch of the family of Eli. The priesthood itself seemed to sink into insignificance before the dignity of Samuel. He was dedicated to God as a Nazarite, and he seems to have risen to the height of his great calling. He was not a warrior like Joshua or Gideon, and there was nothing in his life of the wild and reckless valor of Jephthah and Samson. He did not possess the military skill and dash of Deborah and Barak, but he was more than either. He was the founder of a school; he created an epoch; he was more than the Luther of his day.

As a civil administrator, Samuel was equally successful. He united the tribes under his authority, and he united Israel once more to Jehovah. This was really his great achievement; this was the crowning point of his service to Israel and to God. Once more the scattered tribes become a nation, to the joy of all. The old rivals, Ephraim and Judah, made common cause against a common enemy, and even the more distant tribes gave their allegiance to Samuel, the last Judge, and to Saul, the first king. The loss of the Ark tended to unite all the tribes in a common calamity; and the return of the Ark completed the union by striking a note of hope in the heart of all of them. The result was that from the foot of Lebanon to the edge of the Desert, from the pastures of Gilead to the seacoast of Asher, the dormant religious devotion and patriotic enthusiasm of the people were aroused as seldom in their history. Even those who may have previously had but little devotion to God and much leniency toward idolatry, were now both rebuked and inspired by the great movements of the hour. Samuel held three annual sessions of justice at Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, at which there is reason to believe all the tribes were represented. In his old age, his sons were installed in the judicial office, but, unlike their father, they were venal and corrupt. The people, therefore, desired a monarchical government. Some have suggested that Moses had anticipated such an exigency, and had laid down regulations for the election of a sovereign. The king was not to be a foreigner; the independence of the country must be preserved. He was not to maintain any force of cavalry, lest he should attempt foreign conquests and thus neglect the internal development and security of the kingdom. The people asked for a king, avowedly that justice should be more certainly administered, and for a strong and permanent military force; that the king should go before them to fight their battles, as well as to give them just judgment. As they now had to resist powerful monarchies, and the formidable leagues of the Philistine chieftains, the untrained national militia, though sufficient to quell temporary invasions of wandering tribes,

were not able to master and overwhelm trained armies, with war chariots and camels. Samuel's conduct was prudent in the extreme. He showed the people the danger of an oriental despotism, and the exactions and oppressions of arbitrary power, but he then left them to make their choice.¹ The popular feeling was strongly in favor of electing a king. The next object then was to secure the election. The king must be chosen from one of the southern tribes, as they were more exposed to inroads from powerful and implacable foes. Divine wisdom and human polity beautifully harmonized in the nomination and election of the first king. If a prince of Naphtali or Asher were chosen, the interests of Judah and Benjamin might be neglected; if a prince of Ephraim or Judah were chosen, he would necessarily excite the jealousy of the rival tribe, and he might be in danger of exercising a domineering power over the weaker tribes.

The choice of the first king is a most interesting event in the history of Israel, partly because of its influence upon the nation itself, and partly because of its relation to the history of monarchs in all other nations. There comes before us a youth of striking beauty, of unusual height, and of superb bearing. He seems to be, as he passes before us, "every inch a king."² He is the son of a Benjamite chieftain, and he has been searching for some of his father's asses which were lost. To him the thought of Samuel is directed. He is given a prominent seat at a feast where thirty persons are present, and Samuel proceeds privately to anoint Saul as Israel's first king.³ The young man, however, needs a course of religious training and instruction, and his heart is deeply moved with patriotic enthusiasm and religious devotion. He goes for a time to one of the schools of the prophets which Samuel seems to have instituted. There instruction is given in music, poetry, patriotism, and religion. While at this school the character of Saul is entirely changed. It had been promised that the spirit of the Lord would come upon him, that he would prophecy, and that he would be so converted as to become another man. He mingled in the sacred dances. His former levity disappeared. His wondering friends ask, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"⁴ We are now at Mizpeh and a solemn assembly is attended by all the tribes. Little Benjamin is designated by lot, and Saul is at once received as king; not, indeed, without some opposition from some factious spirits, but with the approval of the great majority.

Samuel at Gilgal assembled the people, and solemnly appealed to the whole country to bear

¹ I. Samuel viii, 11-19.

² I. Samuel ix, 2.

³ I. Samuel x, 1.

⁴ I. Samuel x, 11.

witness to the justice and integrity of his administration. He invited their scrutiny, he defied their censure, he rebuked the people, both by his words and by a sign from heaven, for a thunderstorm came at the unusual time of the wheat harvest.¹ His rebuke of the people was caused by their innovation on the established constitution without divine authority. Then he surrendered his judicial authority, and proceeded to the inauguration of the king whom they had chosen.

Samuel "stood between the dead and the living," between the dead past and the living future. He gave up the convictions of a lifetime when he consented to the election of a king. The real foundation of all his reforms was laid in the moral and religious life of the people. He did not depend merely on his personality for the permanency of his work. He founded great institutions. What the founders of great colleges in England and America have done for their respective countries, that Samuel did for Israel. He was, as has been said, probably the first founder of great schools. Such schools were an absolute necessity to the training of David and other great leaders of the nation. Naioth means Students' Lodgings, and there he gathered the young men who were to lift Israel from her degradation into national honor and religious glory. The fostering of these schools was one great part of his life-work. He fostered the growth and extension of a system of national education. He also trained men to be Israel's teachers. His example has been largely followed by enlightened Protestant ecclesiasts and rulers. His example

¹I. Samuel xi, 15, xii.

explains the power of Britain, of Germany, and of America, and his example needs to be emphasized to-day and followed in all the future. He was one of Israel's, one of antiquity's, one of the world's great men. Even in the closing decade of the nineteenth century, he stands forth worthy of honor and glory among the leaders of the great nations of the world.

We have now reached the end of the period of the Judges. It was one of alternate slavery and cruel oppression, but all the while there was a struggle for larger liberty and for a grander future. Some may affirm that the Mosaic polity failed in securing the happiness and prosperity of the people. But it ought to be borne in mind that the principles of the great lawgiver were never fully carried out, and that the misery of the people was the result of their disobedience to the divine law; and it ought also to be said that, during this period of perhaps 480 years, not more than one-quarter was passed under the yoke of a foreign oppression, and that some of the oppressions which marked this quarter were local, including but a few tribes, while the rest were comparatively peaceful and prosperous. We have, then, more than 300 years, notwithstanding all that may be admitted regarding this wild and stormy period, that were, on the whole, marked by national growth and prosperity.

See Milman's description of the period, "History of the Jews," Volume I, p. 319. For a superb account of Samuel's character I, p. 319. For a superb account of Samuel's character and for especially for the rise of the prophets, and the meaning of the word, see Stanley, "Jewish Church." First Series, Lectures XIX and XX. The critical and somewhat destructive remarks of Oort, Hooykaas, and Kuenen, "The Bible for Learners," Volume I, p. 433, are suggestive.

R. S. Inae Arthur.

BOOK VII.

FROM THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY TO ITS DECLINE.

BY REV. MARTYN SUMMERBELL, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE ACCESSION OF SAUL TO THE THRONE OF ISRAEL.

AS the closing years of Samuel draw on, great changes occur, which involve the civil constitution of Israel, and finally the whole fabric of the national life and character. As yet the ways of the people were simple. The land had been entered, but was still to be conquered. The Canaanite had been evicted from many of his fair holdings, but he still occupied points of vantage here and there, and years were to pass before he could be completely dislodged. The Philistine was in possession of a fertile tract to the south and west, but, since Samuel had routed him so disastrously at Mizpeh, had ceased to be a source of apprehension. The wild clangor of war was hushed, and the nation, aside from some sudden foray from its restless neighbors, was in the enjoyment of comparative peace and quietness. If a census of the population had been taken at this period it would have shown a count possibly of a million and three-quarters,¹ a material reduction from the number that came in with Joshua. That there had been loss instead of gain since entering the land may be accounted for by the withdrawal of the allies, who had come up with Moses out of Egypt, and by the decimation resulting from the protracted Canaanitish wars.

The occupations of the people were grazing and the tillage of the soil, varied by a few handicrafts of the most primitive sort. For dwellings, they were still living under tents, or in the rudest of huts. For a long time we note no attempt at building. When at length the era of construction commences, it is necessary to import architects and skilled workmen from another country; from which circumstance it is sufficiently clear that the Jew was not yet master of the building art.

But the interval of peace was making the nation prosperous. In that mild climate, with their simplicity of manners, their wants were few, and were far more than met by the natural

increase of flock and field, the surplus of which was accumulating a store of popular wealth. In this way, strangely enough, the wise rule of Samuel, which had discomfited the invader and given tranquility to Israel, became the occasion of its own subversion, darkening the last days of the grand old seer with cloud and storm. It had been foretold, under the poetical figure of Jeshurun the fattened ox,¹ that prosperity would render the nation restive, and, in accordance with the prediction, the enjoyment of peace and the increase of resources and power become promoters of disturbance and upheaval. At first there is the rising murmur of dissatisfaction, which, unrestrained, presently bursts forth into a wide-spread clamor for radical changes in the mode of government.

As already observed in another book,² after the entrance into Canaan, the established rule had been by chiefs of families and tribes; while concerns of high moment lay in the hands of the man who for the time being stood nearest to God, who in all difficult cases inquired of God, and who was the Almighty's chosen intermediary with Israel. Moses had been such a Lawgiver and Judge. Joshua, and Gideon, and Barak, Jephthah, and Samson, and Eli, and now Samuel, had been such leaders, with God as king over all. It was government not only by divine right, but also by divine rule, a theocracy, God ministering directly in civic affairs. In the eyes of the people, however, the human agent was the more conspicuous, and so, presently, with a strange forgetfulness of services which a later generation could better value, they call upon Samuel to step aside, and yield place for the appointment of a king.

Had the demand been less general, the personal influence of God's servant might have sufficed to preserve the old status; but now many influences were combining to force his consent to what, in effect, was a revolution,

¹ Deuteronomy xxxii, 15.

² Book V, p. 262, "The internal government of Jewish cities," etc.: p. 265, III, B.

¹This estimate is based on the number of fighting men whom Saul led to Jabesh. I. Samuel xi, 7, 8.

though happily no blood was spilled in bringing it to pass. One class of those importuning for the new order was possibly seeking a change from sheer weariness with settled conditions, and from love of the stir and excitement that must attend the creation of a throne. The adventurers, no small part of the population, as subsequent events demonstrated, were eager for the opportunities for advancement which offer in the antechambers of an oriental court. The great chieftains, among whom choice of the coming monarch would be assumed to fall, were willing to indorse a movement in which one of their number might secure the coveted prize. But a still stronger motive impelled the body of the people in their headlong preference for royalty over the simpler forms of the theocracy. The Oriental is the child of custom. He clings with amazing tenacity to the ways of his neighbors and his ancestors. The sheik of the desert to-day wears his caftan and turban, cut and twined after the fashion of Father Ishmael, and gathers his household into a tent, the counterpart of Abraham's, which the patriarch pitched under the terebinth in Mamre. With such passion of imitativeness as an innate characteristic, it was difficult for him to differ in any marked degree from his neighbors. Israelitish history shows the repeatedly recurring phases of relapse into the customs and ways of the nations, and the explanation lies in the tendency of the Oriental to be like with like. And, as the nations were governed by kings, there soon rose a great longing for royalty, and for a king with all his regal state and consequence.

But behind all these mixed motives and selfish ambitions there lay a legitimate anxiety for the national welfare. It was a critical period for the Hebrew name. Dangers were beginning to menace on the frontier. The rich grain fields, and pasture lands overflowing with flocks, tempted the cupidity of the Spoiler, who was all the bolder, as Israel had so long refrained from active warfare. On the east the children of Ammon were pressing sharply, while along the west and south the Philistines were multiplying their periodical forays. If peace was to be purchased with the sword, there must be some headship for the tribes; some central authority to which all should submit; a leader whom all must obey. It is thus, through the sense of weakness, and the need of a strong arm, that kingship takes its rise. Dryden puts it none too strongly in his verse,

"Kings' titles generally begin by force."

The savage who wields the heaviest club, commands the tribe. The chief who can marshal the clans for battle and overpower the adversary holds the preëminence, which he transmits to his eldest, who is presumably his

strongest son. The menace of disaster is the usurper's opportunity. Rome guarded herself for generations against the tyrant by requiring her dictator, after saving the republic from detriment, to surrender his prerogative and become again the humble citizen. But she learned this wisdom only after endurance of the intolerable oppressions of the Tarquins. France sought by her Revolution to abolish the rule of kings, but the Revolution itself gave chance for the Three Consuls, for the First Consul, for the Emperor. The firm patriotism of a Washington, who was resolved that America should be self-governing, rendered possible the establishment of our Constitution, so admirable in its safeguards for the liberties of a free people. Had the Father of his Country been less virtuous, the American Republic would have been an empire.

These considerations assist to an understanding of the situation in the time of Samuel. In case of invasion from across the border, could the aged prophet lead the hosts to victory? Were he to fall in battle, or be crushed in spirit by defeat, who should lift up the standard? Could the fate of the nation be intrusted to Joel or Abiah, Samuel's sons, whom he had made judges in Beersheba? Though blood may tell in the general average of a race, it is not every good man who is blessed with children after his own heart; and of these men, because of their bribetakings and evil conduct, the people were justly in fear.¹ And so, as perplexities multiply, the tide of apprehension swells, and the desire for a king extends till the impulse becomes resistless. By common consent the elders of Israel assemble in Ramah, and, finding that they are of one mind, make formal demand of Samuel:² "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like the nations."

Grieved to the heart at the popular waywardness, the old man carried his burden to God, to be assured that the turning away was not so much from the Judge as from Jehovah. God had led them hitherto, and was still able to deliver them from all their enemies. Nevertheless, Samuel is bidden to accede to the entreaty and provide the king, whom he is to choose under divine direction. If a crown must be had, God must determine the man to wear it. If monarchy must replace the theocracy, the new rule must still be theocratic, God lifting up and guiding the ruler. Bearing this intimation of the divine purpose from the Holy Presence, the prophet dismisses the tribal chieftains with the assurance, that for the hardness of their hearts God will give

¹ I. Samuel, viii, 3.

² I. Samuel, viii, 5.

PALESTINE

under the
JUDGES AND KINGS

with the Distribution of the
TWELVE TRIBES.

- THE TWELVE TRIBES**
- I JUDAH
 - II SIMEON
 - III BENJAMIN
 - IV DAN
 - V EPHRAIM
 - VI MANASSEH
 - VII ISSACHAR
 - VIII ZEBULON
 - IX ASHER
 - X NAPHTHALI
 - XI GAD
 - XII REUBEN

- The Levitical Cities underscored**
- Cities of Refuge** ...
- BATTLE FIELDS**
- 1 Moses conquest of the Ammonites (Og of Bashan)
 - 2, 3, 4, 5 Joshua's victory over the Canaanites
 - 6 Barak's and Deborah's conquest of the Syrians
 - 7 Gideon's of the Midianites
 - 8 Jephthas of the Ammonites
 - 9 Samuels of the Philistines
 - 10 Sauls of the Philistines
 - 11 Saul's D.D. (David & Goliath)
 - 12 Saul's encampment and death, by the Philistines.

33

33

32

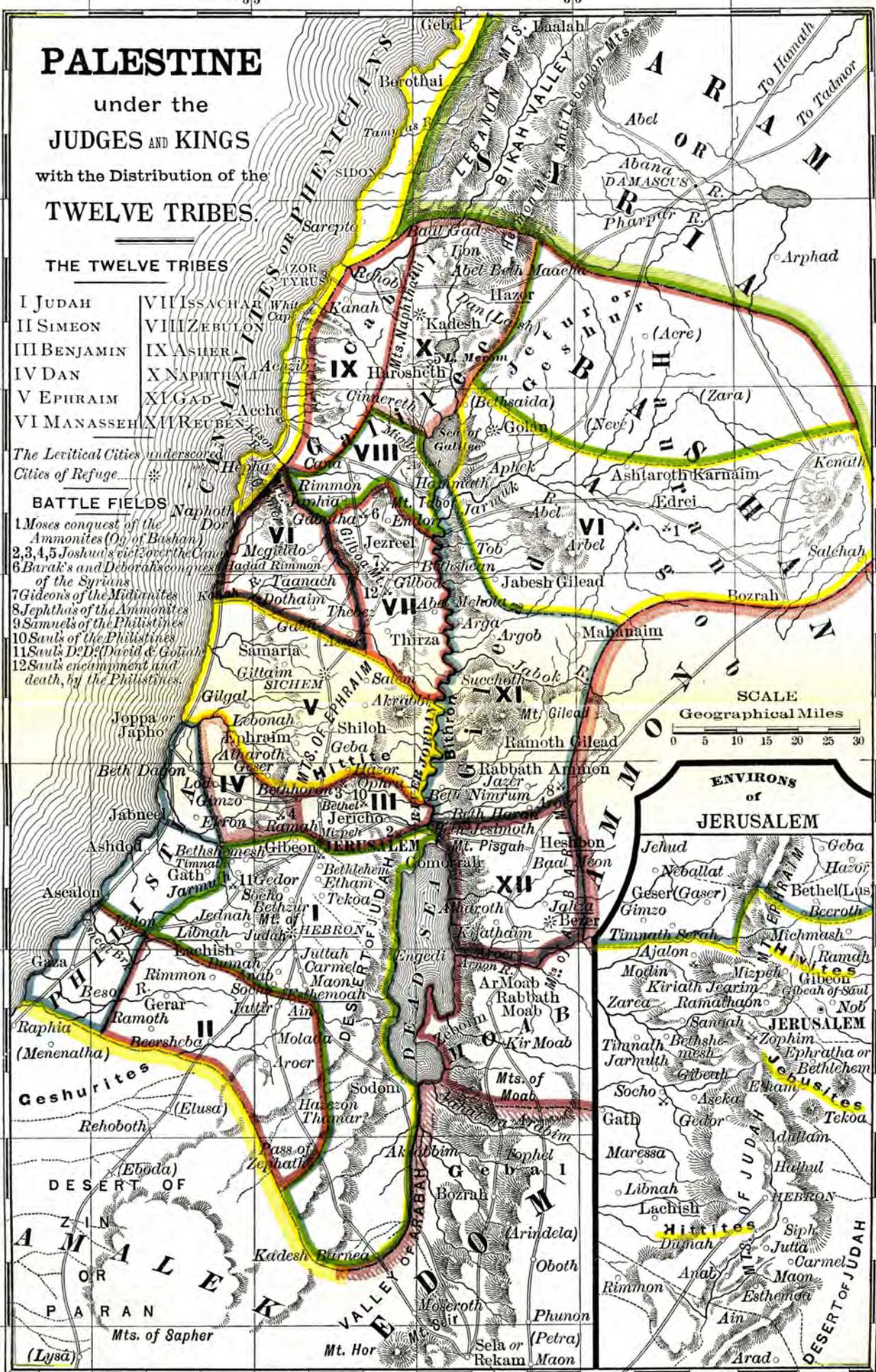
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them a king, who will make their sons his servants, and their daughters his handmaidens, and levy upon their goods and their increase for the keeping of his captains and men of might.

The revolution having been thus sanctioned, God speedily provides the king. In the circumstances attending this choice, it is noticeable how he indicates, both to the man himself, and also to all Israel as well, that it is not the counsel of the wise which controls in the matter, but Providence alone, which willeth to do of its own good pleasure. As for the man, he is to be taken from the body of the people; as the Redeemer, in the fullness of times, was to choose his disciples from men in the humblest walks. He is to feel keenly that nothing in himself commends him for this high honor. He leads no tribe and is followed by no clan. He has performed no act of renown. As for reputation, he is a man unknown. He does not climb to the throne, for when he has no thought of such elevation, God's servant abases the throne to him.

The incident which introduces Saul, the overgrown son of Kish, to the page of history is absurdly trivial. His father's she-asses have gone astray, and when he has sought them far and vainly, the tall Benjamite comes to the prophet's door, imploring the seer's vision for the recovery of his property. It is this Saul, with his look of wistful helplessness, dependent in so small an affair as the tracing of the asses, whom Samuel recognizes as God's choice for the kingdom. God can make the weak things of this world confound them that are mighty, and if Saul leans hard on God, despite his evident deficiencies, he may enjoy a glorious reign. The prophet invites him to his feast, seats him in the place of honor, and gives him the choicest of the food, that which had been reserved in prophetic anticipation of his coming. On the morrow, as he sets forth on his return, Samuel accompanies him for some distance. At a convenient place he sends the servant forward, and, after declaring to the young man the divine will, taking a bottle¹ of oil, he anoints him prince over God's inheritance.² To impress Saul's mind with the profound importance of the act, he gives him several tokens, which will certify that all this is of the Lord. Two men shall meet him at the sepulcher of Rachel, the mother of the Benjamites, with tidings of the finding of the asses, and of his father's anxiety at his prolonged absence. At the Oak of Tabor³ he will meet three men going up to God at Bethel; one of them having three kids; another, three

loaves of bread, and the third, a wineskin of wine. They are to give him two of the consecrated loaves. On approaching his home, as he draws nigh to Gibeah of God,¹ where there is a station garrisoned by a troop of Philistines, he is to meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place; and, when these are prophesying, the spirit of prophecy is to come upon him, and he is to be turned into another man, and prophesy with the prophets.

Minute as these predictions are, all befell according to the prophet's word. At Rachel's tomb, Saul is told that the asses have been found. At the Oak of Tabor, the man presents him with the two loaves, which had been destined for the altar. When at length he reaches Gibeah of God, and encounters the "chain" of prophets descending the hill, with music and religious dance, moved to the soul by the striking confirmations of the prophet's speech, which corroborate the destiny which he has been told to expect, he is seized with a transport of religious ecstasy, and, rushing into the line, he lifts up his voice in an outburst of prophetic song. If we accept Wellhausen's suggestion,² that the disorders of the time are to be credited with the awakening activity of prophecy among the young men, we can readily imagine the burden of the company's song to have been the woes of Israel, and the victory of God over the oppressor. And in such case it is not difficult to perceive how Saul, beginning to realize that he had surely been called of God to be leader of the host, should be lifted above his former self, and, in a rapture of enthusiasm, foretell the coming battles and sieges, and the discomfiture of the Ammonite and the Philistine. At all events, Saul prophesies with the prophets, a circumstance so remarkable as to give rise to a new proverb in Israel.

But the nation is to be taught how God rules in calling whom he will to the kingdom. Only a few days pass, when Samuel summons the princes and the elders to a great convocation at Mizpeh. It is a solemn religious assembly, and is opened with a sacrifice to the Lord, which is offered with a solemnity appropriate to the importance of the occasion. After the celebration of the rites and a brief address, recalling how God had always been their helper and deliverer, he turns to the concern for which they are assembled—the selection of a king. The mode of procedure emphasizes the divine superintendence. There is no nomination by the heads of tribes. No great lord presents himself for the suffrages of his countrymen. The whole nation, in the person of its representatives, appears before Samuel,

¹ "A narrow-necked vessel, from which the oil would come by drops."—Edersheim, "Bible History," IV, p. 41. ² I. Samuel x, 1. ³ I. Samuel x, 3.

¹ So the revision.

² "History of Israel," p. 449.

beside whom stands the high priest, in all the dignity of his official robes and wearing the sacred ephod. With such impressive auspices the lot is cast, embracing every man in Israel. So at the siege of Ai, Joshua had been shown the pilferer of the golden wedge and the Babylonish garment. By like decision of the lot, Canaan had been partitioned among the tribes. So also in a later time, after earnest prayer, the disciples were taught God's will in the selection of Justus or Matthias, to take the apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell. The names of the tribes were inscribed on tablets, which were deposited in an urn, and this was agitated violently until but one was left, which was the tablet of Benjamin. The lot had fallen on Benjamin, the smallest of all the tribes, which up to this time had not recovered from its almost complete extermination, in retribution for the sin of Gibeah, in the days of the Judges.¹ As the lots were again cast, they fell successively on the clan of Matri,² on the family of Kish, and finally, when the sons of Kish were presented, on Saul, the eldest, who was thus formally designated as God's answer to the nation's prayer. At the announcement of the lot, Saul is modestly missing, but by divine direction is found hiding among the baggage.

A choice so foreign to every expectation carries discomfiture to the friends of the prominent leaders, whose claims to favor have been ignored. The people shout, "Long live the king," but the acclamation lacks the hearty ring of enthusiasm. Ephraim, especially, as the largest and most influential of the tribes, cherishes a sullen discontent, which is to burst into full flame in a later reign. According to oriental custom, the people lay tribute at Saul's feet, though some, who have no reputation to lose,³ offer no presents, and openly scoff at the presumption of such an aspirant for the throne.

The new ruler makes no haste to assume his authority, and, with a bit of kingcraft hardly as yet to be expected of him, is conveniently deaf to all adverse comment; thus shrewdly escaping the obligation of punishing his detractors, and thereby arousing a troublesome spirit of enmity. Convinced that time will bring the fitting opportunity, as the people disperse to their homes he returns to the obscurity of his rustic occupations.

But the exigencies of the times forbid his remaining in protracted retirement. Hardly a month passes,⁴ when Nahash, king of Ammon, invests Jabesh, the chief town of Gilead, on the east side of the Jordan, with an overwhelming force. It seems that the inhabitants

must surrender; but when they are told the barbarity of the conditions exacted by the conqueror, they are nerved to the last effort of despair. For Nahash insists on putting them all to the sword, and will spare their lives only on their submitting to his putting out their right eyes, as a reproach to all Israel. Scarcely daring to cherish a hope of success, and yet grasping at every straw, the men of Jabesh ask for seven days' respite while calling for help, agreeing, if not rescued, to yield themselves to the victor's pleasure at the end of the time. On his contemptuously granting their request, the men of Jabesh send swift messengers throughout the land; and, as the evil tidings spread, all Israel is in dismay. The towns reëcho with cries of grief, the men joining with the women in lifting the voice of lamentation. At nightfall, when Saul comes, driving his yoke of oxen from the field up the hill of Gibeah, he hears the mourning of the people. When told of the calamity which faces the men of Jabesh, his heart swells with indignation. He is a Benjamite, and the men of his tribe are known far and wide as the most accomplished fighters of the Israelitish host. Shall Benjamin sit sullenly while Jabesh, knit to the tribe by the maternal tie,¹ is crushed in the writhing folds of the Serpent of Ammon?² In a blaze of righteous wrath, he ceases to be the retiring herdsman, and becomes "every inch a king." Pausing not for counsel, he slays the oxen, and hewing them in pieces, despatches the bleeding parts into all the tribes with the sharp summons, that so it shall be done to all who come not forth after Saul and Samuel. The nation, realizing that it has a leader at last, rises in its might and pours out its warriors in a veritable landsturm. Thirty thousand men of Judea, and 300,000 of the rest of Israel, throng into the region of Bezek, and, by a forced march, push on over the twenty miles between Bezek and Jabesh in three columns, to fall upon the Ammonitish army, just before dawn of the last day of the respite. The surprise in its completeness reminds the historian of Washington's attack on Rahl at Trenton, or of the shock of Bonaparte's landing at Cannes to Louis XVIII. The Ammonite had not suspected that Israel would dare to fight, and these thousands pressing him from every side drive him to headlong panic. The besiegers scatter, with Israel in close pursuit, and Nahash,³ their king, is slain. It is a great deliverance. Jabesh pours out its gratitude to the young king, and years afterward redeems its obligation by a service of danger and sacrifice.

But the immediate effect of the battle is to place Saul securely in his kingdom. In the

¹ Judges xix, 22-30, xx, 35-48.

² I. Samuel x, 21.

³ "Sons of Belial," I. Samuel x, 27.

⁴ I. Samuel xi, 1.

¹ Judges xxi, 12.

² "Nahash" signifies "Serpent."

³ Josephus, "Antiquities," VI, v, 3.

hour of triumph Samuel proposes another national convention, to be held this time in Gilgal, where the gathering will be free from interference by the Philistines. The place is on the west of the Jordan, near Jericho; and is memorable as the first camping place of Israel, on its occupation of the land under Joshua, and the spot where the first Passover was observed in the Land of Promise. Like Mizpeh, it was a sacred gathering place; and hither the clans come in multitude, their hearts buoyant with a national hope, born of the recent victory. The sacred historian places it on record that "all the people went to Gilgal." The usual sacrifices are offered. Samuel once more reminds them of his faithfulness in service, and of God's gracious providences in all their eventful past. He assures them that they can hope for prosperity only as they cling to the Lord, and serve him with their whole heart. If they will do this, he will still pray for them, and teach them the good and right way.

But while the monarchy is thus again solemnly intrusted into the hands of Saul, it is to be observed that it is to be theocratic. The kingship has its limitations, which Samuel has recorded, and laid up¹ in the Ark of the Covenant beside the Book of the Law. Saul is not

to govern as a despot, nor to hold the arbitrary authority of the kings of Phœnicia or Philistia. He is rather to be the leader of armies, and, even in the declaration of war and the prosecution of campaigns, to seek direction from God.

In some degree he accepts this position, and rarely troubles himself with civil affairs.¹ He maintains no court, and lives in the simplest way with his household, whenever the peace of the country permits. In the earlier part of his reign, he is submissive to the divine leading as announced from the Sanctuary; and, had the depth of his religious nature been sufficient to counteract the impulse which seized him afterward to grasp after powers which it was not intended for him to exercise, his career might have been one of constantly increasing glory.

He was an able soldier, prompt in action, and skillful in the disposition of his troops. He finds his country strong in numbers, but weak for want of military discipline, and weighted down by the growing might of Philistia on the southern border. It is a great commander who can rally a shepherd and farming people, and teach them to strike great blows for independence; and though it is David who finally breaks the yoke of the oppressor, we trace the beginning of the nationality to the inspiring leadership of Saul.²

CHAPTER II.

THE PHILISTINES, AND THEIR OVERTHROW AT MICHMASH.

THE logical consequence of the defeat of the Ammonite, and of the ratification of the kingdom at Gilgal, was the renewal of aggressive measures on the part of the Philistines, who were shrewd enough to foresee a decline of their ascendancy unless this popular movement could be checked.

This people, settled in the fertile district of the Shephelah, the great maritime plain to the south and west of Judea, by their thrift with the plow and their prowess with the sword had become great and powerful. Their barley harvests, the produce of their vineyards and olive groves, and the increase of their extensive sheep pastures were sources of wealth in themselves, to which they added by the practice of many handicrafts, and by carrying on a wide commerce with Egypt and Arabia. For protection in time of war they had fortified their five chief cities, Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath, which they constructed with such art as to enable them to endure the fiercest sieges.

As their power augmented, they made increasing inroads on the territory occupied by

the tribes, and were able to control the three principal caravan routes which traversed the country; Ashdod and Gaza especially being the keys to traffic with Egypt. The presence of the Philistine army as far north as the hill country of Gilboa, in the last days of Saul, is to be explained by their having followed the upper caravan line along the coast, which turned eastward through the rich plain of Esdraelon, skirting Gilboa and Little Hermon, and then passing down to the fords of the Jordan. During the rule of the Judges, Israel suffered much from the Philistines. As already noticed, Samuel had checked their depredations for a season by his victory at Mizpeh. But the truce was more apparent than real. A struggle to the death between two nationalities of such vigor was inevitable. So Rome and the Etruscan Veii must battle until, after three and a half

¹ Wellhausen states the case almost too strongly when he says of Saul, "He recognized as belonging to him no other public function besides that of war; the internal affairs of the kingdom he permitted to remain as they had been before his accession."—"History of Israel," p. 450.

² "Saul and David made out of the Hebrew tribes a real people in the political sense."—Wellhausen, "History of Israel," p. 413.

¹ I. Samuel x, 25.

centuries of warfare, the Etruscan stronghold is blotted from existence. So Rome and Carthage, though separated by the breadth of the Mediterranean, lock arms till Carthage falls. In the logic of events it must be the same with Philistia and Israel. Neither can be content till its rival yields. For the time the odds seemed in favor of Philistia. It had the higher civilization, which commonly overshadows the lower civilization at its side. Though Israel enjoyed the purer faith, Gaza and Askelon were more advanced in the industrial and mechanical arts. The Philistines wove fine cloths, those of Gaza being especially famous. Their smiths fashioned all manner of tools and weapons of war, as well as equipments for the soldiery. Their artisans were busied in various crafts, which the luxurious life of the townspeople easily supported. In Israel, on the contrary, such occupations dwindled, as each household arranged to supply its own simple needs. And Philistia had good reason for self-gratulation when she compared her established military organization with the feebler military system of the scattered tribes. Her soldiers were trained and equipped for regular service in the field, while Israel's fighters were minute-men, armed as chance permitted, and helpless in the plains against Philistia's horsemen and terrible war chariots.

Upon the accession of Saul, the incursions of the Philistines into Israelitish territory became more frequent and formidable. They appear to have made no attempt at permanent occupation of the country, their policy being to intimidate and overawe a hill people for whom they cherished a hearty contempt. At harvest time they dispatched foraging parties, who carried off the grain from the fields,¹ or, falling upon a village, seized the people to sell them as slaves,² or, taking possession of commanding points established posts³ from which to send out predatory bands at pleasure. Such garrisons are mentioned as stationed at Gibeah of Saul, about three miles north of the hill of Jebus, which was afterward the site of Jerusalem; and at Geba and Michmash, which face each other as they overlook the intervening "Valley of the Acacias"—the Wady-es-Suweinit—in the hill country of Benjamin.

Concerning the first ten or fifteen years following the confirmation of Saul at Gilgal, the sacred historian is strangely silent, evidently constructing his narrative with an eye to the approaching prominence of David. Still, from incidental references it is apparent that the terrorizing policy of Philistia was pursued with relentless vigor. By a refinement of statecraft they had seized the workers in metals and de-

ported them to their own towns as slaves, thus disarming the nation¹ and compelling the farmer to pay tribute to their cities for the repair of his tools. Wellhausen is inclined to question this statement, regarding it as an unhistorical exaggeration;² but from what has been noticed, such a measure harmonizes with the general policy of the Philistine kings, while the Biblical statement is as explicit as language can make it. Meanwhile the periodical forays were conducted on an enlarging scale, till, at the mere rumor of a plundering expedition in force, the inhabitants of whole districts would desert their homes for the fastnesses of the hillside, or seek a place of safety across the Jordan.³

Having borne such outrages till patience had lost its virtue, Saul resolves to make a bold stand for his country's life. Hastily enlisting 3,000 fighting men, he stations 2,000 along the heights from Bethel to Michmash, thus controlling the upper caravan road, from which an attack might first be expected, and 1,000 at Gibeah of Saul, the home town, under command of Jonathan, who has grown to manhood and is the idol of his father's heart.

This young prince, whom the rising spirit of independence introduces to the narrative, is one of the most engaging figures of Old Testament story. As with Joseph, every representation of the sacred historian is to his advantage. Faithful as a son through every vicissitude, loyal as a friend to the point of sacrifice, brave in battle, dashing in action and winsome in companionship, we cannot wonder that he was idolized by the nation, and that, meeting the son of Jesse, the two were mated evermore.

"Great souls by instinct to each other turn,
Demand alliance and in friendship burn."⁴

The king in disposing his forces in such a manner as to place himself nearest the enemy, who must come up by the way of Bethel, and, by making Jonathan's band a sort of home guard for Gibeah, apparently intended to keep his son well out of danger while he was growing into the discipline of a soldier; but, if so, his plans miscarried. For hardly is Jonathan installed over his thousand, when his resistless valor drives him to strike the first blow of the war.

On the verge of the wady through which runs the main road from the coast to the Jordan valley, right across from Michmash, stands Geba, about an hour and a quarter to the

¹ I. Samuel xiii, 19.

² "But the assertion that they had confiscated all weapons and removed all smiths, may be regarded as an unhistorical exaggeration."—Wellhausen, "History of Israel," p. 448.

³ I. Samuel xiii, 6, 7.

⁴ "The Campaign," Addison.

¹ I. Samuel xxiii, 1.

² Amos i, 6.

³ I. Samuel xiii, 17, 18.

north¹ of the point where Jonathan was stationed, a town set apart for the priests when not in service in the Sanctuary, and a point of strategic importance. With an eye to this fact, the Philistines had made it one of their principal settlements, and had stationed here a tribute collector and a garrison. By a sudden assault, Jonathan overpowers the place and puts to death the officer in charge.² It is an act of high daring, and Saul, recognizing that the Philistines will accept it as a challenge for retaliation, sounds the war horn, summoning all Israel to defend their homes against the invader. Under counsel of Samuel, he names the ancient shrine of Gilgal, the place where he had been confirmed in his kingdom, as the rendezvous for the army of resistance. Thither, after seven days, Samuel is to come to meet the king, and Saul is directed to await his arrival before taking any important step.

For their part the Philistines are not idle, but promptly assemble an immense force, and come crowding up the difficult passes from the plain, drafting into their ranks such Israelites as they have captured on the way; and so move down the valley of Michmash with 6,000 horsemen, 300 war chariots, and a multitude of infantrymen, whose numbers the Scripture likens to the sand on the seashore, and set their camp to the eastward of Beth-aven, placing their advance outpost on the naturally fortified heights of Mishmash.

The approach of this mighty host fills the Hebrews with consternation. How shall these shepherds and farmers cope with this avalanche of disciplined soldiers? In the hopelessness of their cause the people scatter to hiding places in cisterns and grain pits, some not halting till they come to refuge in Gilead and Gad, beyond the Jordan. The general panic interferes with the recruiting at Gilgal. Reports arrive from the hills to the effect that the Philistines are sending out reconnoitering parties, preparatory to an advance. The souls of the people sink with terror, and some of the earlier recruits slip away from their places in the ranks. Saul, as military commander, feels that prompt action is necessary to forestall the complete demoralization of his army. But before he can begin operations, the sacrifices must be offered without which no nation of antiquity ventured into an engagement. The king remembers Samuel's explicit direction to tarry the seven days at the rendezvous, and yet his impatient spirit chafes at the delay. As day succeeds day

¹ "Geba is only about an hour and a quarter north of Gibeah."—Edersheim, "Bible History," IV, p. 64. "Ramah and Gibeah were on the south, at short distances behind Geba."—Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 98.

² Ewald, Wellhausen, and Kuenen read "governor" or "officer," instead of "garrison," in I. Samuel xiii, 3.

he presently asks himself if he shall order the sacrifices, or await the coming of the prophet.

While balancing this question of submission to the divine law, Saul is under trial of his faith, and stands at the crisis of his life. Gideon, who trusted in the God of his fathers, could dismiss thrice ten thousand warriors from his camp and yet eagerly smite the Midianites with only his valiant 300. If Saul leans on Jehovah of Hosts, what matter it whether those against him be many or few? But, the worse for himself, for some reason he has been chafing against control from the Sanctuary, and his headlong will now urges him to the extreme of bidding the priests begin the rites. Such a step, however, means nothing less than casting off the influence of Samuel, and repudiating the authority of the Tabernacle. It will be resistance to the divine command, and consequently a practical defection from God.

That Saul is conscious of grave error, though, like most sinners, he will not look his wrongdoing in the face, is apparent from his hesitation till the last day of the seven; when, at his word, the bullocks are slain, and the smoke of the burnt offering drifts over the camp. Hardly has this breach of the divine law been committed, when the prophet comes with sharp rebuke. Before the peace offerings are presented at the altar he sternly asks, "What hast thou done?" Stricken with a vague alarm the king stammers out his excuses, but they are of no avail. He has set his will against the will of God; as King of Israel defying the King of Kings. He has disobeyed the law. "In that indifference to law,"¹ so Maurice remarks wisely, "lay the seeds of arbitrary government, the pretensions of an aristocrat." Still more, he has violated the tacit covenant, which had made him ruler under the theocracy. In the act he has separated himself from God, and so from the kingdom. At once the prophet pronounces judgment. Saul's kingdom shall not continue, and God will seek another, one more after his own heart, and appoint him prince over Israel. With such parting condemnation, Samuel withdraws from the camp, leaving the chagrined and remorseful king to enjoy his new-found independence as best he can.

After this open breach with Samuel, Saul cannot remain in Gilgal. The rage of emotion must have vent in action, and he hastens up the steep valley, following the by-paths, and joins Jonathan, who from his station at Geba² is watching the foe. On numbering their fighting men the leaders find that they have but 600, though these are doubtless the bravest of all who had followed them. But the

¹ "Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament," p. 27.

² So the Revision, following the Hebrew.

prospect of repelling the invasion with such a remnant is so hopeless, that the king and the prince royal, as they stand on a jutting crag and watch the gathering banners of the foe on the hillside across the valley, lift up their voices in an outburst of oriental lamentation.¹

But dark as the hour might seem, God had not deserted his inheritance, and he now reaches out his hand in one of those mysterious interpositions, of which the history of the chosen people furnishes so many examples. The army of the Philistines lies on the ridge of the watershed, and along the upper part of the wady which falls toward Jericho. It is overpowering in numbers, but its strength ultimately appears to be its weakness. If such a multitude might seem to be of advantage on the open plain, here in the mountain defiles, and along the raggedness of the torrent beds, the greater the forces, so much greater the chances of confusion in action. And the nature of the host, composed as it is of regular troops, of mercenaries hired from the wilderness tribes, of Israelites who have been impressed into service in the last few days, and of slaves who could have no keen sense of loyalty to Philistia, forbids anything like unity of feeling or enthusiasm of purpose. Then, also, the consciousness of power and the confidence in the protection for the front afforded by the strong fortress of Michmash lead to a sense of security all the more disastrous, when for any reason it proves ill-founded.

The position of the garrison at Michmash might well occasion confidence, as it is most favorable for defense. The traveler can still trace, on the northern side of the wady, the three mounds and the tongue of land which Josephus identifies as the outpost of the Philistines. The cliff falls sheer and precipitous to the defile below, which, while broader to the east, here contracts to a narrow gorge. Across the deep ravine and on the heights beyond appears the site of Geba, the post of Jonathan; but though no more than an hour away as the crow flies, the almost perpendicular walls of the wady forbid all communication, except by a circuitous route of many miles. Mr. Harper, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, has recently visited the spot, and reports the cliff of Michmash, while apparently inaccessible, not absolutely impassable to enthusiastic intrepidity.²

In his earnest hope to save his country, Jonathan ponders a plan for scaling this cliff and surprising the fortress. From all human prevision the project is immeasurably foolhardy,

¹ I. Samuel xiii, 16, Septuagint. ² "It must have required a cool head and steady nerve to climb this cliff. To look at it now, it seems impossible, but it has been done by Major Conder and the survey party."—*"The Bible and Modern Discoveries,"* p. 277.

but the prince believes that it is of the Lord. To forestall any chance of opposition he confides in no one aside from his armor-bearer, who is to accompany him. Having made his preparation, he gives his mind to action, feeling, doubtless, as Bacon has wisely observed, "In meditation all dangers should be seen, in execution none, unless very formidable." In the darkness of the night he creeps down the south wall of the wady, crosses the interval at the bottom, threading his way through the inextricable maze of mounds and hummocks, impassable except to those perfectly familiar with the place; and, having reached the farther side, creeps cautiously up the rocky wall, where a single misstep would prove fatal. He times his perilous enterprise so well that he arrives on the plateau just as the day is breaking.¹ The sentinel on guard is unsuspecting of assault. Thinking the intruder to be one of the Hebrew fugitives who has grown weary of hiding, he gives the merry challenge for him to come up, where he will show him a sight. Accepting this as confirmation that his enterprise is of the Lord, Jonathan hastens to the summit, followed closely by his armor-bearer. Once at the top, he plies his darts and his dreaded Benjamite sling with such impetuous ardor that twenty of the defenders fall. Edersheim accounts for Jonathan's success by supposing the conflict to have occurred on a narrow ridge, where the Philistines were compelled to meet him in single file.² In any case, however, there is no resisting the force of his onset. The survivors flee in terror, and as their fear spreads to others a great tumult arises. Soon one of these inexplicable panics, like that which befell the army of Sennacherib before Samaria, and the other which kept all London under arms through the terrible Irish Night, after the flight of James II.,³ strikes the host, and in a moment it is wild with the madness of unthinking terror. Each man dreads he knows not what, and strikes he knows not whom. The path up the hills becomes a scene of inextricable confusion, the Philistines turning their arms against themselves. The drafted Israelites, seeing that their moment of vengeance has come, smite their oppressors. Saul, from across the wady, hears the clamor and leads his troops in hot pursuit. The men of Ephraim pour down from their pasture lands, and, taking position on the heights, hurl javelins and rocks upon the heads of the retreating horde. The battle becomes a flight, and the flight a rout. The struggle of pursuers and pursued sweeps on past Beth-aven, down the western valley, until by nightfall the enemy has been driven some twenty

¹ Josephus, VI, vi, 3.

² Edersheim, "Bible History," IV, p. 66.

³ Macaulay, England, I, x, p. 604.

miles, and taken refuge, after great slaughter, behind the gates of Ajalon.

It is a great victory for Israel, and has nothing to mar its triumph except the rash imprecation of Saul, who had invoked a curse upon any who should eat food that day, and which comes so near to costing the life of his son. In the eventide, after the people, who had been fasting all day, had slaughtered sheep, oxen, and calves, and, hastily cooking the flesh, had eaten and been refreshed, Saul was hot to resume the pursuit of the foe. But on inquiring of the Lord, there was no response. At once Saul summons the people to a lot, to discover where sin had been that day, and vowing that, though it were with himself or with his son, the guilty one must die. As the lot was cast the people escape, and Saul and Jonathan are taken. The king demands a perfect lot between the two, and now Jonathan is taken. Saul demands of Jonathan to confess, and he admits, while he was hurrying in the chase, that he had dipped the tip of his rod in some wild honey, and had touched it to his tongue. For this light offense Saul would have fulfilled his impetuous oath, and have ordered the prince to death. But the people do not forget the hero of the day, and interpose to prevent the execution of the royal decree. So Jonathan is spared, doubtless to Saul's intense relief. As to the Philistines, their disaster and defeat is so overwhelming that many years pass be-

fore they venture upon another invasion of Israelitish soil.

To Saul the unexpected turn of fortune brings great revulsion of feeling. He has been thrust into the pit of despair, but the one day has freed his country from the yoke of vassalage, and restored his self-confidence. True, he is parted from Samuel, and has made such rupture with Ahijah, the high priest, whom he brought from the Sanctuary at Nob, that there is no more inquiring at the Ark¹ for the rest of his reign. But why should he mourn for the priest more than for the prophet; or why should he trouble himself for either when victory crowns his standard? At once he assumes more of the authority of a king,² and sets up the nucleus of a standing army, with its officers and captains. He places the host, the great body of the tribal militia under command of his kinsman Abner, believing that this cousin was related near enough to himself to insure his loyalty, and yet not so near as to imperil the royal succession by misuse of his high dignities. With this force he engages in a series of sharp campaigns, in the course of which he humbles the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Idumeans, and the Syrians of Zobah, whose little principality to the north had become too aggressive. Everywhere that he leads, success crowns his standards, and the nations are smitten with fear at this redoubtable king and the rising glory of his arms.

CHAPTER III.

THE WANING STAR OF SAUL.

SAUL'S most important movement at this period of his power, and the one involving the most far-reaching consequences, is his expedition against the Amalekites. In its military aspect it is completely successful, and yet it is also his ruin, because of his continued disobedience to God. The Amalekites were a desert race, occupying the region of Arabia Petra. They roved, with their flocks and herds, from the Sinaitic wilderness to Canaan, in which, from the names which have lingered for ages, it seems that they must at one time have had strong foothold. They opposed the march from Egypt, and Joshua was despatched against them and fought them all day long, while Moses watched the varying battle from the cliff of Horeb. Notwithstanding this defeat, they persisted in their depredations, giving the tribes no respite from their guerrilla assaults. Just before the crossing into the Promised Land, in union with the Canaanites, they inflicted a severe repulse on Israel at Hormah. The people of God had no more

bitter or inveterate foe than these Bedouin marauders, who must at last have been perpetrating acts of aggravating atrocity beyond what appears in the record; for Moses had made vow of unceasing war³ with Amalek. There is also allusion to the enmity of this nation in Deuteronomy,⁴ where Israel is bidden, when it has secured its rest in the Lord's land, to blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

Toward the last days of Samuel¹—the history furnishes no clue for accuracy in date—it appears that the tribe had renewed hostilities, this time from the south, in the territory of Judea. Roused by tidings of the bloody deeds of the Amalekite king, the aged prophet emerges from his retreat at Ramah, and calls upon Saul to recognize his heritage of vengeance against the ancient enemy, and bidding him to make Amalek a *Cherem*,⁵ an object de-

¹ I. Chronicles xiii, 3.
² "So Saul took the kingdom."
³ — I. Samuel xiv, 47.
⁴ Deuteronomy xxv, 19.

² "So Saul took the kingdom."
³ Exodus xvii, 14-16.
⁵ I. Samuel xv, 3.

voted to utter destruction. That Saul may not mistake his meaning, the prophet specifies that he slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. Nothing of Amalek that breathed was to be left alive.

The king accepts the commission and quickly gathers an army of over 200,000 fighting men, 10,000 of them being men of Judea, who from this time forth begin to appear more prominently in the national life.¹ With this enthusiastic army he makes a forced march to the principal city of his adversary, no trace of which now remains. Here he lies in wait in a convenient valley, while he performs an act of gratitude to the Kenites. Remembering their former kindnesses to Israel, he bids them to withdraw from the Amalekites, with whom their nomadic habits had brought them into association. When the Kenites are well away, he rises upon his foe with such swift attack as to forbid successful resistance. The Amalekites are completely overthrown; their Agag,² or king, falls into the hands of Saul, and the fleeing remnant of their command is hotly pursued to the Isthmus of Suez, on the way toward Egypt.

The booty that falls to the lot of Israel in flocks and herds is immense, and rouses another conflict in the heart of Saul. He desires to commemorate his signal victory with suitable memorials, and would have some trophies to display on his return to the home cities. Shall he execute the command of "Devotion," slaying the Agag, and destroying all this wealth of oxen, and cattle, and sheep; or, may he not preserve them, under pretext of offering them to the Lord? Like another who asks, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?" he prefers his own will to that of God. So he returns from his expedition, setting up a trophy on the way at Carmel, a city in the mountains of Judea, and goes on to Gilgal with his wealth of spoil, willing, like many another sinner, to offer a little to God, if so he may palliate his holding the lion's share for his own uses.

But this breach of the divine command is more flagrant than the other, when the king failed to await the prophet's coming before kindling the sacrifice. In Ramah, Samuel has a vision in the night season. Once more God declares that Saul has turned away from his commandment, and has forfeited the sovereignty. The prophet cries in supplicating pro-

test all the night, but the judgment stands. This king is perverse in his disobedience, and God must withdraw from him. Bearing this direful message, Samuel visits Saul at Gilgal, where the king is already making the altars smoke with the offerings of cattle that should never have left the desert. Arriving, Samuel utters his stern command, "What meaneth this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen, which I hear?" The king explains that the people are sacrificing the best of the sheep and the oxen to Samuel's God, and that the rest he has utterly destroyed. It is a vain excuse. The favor of God cannot be so easily purchased. As the prophet declares, "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." The king's sin is great; his perversity, beyond remedy. Samuel rends away the veil of pretexts with which Saul has covered his frowardness. His rebellion against God is as iniquitous as divination, and his stubbornness as base as though he had bowed the knee to teraphim and to the idols of the heathen. This time there can be no reprieve, and the kingdom must pass from a hand so unworthy.

At this word there follows one of the most dramatic scenes in history. The king, humiliated, pleads with the prophet, confessing his sin, and virtually beseeching yet another trial. But Samuel turns away. To detain him the king catches hold of the skirt of his robe, but there is no yielding, and the robe is rent in his hand. It is a prophecy, which Samuel interprets. God has rent the kingdom from Saul and given it to one near him, who is a better man than he. For a king the circumstance is immeasurably painful. If the prophet retires in this mood, Saul is dishonored publicly before his people. Will not Samuel tarry at least till the king has prostrated himself in worship, and so do him some honor in the sight of his lords and retainers? To this Samuel consents. But when Saul's devotions are concluded, Samuel calls for the Agag to be brought to the altar, and there saves the nation from responsibility for the violated vow by hewing the captive to pieces with his own hand. It is a terrible retribution, one which seems unnecessary to our modern sensibilities, cultured as they have been under the sweet teachings of the Gospel, and yet it was quite in keeping with the rude justice of the time. Having given this practical rebuke for the king's disregard of the *Cherem*, for the second time Samuel leaves Saul in Gilgal; and, though he continues to mourn for the man he once anointed, he comes to his presence no more.

And now a dark change settles down upon the fortunes of Saul. The campaign against Amalek marks the summit of his renown.

¹ "Through Saul, Judea entered definitely into the history of Israel; it belonged to his kingdom, and it, more than most others, supplied him with energetic and faithful supporters."—Wellhausen, "History of Israel," p. 451.

² Agag was a common title of the Amalekite kings. See Hengstenberg, "Pentateuch," II, p. 307. Compare the Aga, the commander of the Janizaries, and also Pharaoh, Kaiser, and Tsar.

Other victories crown the arms of the nation, but the people sing the praises of other chiefs. He has braved the King of Kings, and his soul is clouded with distrust, which soon passes into a brooding melancholy. The kingdom is to be intrusted to another, and he questions within himself who that other may be. He knows nothing of Samuel's going down to Bethlehem and of his secret anointing of the lad David, the youngest son of Jesse, but he realizes that the parting word of the prophet was no idle threat. He is conscious that the ban of God has fallen. Daily he grows more querulous, and subject to fits of brooding sadness, in which he becomes suspicious of his most loyal servants, and doubts the fidelity of his truest friends. The Bible represents his condition as the product of his folly, for the occasion of his trouble is "an evil spirit from the Lord."¹

The courtiers are distressed at their king's sorrow, and suggest that he try the soothing effect of music to distract his mind from care. The proposition was wise. Others who have experienced this strain of melancholy have been relieved, like Luther, by playing on the flute, or, like Abraham Lincoln, by resolutely turning the mind into another channel. When Boswell once remarked to Doctor Johnson that he might rid himself of disturbing thoughts by thinking them down, the grim philosopher replied, "To attempt to think them down is madness."² His specific was rather a book, or a course in chemistry, or even a course in rope dancing. It is said that Philip V. of Spain was cured of a mental disorder by the repeated playing of a skilled musician. And so search is made for a harper, and the one whose fame has already reached the farthest for "cunning in playing" is the young shepherd of Bethlehem. The list of his virtues as reported to the king shows that already, though scarcely more than in his eighteenth or nineteenth year, he betrays the marks of future greatness. For besides his skill in music and his beauty of person, he is described as a mighty man of valor, a man of war, and prudent in business.³ With that urgency of the oriental rule which regards the will of the throne as overriding all private concerns, the messenger is dispatched with peremptory summons for Jesse to send David, his son, who was with the sheep.

Taking his gift in hand, without which no one ventures before an oriental despot, David presents himself to Saul at Gibeah. We are to think of him at this time as a young lad, on the verge of manhood, ruddy, and of frank and open countenance. He has already fought with wild beasts in close encounter; when, as

with Samson, the Lord was with him so manifestly as to give him a profound sense of the divine watchcare, as well as renown with the people. But most of all, his communion with nature had stimulated his natural feeling, and had given him that appreciation of beauty in thought and expression which characterizes the poet, who is born, not made. Before this time he has written some of those sublime compositions, which, in the Psalter, are the vehicle for the raptest devotion and the utterance of the most exalted aspiration of the ages.

His music, as he stands playing before the king, is the blended song of the psalm and the rhythm of the harp in sweet accompaniment. It is a touching sight—the gloomy king sitting sunken in morbid fancies, and the bright youth, whose fortunes henceforth are to be so inextricably interwoven with those of Saul, touching his harp, and singing, possibly,¹

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters;"—

or,

"O Lord, my God, in thee do I put my trust:
Save me from all them that pursue me, and deliver
me:
Lest he tear my soul like a lion,
Rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver."

At the sound of that fresh young voice, breathing out the accents of such confident trust in God, the smile returns to the king's face, and cheer to his heart. It soon appears that the singer is a necessity in the court, and David is established as court minstrel, being summoned from Bethlehem at each recurrence of Saul's malady to charm away the madness.

But once more the blast of the war horn is heard in the land, for the Philistines are pressing up the hill passes, and presently take the field with a strong force, marching up the Wady of Elah, or "The Terebinth," and camping at a place called Ephes Dammin—"The End of Bloodshed." At this point the plain, which to the east and west is almost a mile between the hills, narrows by the jutting out of rounded knobs or crags from the northern side to a space of about a quarter of a mile in breadth, while through the plain runs a deep channel cut by the winter torrents, which Major Conder describes as of some twenty feet wide, and about twelve feet deep, its sides strewn with pebbles rounded by the action of primeval waters.

The Philistines post themselves on the hills to the south, while Saul takes position with his regular force of 3,000, and such volunteers as he can muster, on the crags to the north of

¹ I. Samuel xvi, 14. ² Boswell's "Johnson," p. 277.

³ I. Samuel xvi, 18, Revision in margin.

¹ The Seventh and Twenty-third Psalms are among those assigned by critics to the earliest period of David's music.

the valley. Here, though the hostile armies face each other across the plain, there is constant provocation on the part of the enemy, but no fighting. The Philistines have put forward a champion, Goliath by name, a descendant of the old Anakim, whose reputation had filled the Israelites with such superstitious terror. This giant advances daily, uttering taunts of cowardice, and challenging the command of Saul to provide a champion to meet him in single combat, and so settle the issues of the war. Tradition has preserved the story of the completeness of his martial array — his gleaming helmet; his coat of mail, as heavy of itself as a common man; his brazen greaves, protecting his massive legs, and his mighty shield, carried by his esquire, or armor-bearer. His spear was like a weaver's beam, and the iron head upon it, a mass of metal weighing from seventeen to eighteen pounds. Crossing the torrent bed, and coming over the plain to the foot of the hills below the camp of Saul, he abuses the Hebrews, covering them and their parents with the coarsest insults. He boasts of his own deeds of prowess, asserting that he was the slayer of Hophni and Phineas, the two sons of Eli, and that his hand had captured the Sacred Ark.¹

The sight of the man fills the camp of Saul with dismay. The king offers princely rewards to anyone who will engage and slay the giant — freedom from military duty, exemption from taxation, great riches and one of his daughters for a wife — but the bravest of the host shrink from the encounter as courting inevitable death. And so the days glide on into weeks, with the daily challenge, and the deepening sense of humiliating helplessness burdening the heart of Saul.

While affairs are at this pass, Jesse sends David to the camp with food for his three elder brothers, who are among the soldiers. On arriving at the wagons, which are drawn up about the outer line as a barricade, he hears the war cry; and, leaving his provisions with the keeper of the wagon train, hurries to the front. There he hears the challenge of the champion, learns of the dread which he has inspired, and makes the quick decision to offer himself as the defender of the honor of Israel. The scoffs of Eliab, his elder brother, do not alter this determination. He knows his own weakness, but he trusts in God, who had delivered him from the lion and the bear, to deliver him out of the hand of the Philistine.

Saul offers him his own armor, but he wisely trusts rather to the weapons to which he has been used from childhood, and to the God of battles. The soldiers from the hilltop watch

him anxiously as he descends to the plain, clad in his simple shepherd's garb, and armed only with his staff and his trusty sling. The Philistine was returning to his camp, and, having crossed the gully, was advancing over the level ground to the south, when the lad, who had descended into the torrent bed, and had chosen five smooth stones from the bank where they abound, comes up behind him, attracting his attention by shouts of defiance. The giant, glancing about and observing his insignificant adversary, disdains to compete with a child, who comes armed with a shepherd's stick, as if to fight with a dog, and reviles David by his gods.

Indeed, to all human seeming, it was a posterously one-sided combat. Everything promised victory to the Philistine — his overmastering muscular force, his military discipline and his long experience in war. And yet David's confidence was not ill-grounded. In ancient warfare the sling was a formidable weapon, and the men of Benjamin were so trained from childhood, as to sling stones at an hair's breadth and not miss;¹ and David, who had used the weapon first as a toy, and afterward as a defense from the wild beast, was as expert as they. With his sling he could fight at long range, while his adversary must be out of action till he could close with his lighter antagonist; and this the youth's superior agility could altogether forbid.

Confiding thus in himself and in the God of Israel, the lad runs swiftly toward his foe, meanwhile fitting a stone to the sling. Still running, as the giant turns to come to closer action, he hurls the missile, which, grazing the edge of Goliath's helmet, smites him full in the forehead, and fells him, stunned, to the ground. Seizing the ponderous sword of his victim, David strikes off the champion's head.

Overcome with terror at this unexpected catastrophe, the bands of the Philistines flee in disorder, Saul pursuing them with great slaughter to the fenced cities of Ekron and Gath. Josephus, summing up the loss of the enemy on this eventful day, puts it as 30,000 killed, with double that number wounded.²

The Septuagint Bible has a psalm at the end of the Psalter, which David may have composed at this time. It purports to be of his own writing, and outside the number; when he fought the single combat with Goliath.

"I was small among my brethren, and the youngest in my father's house.

I was feeding my father's sheep.

My hands made a harp, and my fingers fitted a psaltery.

And who shall tell it to my Lord?

He is the Lord, he heareth.

¹ Judges xx, 16.

² Josephus, "Antiquities," VI, ix, 5.

¹ Chaldee Targum on I. Samuel iv, 11.

He sent his messenger, and took me from my father's flocks, and anointed me with the oil of his anointing.

My brethren were beautiful and tall, but the Lord was not well pleased with them.

I went out to meet the Philistine, and he cursed me by his idols;

But I drew his own sword and beheaded him, and took away the reproach from the children of Israel."

If fortunate for Israel, the killing of Goliath was no less fortunate for David, as it elevated him at a bound as the national hero. He had freed his country from a dreaded foe, and had also attempted the impossible with splendid courage, and had succeeded triumphantly. At once he is received into the tent of Saul, where Jonathan, who is now returned, embraces him. Taking off his own mantle, sword and girdle, the generous-hearted prince presents them with his bow to David as a mark of special favor. From that instant there sprang up the most delightful companionship between Jonathan and the young man, whom Saul first made armor-bearer, and soon captain of a thousand, and then commander of his body-guard. Both were true hearted, noble in spirit, and young. They were sufficiently unlike, so that each could help the other, and yet they were like enough to love. In all the vicissitudes that followed, their compact of friendship held sacredly. Even when Jonathan finally realized that David must ultimately take his place as successor of Saul, he does not alter his allegiance to his friend. Renan has said, referring to John the Baptist, that "Youth is capable of any sacrifice," but here much more than youth was involved. It was a question between a throne and a soul's honor, and it will be remembered to Jonathan's favor that he held his pledge to David inviolate. In the beautiful words of Scripture, "And it came to pass . . . that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."¹

The great victory, however, does not relieve the mind of Saul, but rather gives him fresh occasion for suspicions and forebodings. He cannot make allowance for the enthusiasms of the triumph, and, when the women at the villages meet the returning soldiers with the joyful shout, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," he is consumed with burning jealousy. At last he has found the man, who may grow into a possible rival. For a season he conceals the bitterness of his envy and seats David at his own table. He grants him many kindnesses, and, when the darker mood strikes him, suffers the minstrel to take his harp and drive the shadows from his brow as before with a song. But Saul's madness eats its way into his heart like smothered fire, to

burst forth presently in raging fury. Fingering his javelin one day as David is singing, he suddenly lifts it for a cast, to pin the harper to the wall. By a quick turn David escapes the thrust, and at once leaves the place.

The open assault failing, the king in his gloomy hatred lays hidden schemes to ensnare his servant, whose chief offense is that he has grown too popular. He promises him Merab, his daughter, to wife; but in the hope that he may be slain in the venture, he demands as dowry proofs that he has slain an hundred Philistines, setting for the matter a narrow time limit. Not hesitating more than Jacob to win his bride a second time, he sallies forth with his men, to return before the expiration of the time with double the number required. On claiming the princess, David learns that Saul has treacherously married her to another, no doubt with the design of stirring up strife between the men, and so disposing of David indirectly. However the young courtier may feel respecting the breach of royal honor, he is wise enough to hold his peace, and soon Saul in a manner redeems his pledge by giving him Michal, a younger daughter, who from the moment that David came to Gibeah from the battle has been passionately enamored with him.

Married to Michal, who proves a most devoted wife, and with Jonathan to watch for his interests with faithful eye, he baffles all the plots that are laid against him. Then once more the wrath of Saul, all the more desperate because so often defeated, bursts forth in open violence. This time the javelin, hurled with all the force of the royal hand, barely grazes its intended mark, and stands quivering in the wall, while David slips away to his house on the battlements.

There Michal brings him tidings that the king is fixed in purpose to kill him, as watchers have been set before the house, with orders to slay him as he comes forth in the morning. Perceiving that he can no longer trust himself at the court, he resolves to escape; and so, like the Apostle of the Gentiles at Damascus, he is let down over the wall by night, and hastens away to Samuel at Ramah.

When Saul learns that he is at Ramah, he sends men to apprehend him, without regard for the sacredness of the ancient Sanctuary. But they also are prevented from doing the fugitive harm, for when they approach the town and hear the song of the prophets, they join in the chant and forget the king's commission. After having dispatched a second, then a third band, to whom the same thing occurs, Saul takes the affair into his own hands. But on coming to the cluster of huts, where the young prophets are housed, the

¹I. Samuel xviii, 1.

spirit of God descends upon him. He, too, forgets his bloody errand and joins in the weird chant before Samuel. In his frenzied excitement, he tears off his outer robe, and ends by falling into a trance, in which state he lies through the day and the night following; and so, for a second time, Saul is found among the prophets.

After his recovery the king returns to Gibeah, balked of his prey, and seemingly in a quieter mood; but David is convinced that, unless Saul be really his friend, he must not imperil the safety of the prophets by bidding under their protection. He, therefore, makes a secret visit to Jonathan, who is only too willing to engage to fathom his father's purpose.

In this the prince royal has not long to wait, for Saul's furious disposition soon unmasks itself. A solemn religious feast was held on the day of the new moon, at which all the

king's household were expected to be present. On assembling, Saul marks the absence of David, and passes it in silence. The second day, the place being still vacant, Saul makes inquiry for the captain of his guard; and when Jonathan offers excuse for his friend the king breaks out into the wildest invective against the prince. He declares his son to be in conspiracy against him, and lifting his javelin hurls it at him with all his force. Barely escaping the missile, Jonathan hastens from the board, and meets his friend at their trysting place, near the pile of stones that went by the name of Esel. Here the two mingle their tears and vows, pledging each other once more their fealty in the name of the Lord, for themselves and their children forever. And so they part, friends still, whatever their fortunes; and holding each other, though separate, in the tenderest remembrance.

CHAPTER IV.

SAUL'S LATER YEARS AND DEATH.

YEARS now pass while David lives in a condition of outlawry. As he has no refuge in Israel, he first finds protection with Achish, king of Gath; having previously visited the Tabernacle at Nob and secured the sword of Goliath, which had been placed there as a trophy. But when the attendants of Achish discover his identity, he finds that his life is again in peril. Remembering, however, the superstitious veneration of the Oriental for the deranged, which, strangely enough, is shared by the North American Indian, he feigns madness, and so makes his home for a time among his former enemies.

On learning at length that he has friends about his old home, he returns to Judea, and conceals himself in the Cave of Adullam, in the limestone region near Bethlehem. Here he is joined by his family, and by others who, like himself, fear Saul. Among these are the three sons of Zeruah, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, men of might, who are to become famous captains in David's long series of wars.

At the head of such a body of fierce and determined men it was easy to maintain himself by forays on the Philistine crops and villages, and by the contributions of supplies which neighboring Israelites were glad to bring in return for protection from the common enemy. When, however, his band had grown too great, and the pursuit of Saul had become too hot for him to continue in these familiar haunts, he retired successively to the neighborhood of Engedi, that bright spot, which has remained in all its pristine freshness

on the desolate border of the Dead Sea; to the thicket of Hareth, in the hill country of Judea; and to the Wilderness of Ziph, which, some four miles below Hebron, though now bare and desolate, was then well wooded and offered a place of temporary refuge.

It was while David was at Adullam that we meet that beautiful incident of the well at Bethlehem. The time was the harvesting, and a body of Philistines was encamped in the Vale of the Giants. One day the chieftain expressed a wish for a draught of water from the well near the gate of his native village. This water was of such repute that later Solomon carried it by a conduit, constructed at immense expense, into his capital. Such was the devotion of his men that David's slightest wish was law. At the imminent risk of their lives, the three mightiest of the band, Abishai at the head, broke through the ranks of the enemy, and returned with the water which they had drawn.¹ But David could not take the draught won at such price, and, with magnanimity that was princely in its recognition of noble service, poured the precious water on the ground, as an offering to the Lord.

"With deep emotion David took
From their red hands the cup,
Cast on its stains a shuddering look,
And held it heavenward up.
'I prize your boon,' exclaimed the king,
'But dare not taste the draught you bring
'To heaven the glorious spoil is due,
And his the offering be,
Whose arm has borne you safely through
My brave, but reckless three!'"

¹ II. Samuel xxiii, 13-17; I. Chronicles xi, 15-22.

So Henry Francis Lyte sweetly relates the tale and makes it the allegory of another Bethlehem, and a well of living water, with no foe to bar the yearning soul.

"Oh, did we thirst as David then,
For this diviner spring,
Had we the zeal of David's men
To please a higher king,
What precious draughts we there might drain,
What holy triumphs daily gain."

Meanwhile the fury of Saul grows more relentless, as he has no minstrel hand to touch the harp, and as David still keeps beyond the reach of his arm. On learning that the fugitive had visited the High Priest Ahimelech, in the Tabernacle at Nob, and had received assistance, he summoned him and his priests, eighty-five in all, to Gibeah, where he charged them with conspiring against his kingdom. Their protests that they had known David as Saul's faithful servant were not accepted, and he bade his guardsmen slay them all. They were shocked at thought of such a monstrous deed and act of audacious sacrilege, and refused to touch the Lord's anointed. But Doeg, the Idumean hireling, who had no regard for the religious traditions of Israel, and scrupled at nothing in subservience to the king, drew his sword and, calling his men, cut them down. As if this were not sufficient to fill the measure of iniquity to the brim, he hastened to Nob, and there put to death every living thing—men, women, children, and cattle; thus in one fell swoop almost blotting the race of Ithamar from the face of the earth. Edersheim draws a parallel in his "Bible History" between the massacre at Nob, and that of the children at Bethlehem, Herod the Great having been, like Doeg, an Idumean by descent.¹ One only, Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, escapes to David bearing the sacred ephod. Thus through the dark sin of Saul, David is given a recognized priest, and henceforth possesses the dignity arising from opportunity to consult the Holy Oracle.

In this world evil works seldom go singly, and the slaughter of the priests at Nob impels the king to undertake another crime of malignant atrocity. He has broken with the priests as well as with the prophets, and yet he has prevailed on Zadok, the son of Ahitub, to serve as his priest, and so makes for him a Sanctuary. But no priest could serve at Nob after it had been defiled by such ruthless slaughter of his caste, and some other site must be provided. In this exigency Saul's mind turns to the Gibeonites, who were holding an eminence some three or four miles to the north of Nob. This people were Hivites, whose fathers had made a covenant with Israel at the time of the invasion

under Joshua. Regardless of this sacred compact, the king sends Doeg, his Red Right Hand, to clear the ground for the new Sanctuary by seizure of the lands of the Gibeonites and their allied villages, and with orders to put out of the way any attempting to resist the mandate. Like many another misdoing, it returned in the fullness of time to plague the inventor's posterity.¹

But all this while Saul is swift in his pursuit of David, whom he hunts, in the other's graphic phrase, "as one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." Nothing in history more forcibly illustrates the wretched blindness of ill-tempered hatred. The rancorous passion of Saul stands out all the more darkly because of the gentle loyalty and merciful magnanimity of David, who, repeatedly, when he holds the king's life in his hands, will not lift a finger against the Lord's anointed. Once, while Saul is following him in the region of Engedi, and the rocks are covered with the king's men, Saul enters a gloomy cave alone, where David and his men are hiding. The fugitive has the ruler of the nation at his mercy, and his men urge him to seize the providential opportunity to bring termination to his life of danger. But his heart cleaves to Saul, and he cannot act the part of a traitor. Silently he creeps up in the darkness and cuts off a bit of the king's mantle with his dagger as a witness that he has been more merciful than Saul. Presently, on Saul's retiring, he comes forth on the hillside, and, showing the piece of the king's skirt, bids Saul judge of his innocence of evil purpose, since he has not harmed him, when he was so wholly in his power. The king is touched by this evidence of generosity, of which he knows that he himself would have been incapable, and with tears he confesses that his son David is the more righteous man. Granting that the kingdom is to be established in the hand of his vassal, he begs him to swear not to cut off his children after him, or destroy his name from his father's house.²

If for a moment Saul's better nature triumphed, the rising fortunes of David, whose band is constantly augmenting, stir his jealousy afresh, and he again takes the field with a large force, which is under direct command of Abner. They follow David to the Negeb, the south country, and are there posted in a regular camp. Thither, in the dead of night, David enters with Abishai, and, stooping over the sleeping king, they carry away the heavy spear, which was always with him, and the cruse of water from his side, returning after their perilous exploit to the other side of the deep ravine. In the morning David calls to

¹ Edersheim, "Bible History," IV, p. 120.

¹ II. Samuel xxi. 1-5.

² I. Samuel xxiv.

Abner from the hilltop, a great way off, and reproaches him for not having guarded the king's person better, and once more shows Saul how he had held his lord's life precious. And so again Saul confesses his folly, and withdraws his army, promising to do his servant no harm.

From these incidents we read the simple sincerity of David's character as in an open book. He is to be king, for God has called him to the throne; but he will not hasten the moment of his accession by a single overt act. At any time he could have kindled the blaze of civil war, but he would not do such wrong to his king or to his Lord, and is content merely with protecting his life against secret plot and open violence. From first to last, though Saul pursues him with relentless fury, he is the loyal subject, his heart full of love to his sovereign. We feel that Browning fits the truth of David's purpose, when he makes him say, in *Saul*:

"See the king—I would help him but cannot, the
wishes fall through,
Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to
enrich,
To fill up his life, I would—knowing which
I know that my service is perfect."

While David is in the Wilderness of Ziph he has his last tender meeting with Jonathan, who comes to comfort him and to assure him that he will be king after Saul. With a generosity that we may name princely, though princes seldom possess the like, he is glad of the prospective elevation of his friend, and will be content to be next after him, whom he knows to be the stronger man.

Two other events mark this period; the death of the aged Samuel, for whom all Israel mourns, and who is buried as an especial honor within the limits of Ramah; and David's espousal of Abigail, widow of the rich Nabal. Though this marriage proves the rise of our fugitive's fortunes, it is also the beginning of many miseries, which are inseparable from the polygamous relation, even in countries where it has the sanction of established custom.

But now David's life takes on a new phase. He cannot remain on unfriendly terms with both Saul and the Philistines, or he will be ultimately crushed as between the upper and the nether millstones. Saul has discarded his friendship, and so he is driven to make terms with Achish, king of Gath, resolving in his inmost soul to do no harm to the king of Israel, whose authority he has always scrupulously acknowledged. Achish receives him kindly and assigns him a city—Ziglag, a border town to the south, on the edge of the desert. Hither he leads his band, now grown to 600 strong, and occupies himself in repelling the Amalekites and other pillagers, who have been making too free with the frontier villages of Judea.

For nearly a year and a half he pursues this life, when he is summoned to join the Philistines in a great movement on the territories of Saul. It is their plan to follow the caravan road northward, till it turns across the extensive plain of Esdraelon; for they realize that they can employ their war chariots to better advantage in the open country than in the tortuous defiles of the hills, where they have suffered so many disastrous defeats.

It is an indication of the shrewdness of David's character that his conduct at Ziglag has won the confidence of Achish so far that he offers him command of his bodyguard; but so fixed is his determination not to injure Saul, that, while he responds to the summons to join the Philistines, he keeps well to the rear of their army. It may have been his persistence in this course which aroused the suspicions of the lords of the Philistines. Recalling the fame of his former exploits while contending with them, they angrily demand of Achish that he send this ally of his away, lest he turn against them in the battle.

Receiving gladly his dismissal, which Achish was reluctant to give, he returns to Ziglag to find that his town has been plundered by a band of Amalekites, and that all the women and children have been captured and carried into the desert. The joy of the return is converted into lamentation, until Abiathar, the high priest, assures them from the Lord that the effort at rescue will be successful. No time is lost in organizing the pursuit. On the third day the marauders are overtaken, surprised and defeated. All the women, children, and cattle are recovered, and the vast possessions of the Amalekites fall into the hands of David. The store of booty is so great, after rewarding his own men for their valor, that David is still able to distribute rich presents to the towns which have been befriending him in his season of adversity.

Menawhile momentous events have been occurring in the north. On hearing of the preparations of the Philistines, Saul had hurriedly raised an army and taken a position to the east of the great plain, near Mount Gilboa. But his men have neither the equipment nor the discipline of the enemy, and the chances of battle are ominous. And yet, had the king in this crisis been valiant and confident, he might have taken the foe by surprise, and overcome him by the suddenness of the blow. But with Saul all the buoyancy of life is past. As the hour of conflict approaches, his spirit grows heavy, and he is as one whose cause is already lost. In his distress he calls upon God, whom he has defied; but God does not reply. There is no assurance by dream, by Urim, nor by voice of prophet. Having forfeited the bene-

fits of communion with God, as with others in like case, he has recourse to the arts of superstition.

To the north of Little Hermon, close by the place where the Philistines had stationed their camp, was the spring of Dor. Here dwelt a woman, a pretender to occult science, who braved the law by consulting with a familiar spirit, the penalty of which was death. In his later years Saul had enforced this law vigorously, and Jewish tradition accounts for the preservation of the woman amid the extermination of her kind, by representing her as the mother of Abner. There seems, however, no foundation for connecting Saul's chief captain with this feminine outlaw. Disguising himself, and accompanied by two of his servants, whom the tradition represents as Abner and Amasa, the king visits the woman in the dead of night. He pledges her that she shall suffer no harm and asks that she call up the shade of Samuel. Archbishop Trench has remarked on the depth of Saul's despair, who, when forsaken of God, "seeks to move hell, since heaven is inexorable to him."

In our ignorance of the unseen world we do best, in the dark transactions that follow, to accept the record as it stands. In the dim light of the narrow hut, assisted, perhaps, by a crude ventriloquism, the woman begins her incantations, and calls upon Samuel to return from the dead. At the summons, to her own consternation, for she shrieks at what she beholds, there rises the apparition of an aged man, wrapped in a mantle. It is Samuel, who once more pronounces the doom of the king, and declares that on the morrow he and his sons shall be slain by the Philistines. At this confirmation of his forebodings, the king, who has taken no food all day, is overcome with sudden faintness and measures his giant length on the earthen floor. It is a pitiful sight—the prostrate king, discarded of God and reduced, in his sore trouble, to depend on the ministrations of the outlawed woman.

Yet all this is a fitting prelude to the disasters of the morning. For in the great battle, which rages all day long, the Philistines are everywhere successful. The light forces of the Hebrews melt away before the weight of their onset, and at last the remnant takes to flight. Saul, having been wounded by the archers, stands near a ghastly pile of the slain, Jonathan and two others of his sons being among them. It is the close of day, and the shadows of death are gathering upon him. The triumph of the foe cannot be hindered. He calls upon his armor-bearer to slay him, lest the enemy make mock of him; but the man refuses. Wearied, bleeding, desperate, he turns his sword against himself and falls upon it, and so dies by his

own hand. There the Philistines find his body, conspicuous by its vast stature and the kingly diadem upon the helmet. In the fierce barbarity of the time they take vengeance on the poor relic of humanity, and nail it up, along with the bodies of his sons, on the walls of Beth-shean.

But here a gleam of light falls athwart the gloomy story. For the men of Jabesh, grateful to Saul for the delivery of their city forty years before, come by night and carry away the grim memorials of departed greatness, to burn them at Jabesh, and bury the ashes under the boughs of a spreading tree.

And so the long agony of Saul had its end. Raised up of God to save the nation from their enemies, he had involved them in his own ruin by his great disobedience. The willful king became the misanthrope, the madman, the suicide. And the last state of the land was far worse than the first. The Philistines have control of the great caravan route, and of the rich plain of Esdraelon, and push their outposts to the southward, no one hindering. For Abner, who is still faithful to the house of Saul, after the sacrifice of the flower of the host at Gilboa, dares not withstand the foe and retires across the Jordan with the remnant left him, to take refuge in the land of Gilead.

Two days after David's return to Ziklag from pursuing the robbers, a messenger from the north, with the air of one bearing good tidings, reports the disaster of Gilboa, and the death of Saul and his sons. Not comprehending the magnanimity of the chieftain, and not thinking that he would regard the lifting a hand against the Lord's anointed as the gravest of crimes, he foolishly claims to have been the slayer of Saul, and shows in proof the royal diadem and the bracelet upon the king's arm. Convicted out of his own mouth, he suffers the extreme penalty on the spot; David, in the intensity of his grief not pausing to sift truth from fiction in the story.

And so David and his men mourn for Saul, rending their garments and spending the day in the bitterness of lamentation. The sincerity of this sorrow appears in the touch of genuine emotion that thrills in the beautiful dirge, which David composes, and which, under the name of *The Song of the Bow*, was taught to the children of Judea, and recited at every fireside. How he laments the calamity of Israel!¹

"Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon the high places!
How are the mighty fallen!"

He alludes to the inseparableness of the king and the prince on his right hand;—

¹ II. Samuel i, 18.

"Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided."

And then his soul turns most of all to his one dear friend;—

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:

Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women."

Songs like this are not made to order. They must live first in the heart, and be fashioned in the mold of some great soul-struggle, and so become the real expression of a real experience.

CHAPTER V.

DAVID AS KING OF HEBRON AND JERUSALEM.

DAVID'S period of mourning being ended, he is free at last to drop the rôle of a guerrilla chieftain and assume the rights and prerogatives of a king. As was naturally the case, he first turned to his own tribe, that of Judah, which from this time forth becomes more prominent in history. During the recent troubles he had given it his powerful protection, and it was the only part of Palestine not overrun by the Philistines.

In the important matter of taking the throne, David, whose constant submission to the divine guidance stands in sharpest contrast with the willfulness of Saul, inquires of the Lord if he shall go up into any of the cities of Judea. In answer, he is bidden to go up to Hebron, the capital town of Judea, and the earliest seat of civilized life in Palestine.¹ Here he is welcomed by the elders of Judea, who soon secure him an election as king to their tribe by popular vote, confirming their action by a public ceremony of anointing.

For the present he accepts his position as king of Judea, realizing that his recent connection with Achish of Gath must render him an object of suspicion with the rest of the Hebrews, and, with statesmanlike sagacity, not breaking at once with his allies of the plains, which would have precipitated him into a foreign war.

Meanwhile Abner, who has withdrawn to the east of the Jordan, stations himself at the ancient Sanctuary of Mahanaim, near the place where Jacob wrestled with the angel, and proclaims Ishbosheth, a younger son of Saul, as king over Gilead, and such portions of Israel as he is able to wrest piece by piece from the Philistines.

And so there is presently war between David and Abner's "Shadow King"; David's power augmenting, Ishbosheth's declining. The subtlety of David's policy at this period is masterly. He still holds friendly relations with Achish, and so the Philistines view his struggle with Abner complacently. As Abner advances his outposts, driving the Philistines before him

and taking possession of the plain of Esdraelon, the heights of Ephraim, and the villages of Benjamin, David advances northward, seizing portions of Dan, and at length capturing Mizpeh and Gibeon, which Saul had made his Sanctuary after the massacre of the priests at Nob.

Events now follow thick and fast. The armies of Abner and of Joab, David's chief captain, are in camp before the pool of Gibeon. Abner proposes that the issues of the rival houses be put to the decision of combat between the young men. Twelve men of Benjamin, and twelve of the host of David, meet in the open space, as the Horatii and the Curatii afterward contend for the rival claims of Rome and Alba. So equally matched are they that at the first onset each of each twelve slays his foeman, and all fall together. A general engagement follows, in which Abner's men are defeated and put to flight. In the pursuit, Asahel, Joab's youngest brother, a passionate love for whom seems the one redeeming trait of that fierce warrior's heart, attaches himself to Abner. It is recklessness for the stripling to seek combat with the experienced chief. Abner warns him to return from following him, and at length, when he will not desist, drives the sharpened butt of his spear backward as they run, with so vicious a thrust as to pierce the lad through. It was an act for which Joab never made allowance, and the memory of which he nursed till time afforded the chance to wipe out the stain in Abner's blood.

The defeat of the army of the north is not so crushing but that hostilities continue in a feeble way. The people are weary of the weakness of Ishbosheth, and many in the northern tribes are evidently turning toward David. Abner himself feels that David's star is in the ascendant, and secretly wishes to make terms with him. An altercation with Ishbosheth over Rizpah, Saul's concubine, affords him a pretext for breaking with his master, and in an outburst of passion he declares that he will translate the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up David's kingdom from Dan to Beersheba. Immediately he opens negotia-

¹ Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 164.

tions with David, sends him Michal, Saul's daughter and David's first wife, who had been separated from her husband by the vicissitudes of his career and had been living at Mahanaim, and arranges to gather a league of all Israel to acknowledge him as king. Hardly, however, is he gone from David's presence, when Joab returns from an expedition to learn that Abner is about entering the king's service. Inflamed by envy, lest the accession of so great a captain may endanger his own position near the king's person, and burning with hatred for the killing of his brother Asahel, he performs one of those acts which so frequently stain the pages of ancient history. Sending a swift messenger he recalls Abner, possibly in David's name, but certainly without his knowledge, and, when he is come, leads him aside as if to speak with him on some matter of importance. Then, when he has so far gained his rival's confidence that he has him off his guard, he stabs him to the heart.

It is one of the sorrowful experiences of David, so many of which fall to his lot through the sins of his household. His nephew may be rebuked, but is too powerful to be punished. It was not the first time, nor the last, that a ruler has been forced to temporize with a too powerful subject. How the pain of it went to David's soul we may infer from his pathetic exclamation, "These men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me."¹

The shock to Israel from Abner's assassination was profound. The slaying of a man of high station, as we have found in the taking off of two of the presidents of our own republic, and as France has learned still more recently in her loss of Sadi-Carnot, confuses the public mind, not only because of the suddenness of the blow, but even more from dread of the dark possibilities that lurk behind. To discover that such deeds can be attributed to private rage or to personal malevolence, and not to a wide-spread conspiracy against the public weal, is a relief. When, as soon was the case, it was understood that David was not concerned in what would have been a serious breach of kingly faith, and that the responsibility of the affair lay wholly with Joab, the nation breathed more freely.

But the loss of Abner was fatal to the stability of Ishbosheth's throne. He had now no strong warrior, no prudent counselor. It was the general conviction that his sway was merely from day to day. What would soon have been settled by time was hastened by the cupidity of two captains in his army — Baanah and Rechab — probably of the old Canaanitish stock, and from the Gibeonitish city of Beeroth, who steal

into Ishbosheth's chamber. There, as he is taking rest in the heat of the day, they murder him in his couch and then hasten to Hebron, carrying the head of their royal victim as a testimony to David that he need no longer fear his rival. But they have mistaken quite the character of the king. He offers no thanks. He bestows no royal grants or high positions of state. As he had bidden the young men slay the Amalekite, who had presumed to think him glad for the death of Saul, so now he bids them smite these Gibeonites for assassinating Saul's last surviving son.

Seventeen years have thus passed since Samuel secretly anointed the young man David, in Bethlehem, and seven and a half since the latter began to rule in Hebron. Now the path is clear for the wider sovereignty. All things come to him who waits, and he has waited the Lord's time with exemplary patience. With Abner and Ishbosheth in the tomb, the eyes of all turn toward David as their natural defender. The long wars with the Philistines have served one good purpose in quelling the jealousies of the tribes. They have found a common unity while repelling a common enemy. The tedious struggle has been justly likened by Wellhausen to a "forge, in which the kingdom of Israel was welded into one."¹ Burying all their past differences, the elders of the tribes assemble at Hebron and offer the national crown to David. And yet they are careful to grant it with restrictions. They have been taught, through their experience with Saul, the dangers of irresponsible power, and so they prepare a solemn league and covenant, which reminds us of the Declaration of Rights agreed to by William of Orange and the English Parliament at the Revolution;² and, when David has consented to its terms, they anoint him king over Israel.

If any fears of his purposes have been entertained, all are dismissed in the general joy of a united nation. They recount his early services, when he commanded the host in the days of Saul, and how the Lord had appointed him a shepherd and a captain of the people.³ Immediately the best elements of the country rally at his side. He has long enjoyed the confidence and help of Abiathar, the high priest; and he is now joined by Jehoiada, the high priest of the line of Eleazar, and by Zadok, the future high priest of Solomon, who bring him 4,600 of the sons of Levi. He had attended the school of the prophets at Ramah, when a lad, and had always possessed their sympathy. The Prophet Gad had been with him for several years, and from this time forward he has Nathan, also, who is, in a way, the successor of Samuel, as a ready friend and counselor.

¹ II. Samuel iii, 39.

¹ "History of Israel," p. 453.

of English People," IV, p. 35.

² Green, "History of English People," IV, p. 35. ³ II. Samuel v, 2.

The inauguration of the new king was observed with a great feast, lasting for three days; the people from all parts of the kingdom freely sending their offerings for the great rejoicing. The chronicler, who tells of the bread, and figs, and raisins, and wine, and oil, and sheep, which poured in from distant Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, adds his significant comment, "for there was joy in Israel."¹

Confirmed thus as sovereign by the willing suffrages of the people, David at once redeems their best expectations by adopting lines of policy which reveal his farsighted statesmanship, and the sincerity of his devotion to his country as a whole. Up to this time there had been no national capital. Each tribe had its own chief city, whose interests it promoted without regard to other centers. And there had been no opportunity for the affections of the people to cling to the Tabernacle, for that sacred tent had been shifted from place to place, according to the exigencies of the occasion. As Prince of Judea, David might have held fast to Hebron, which occupied a commanding position, and was associated with the most sacred memories. Such a course, however, would have tended to give to the established residents of Hebron too great a prominence in the affairs of the kingdom, and awaken a spirit of envy in the other tribes. Consequently, the king wisely resolves to found a new capital, one against which no prejudices may lie.

Eighteen miles to the north of Hebron, just over the border from Judea, stood the ancient citadel of Jebus, a rocky fastness, held by a band of Canaanites who had never been subdued. Deep gorges—the beds of torrents that had rushed down these declivities beyond the memory of the oldest dweller in the land—lay to the east and west, their precipitous sides forming a natural defense, as the hill on which the fortress was built rose some five hundred feet² above the bed of the valley. To the north stretched out an extensive plain, and here a wall had been erected as a sufficient protection. The inhabitants regarded their situation so impregnable that the blind and lame could defend it.

David resolves to make this place the chief seat of his kingdom. For this it presented many advantages. Since it lay actually in the territory of Benjamin, to select it for the seat of government would be taken as a concession to the northern tribes. If not in the geographical center of the country, it was on the great highway from the coast to the Jordan, and was easily accessible from all parts of the nation. The plain at the north would furnish ample space

for the future growth of the city, while the precipitous hillsides, in which the Jebusites entertained such confidence, promised a secure residence, when once the place was in his own possession.

With such a prize in sight, David acts with promptitude. As a statesman he recognizes the strategic value of a great victory at the outset of his wider administration; and, as a warrior, he sees that the hour to strike is when his armies are assembled. Since the enterprise was extra hazardous, he stimulated the ambition of his men by promising the highest post in the kingdom, the captaincy of the host, to whomsoever should first scale the wall and smite the Jebusites. The question has been raised whether some dark thought crossed the king's mind, as to what might befall the most venturesome man in the army,¹ and so the harsh yoke of the sons of Zeruiah be broken, but to this obviously no answer can be given. A more probable reflection would seem to be that of the chances offering for some other to mount the wall before Joab, and so relieve the sovereign from making the appointment, on which otherwise Joab would be certain to insist. Be this, however, as it may, the fortune of war rendered the position of the fierce Joab more secure than ever, for, selecting the southwest exposure, which was the steepest and least fortified, he pressed to the summit and so won the honors of the day.

To the king's credit, he tempers the capture of Jebus with mercy; and, though he takes the site of the city for distribution among his retainers, he spares the lives of his captives and furnishes them lands for residence. Not long afterward we notice the deposed Jebusite king, still a chieftain, holding a tract just without the city wall.² Directly after gaining this important stronghold, David moves his seat of government from Hebron, changing the old name Jebus to Jerusalem, the Place of Peace. For the first time the town enters the field of history,³ where it is to hold a commanding influence through the centuries.

Like Rameses II. of Egypt, David is not only the successful warrior, but also the builder. He begins by fortifying his new capital so as to resist every hostile attack. He strengthens the Millo, the fortress taken from the Jebusites; and, instructed by his recent experience with the cliffs on the south and west, erects a strong wall, extending it till it compasses the entire circuit of his town. This wall, its foundations laid in cyclopean rocks, was enlarged and

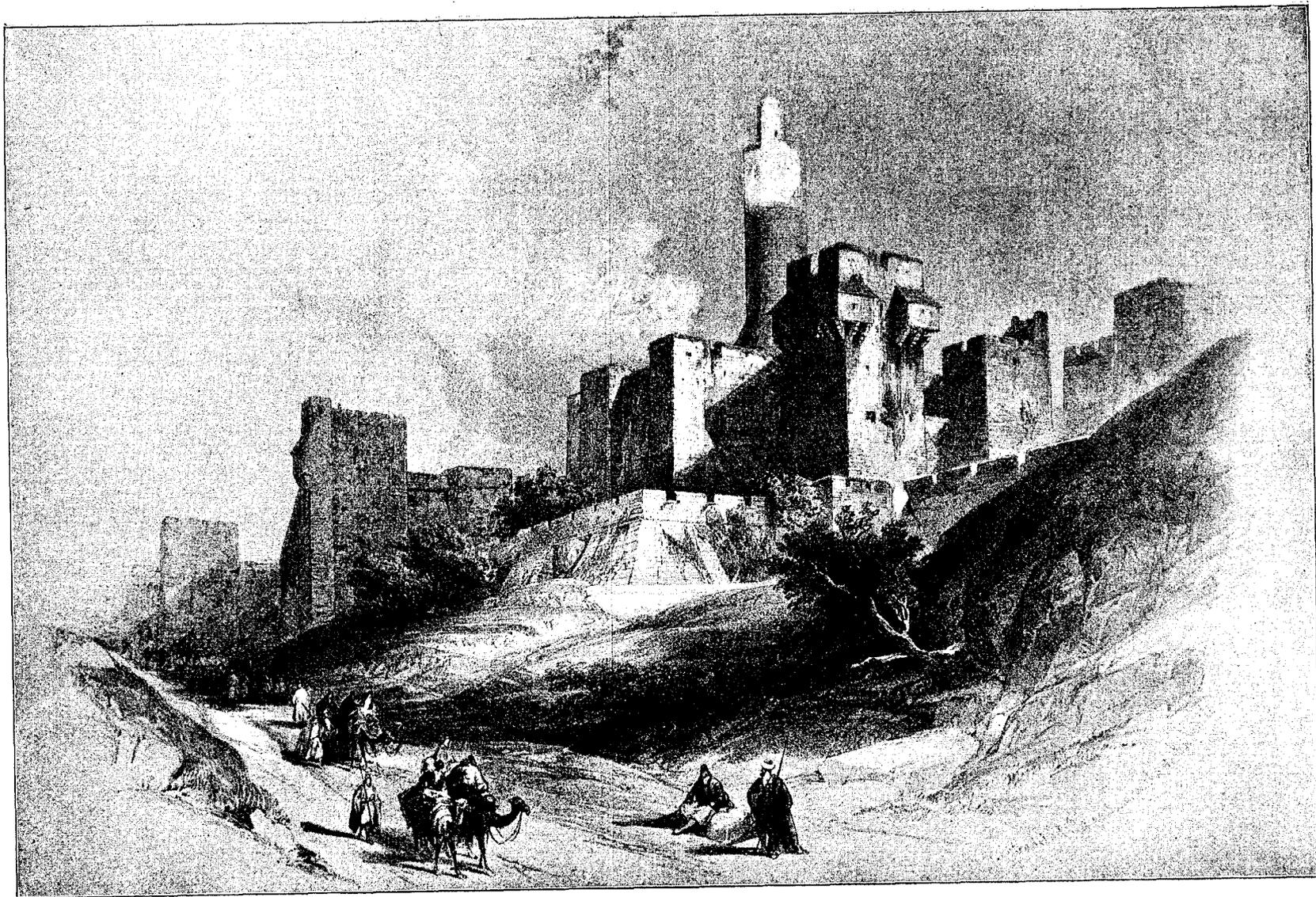
¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 88.

² II. Samuel xxiv, 23, "Araunah, the king."

³ "Jebus . . . first receives historical importance from him (David)." — Wellhausen, "History of Israel," p. 453.

¹ I. Chronicles xii, 40.

² Conder, "Handbook," p. 329.



DAVID ROBERTS.

THE TOWER OF DAVID.

strengthened by David and Solomon, until, with its protruding buttresses, and frowning bastions, and its massive breadth and height, it became the Gibraltar of the kingdom, exciting the ecstasy of a later singer, who exclaims in the rapture of his admiration,

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her:
Tell the towers thereof.
Mark ye well her bulwarks.”

The new city is a hive of industry, with its swarms of workmen hurrying on the fortifications, or erecting new dwellings for the citizens. Not only is employment furnished thus for the soldiers, who in this manner are gradually tamed from the wild life they had indulged during the civil war, but also for foreign workmen. For now the king of Tyre coöperates with David, and sends him skilled carpenters and stonemasons, and great beams of cedar wood from Lebanon, bringing them in rafts to Joppa, whence they are dragged up the hills to their destination. The extensive palace which presently rises, fragrant with its scent of the cedar used in its finishing, and so commodious as to easily shelter the king's great household, marks the expansion of the monarchy, and the development of the idea of the nation. If Saul was the military commander wearing the name of king, but really having slight hold on the wrangling tribes, David, with his strong city, his settled habitation, and his standing army, was the sovereign, ruling his people by his power to enforce obedience, as well as by his hold upon their gratitude and affection.

These changes of organization, and the expanding consciousness of nationality are presently observed in Philistia. Nothing in the narrative suggests any breach of trust on the part of David toward his former suzerain at Gath. His relation with Achish had been more that of an independent ally than of a feudal vassal, and his rise to the kingship seems to have awakened no opposition from the Cities of the Plain. When, however, he takes command of Israel and fortifies his capital, there rise forbodings lest his budding power may become too great. As the confidence of the people in his ability to protect them increased, the Philistines must have found, little by little, the collection of their tribute from Upper and Central Palestine more difficult, until at length they perceived that their rich dependency was slipping from their grasp. We miss from the record any mention of remonstrances made to David, as well as of his replies, though doubtless protracted negotiations were carried on. When, finally, it becomes clear that expostulation is ineffective, the lords of the Philistines determine on war. Remembering David's martial prowess

and how he had slain his ten thousands, they make vast preparations, and at length move up the hills with all their forces, the historian stating definitely that “all the Philistines came up to seek David.”¹ Conscious of the strength of his defenses, after placing a faithful guard in charge of the city, the king leads the army to the region of Adullam,² some six miles to the southeast of Bethlehem.

The Philistines, crowding up from the plain, presently arrive before Jerusalem, and set their camp in the Valley of the Giants, directly under the wall of Jerusalem, and in the very spot that it most pleased David to have them. The king waits patiently till he has inquired of the Lord and received the answer that God would deliver them into his hand, when he bursts upon them with that fierce charge which so often won the day for the Israelitish arms. In David's graphic speech, the rout was like the breaking of waters from a mountain lake. The swift torrent rush sweeps everything before it. The Philistines are driven with such headlong haste that they leave behind their idols, which they had brought in the hope of insuring their triumph, and which David, following the Law,³ destroys by burning them.⁴

The Philistines, realizing that David must be overcome at once, or that their grasp on the hill country must be abandoned, gather all their resources for a second attack; and, as soon as practicable, mass their army once more in the same Valley of the Giants, taking position close under the city wall.

Following much the same tactics as before, David assembles the main part of his army below Bethlehem. Still again, not following his own wisdom, but depending on the guidance of God, he consults the oracle as to his course. This time he is bidden not to go out in direct attack, but to come upon the foe by a flank movement from the rear, through the forest of *beca* trees. In the second battle the discomfiture of the enemy is more complete than before, for they are driven out of the country, pursuit continuing to the parting of the roads, on the edge of the Maritime Plain.

This was the last great struggle with Philistia. The power of the Cities of the Plain was broken, and they were reduced to the humiliation of paying tribute to the land from which their own tax gatherers had so long insolently collected it. “David took the bridle of the Mother City out of the hands of the Philistines,”⁵ for so the sacred writer explains the importance of the victory which made David master of Gath and all her dependencies.

¹ II. Samuel v, 17. ² So I understand II. Samuel v, 17, “And David went down to the hold.”

³ Deuteronomy vii, 5. ⁴ I. Chronicles xiv, 12.

⁵ II. Samuel viii, 1 (Revised Version).

CHAPTER VI.

DAVID'S RELIGIOUS SPIRIT, HIS PSALMS, AND HIS VICTORIES.

THE quick genius of David, even while he is engaged in defeating his enemies and consolidating his military power, perceives that for the full growth of the national spirit he must enlist the religious enthusiasm of his countrymen. To this end Jerusalem must be made not only the temporal, but even more, the spiritual capital, the abode of the national Sanctuary, the center of all pious hope and emotion. Doubtless in this great thought his own anxious longing for the house of God blended with his plans for the increase of the national glory, for David was always a devoutly religious man. He realized, with the insight of a God-fearing heart, that it is true righteousness which exalteth a nation, and that the best assurance of prosperity and happiness for his people lay in their dependence on the Almighty. But how could such a feeling of sacredness in the new city be best promoted? It possessed no such memories of the past as Ramah, the school of the prophets and the home of Samuel; nor as Bethel, where Jacob beheld his vision and heard the voice of the Lord; nor as Hebron, with its "Oak" of Mamre, where Abraham had sat in his tent door; and its Cave of Machpelah, where the dust of the fathers was enshrined.

But if Jerusalem lacked all this, new religious associations might be fostered, and the faith of the One Living and True God be nationalized in the Holy City. To effect this it would be necessary to bring the Sacred Ark from its halting place at Kirjath-jearim, on the outposts of Judea, where it had been deposited by the Philistines on their sending it back from Ashdod.

Having decided on the transfer of the Ark, the king constructs a new tabernacle on Mount Moriah, and arranges for bringing the Sacred Relic to Jerusalem with festivities of unexampled magnificence. A great convocation is summoned, which is attended by 30,000 representatives, many coming from the most distant parts of the realm. On the day appointed, the procession moves to the house of Abinadab, who had housed the Ark for several years, and there, the precious Memorial having been laden upon a cart drawn by oxen, the line starts upon the homeward journey with every expression of joy and thanksgiving. On the way, however, a sudden tempest rises, and Uzzah, one of the sons of Abinadab, is pierced by a lightning shaft, and falls dead upon the spot. An incident so ominous strikes dismay into the hearts of David and his people. Its

occasion was attributed to the disregard of the Levitical requirements in the carriage of the Ark, for it should have been borne on the shoulders of Levites, all of whom were ceremonially clean. The placing of the Ark upon a cart, after the manner of the Philistines, and Uzzah's attempt to steady it with his hand were contrary to the ancient regulations of the Tabernacle.

Not daring to bear it farther, the king orders it to be deposited at the house of one Obed-edom, where it lay three months. It appearing after this time that the house of Obed-edom had not been injured for the Ark of God, but rather prospered, David decides to complete the work of transfer. On this occasion every requirement of the Law is fulfilled. None but Levites are suffered to approach the Ark, and they bear it with staves, as it had been carried in the Wilderness. As the line sets forth upon its march, the anxiety of David and his courtiers is intense; but when they had moved six stages (something near a mile), and nothing untoward has occurred, a halt is made and a great sacrifice is offered to the Lord. Then, amid the acclamations of the assembled thousands, it is again lifted. The weird cry goes up, as in the desert five centuries before,

"Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered."¹

To this is now joined a new song, appropriate for the removing of the Ark:

"Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place,
Thou and the Ark of thy strength.
Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness;
And let thy saints shout for joy."²

The chronicler gives an extended catalogue³ of the priests and dignitaries of the kingdom who participated in this celebration, which set the keynote of Jewish devotion at a high pitch, and the memory of which lingered long in the national heart. All manner of musical instruments in use at the time were heard, keeping time with the chant of the Levites; and the line of the sons of the prophets joined in the religious dances to which they had been trained. The most conspicuous figure of all, however, was the king himself, clad in the white ephod, as worn by the high priest, and dancing to the music of his harp before the Ark. Dean Stanley has called this the greatest day of David's life, as here he was the Conqueror,⁴ Poet, Musician, Priest, in one. The

¹ Psal'm lxviii, 1.

² Psalm cxxxii, 8, 9.

³ I. Chronicles xv.

⁴ Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 94.

incident of Michal, who sees him from her window dancing as he convays the symbol of Jehovah into the ancient habitation of heathenism, and presently reproaches him for so demeaning himself, has been termed unhappy; and yet may it not have served its part in bringing out the noble response of the king, who does not disdain to be the Lord's servant? If he had humbled himself, it was before the Lord, who had chosen him in preference to Saul, to make him prince over the people of the Lord. It was on this festival day that good use was made of some of those admirable compositions, the psalms, the joy songs of the Church of God. Apparently the Twenty-fourth Psalm was composed for the triumphal march, as the Ark was borne toward the city. There is the call to the watchmen:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors:
And the King of Glory shall come in."

To this call the watchmen replied in challenge,

"Who is this King of Glory?"

And the waiting host in answer takes up the strain:

"The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle."

And then all the singers, as the procession sweeps into the city, chant together:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates:
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors:
And the King of Glory shall come in.
Who is this King of Glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of Glory."

And the chronicler, in his description of the proceedings of the day, records an extended psalm, which he states that David gave to Asaph, the chief of the singers, to give thanks unto the Lord. As we examine this beautiful praise poem,¹ we find it breathing the spirit of devout dependence upon God, and swelling with the emotions of a loyal heart, which feels that its highest work is to worship before the Creator.

Taking this Song of Consecration, we have a standard by which to measure the Psalms of David. For it is now well understood that the Psalter itself was the Temple Hymn Book, and that some of the songs were written by an early hand, while many were of later composition. Seventy-three are connected with the poet king by title, and even of these the critics are doubtful whether all can assuredly be attributed to him. Many of the one hundred and fifty, as we have them, contain allusions which show their later origin. On the score of references to the ritual service, and to the Temple, which did not exist in David's time, some psalms, which otherwise might be regarded as

David's, are assigned to forgotten authors. Possibly the critics may be over rash in thus wresting the laurel from David's brow on the basis of a chance expression, since the allusion to the place of use may be accounted for very easily. It is not difficult to imagine the leader of the Temple choir employing an existing hymn, and inserting a line, or an allusion, better to adapt it for the immediate purpose. When we find the Psalm of Consecration,¹ which the chronicler declares to have been given by the king on the day of the festival, furnishing fragments which occur in six several psalms of the Temple collection, we perceive that the leaders of the choir understood in some measure the art of adaptation for the occasion.

Three psalms particularly, the fifteenth, the one hundred and first, and the one hundred and eighteenth, are outgrowths of David's delight in coming to his new home. Others, like the eighth, or the eighteenth, or the twenty-third, or the thirty-second, are clearly the expression of David's personal emotions; the eighth, of his view of nature while watching the flocks by night; the twenty-third, of his confidence in God, probably used on his introduction to Saul; and the thirty-second, the vehicle of his penitential sorrow after his great sin. Comparing the titles, the local setting, and the peculiarities of diction in the entire collection, we may conclude that the king composed not far from half of those handed down to us, though we are to understand that he wrote other compositions that have not been preserved.

For the principle of the Temple collection, as Ewald has pointed out, was to gather poems selected for their appropriateness for public worship, without regard to their intrinsic merit. In this manner the songs of Moses, and of Deborah, and even David's beautiful Song of the Bow, were omitted by the compiler, who inserts but two of the songs of Solomon, though he composed no less than a thousand and five.² A recent writer has lamented the loss to the world's imagination from the fact that David's secular poems have perished. He misses the "Idyls of shepherd life,"³ some of which, preserved in his psalms, are painted "with more skillful touch than ever Theocritus or Bion possessed; his songs of love and the dance, to both of which his nature inclined him; his ballads of war, from the days that he and his little company of moss-troopers lived in outlawry along the Jewish border." But it is better as it is. Were the choice given us now, we should quickly decide in favor of the religious songs, in which he

¹ Psalms xv, xcvi, cvi-cviii, cxxxvi.

² I. Kings iv, 32, 33. ³ Murray, "Psalms," p. 173.

¹ I. Chronicles xvi.

touched the sweetest key, and soared to the loftiest height.

But if it be true that religious adaptation ruled in the selection of psalms for the Psalter, we may be sure that the best of the psalms were composed independently of such intention. The noblest poetry is spontaneous. It wells up from the singer's heart like living water from the gushing spring. It has been said of Longfellow, that his verse is easily remembered, because its expression is so wholly natural. Such simplicity and spontaneity are characteristic of David's muse. Murray well remarks¹ that his "writings attest him to have been a man of original mind: his poetry is easy and limpid, showing no trace of conscious effort." If, then, we seek the sources of David's song, we find them in his innermost life. He is the *poeta, qui nascitur*; and so is always the poet, whether tending the sheep or waiting in the court of Saul. Tradition has it that his harp hung over his couch, and that when touched by the south wind the strings would sometimes sound while he was sleeping. His soul was such a harp, all incidents moving its strings to the honor of his Maker. His spirit was sweet and gentle, his mind inclined to lofty thought, his nature contemplative and wholly sincere. He has an almost Johannean sense of dependence on God, and his conceptions of righteousness and truth are foregleams of Gospel teaching. The man of affairs, in all affairs he enjoys the poetic insight, and, having touched life on every side, he speaks for all experiences.

And so, though he writes but a portion of the psalms, his spirit dominates them all. He is the master, whom the other writers follow. Trust, devotion, praise, rule in all these exalted lyrics, it being true, as has well been said, that "every furrow in the Book of Psalms is sown with the seeds of thanksgiving." If the genius of Solomon is to be recognized in the structure of the Temple which is known by his name, the Psalter, in the songs which David himself composed, as well as the others modeled after their likeness, displays the man who made God his shield and the horn of his salvation.

But bringing the Ark to the capital necessitated a reorganization of the priestly and Levitical castes, and an assignment of regular duties for them in their several courses. While the Ark lay at Kirjath-jearim, the priests seem to have remitted the performance of their usual functions. Benaiah, one of David's chief warriors, was son of Jehoiada, the high priest, the tendency of whose example was seen in the profession of his son. Zadok, who comes to David after the death of Ishbosheth, leading

900 warrior priests, is described as a "young man, mighty of valor,"¹ a fighting priest, as Julian II. was a fighting pope. Henceforth, God's service was to be attended with greater dignity, and the Levites were assigned to their various tasks in the care of the Holy Tent and its sacred furnishings, while the priests were to offer the daily sacrifices at morning and evening. It seems that the resumption of observance of the Day of Atonement, when the high priest made reconciliation for the sins of the people, dates from this time.

To enrich these daily services of the Sanctuary, David summons together 4,000 trained singers, dividing them into twenty-four bands, each of which is to be on duty for half a month during the year. The voice of choral song, as these skilled musicians chanted the daily psalms, accompanied by the clash of cymbals, the blast of trumpets, and the sound of psaltery and harp, must have moved the hearts of the people to remembrance of God with a force unknown since the march through the Wilderness.

As a further step toward development of the national consciousness, David rearranges the military system. He had inherited from Saul the old tribal militia, which dated from the days of the Judges, and comprehended all able-bodied men, from twenty years old and upward. Any extensive reorganization of this ancient body would naturally provoke resentment; and yet, as it existed, its strongest sympathies lay in the allegiance of each man for his native tribe. With singular astuteness the king leaves this organization intact, providing for the national tie through the appointment of general officers taken from his faithful 600, whose services he retained as the nucleus of a standing army. And still further to instill the principles of national loyalty, he cuts the great host into twelve divisions, each of which is to serve in turn for thirty days under the king's order, near his person, or at any duty he may direct. In this manner every man in the kingdom, able to bear arms, came into touch with the influences circling about the throne and the Sacred Tabernacle. With equal sagacity the new ruler left the administration of justice for the most part with the local authorities, though the king's authority was felt in all parts of his realm.²

Gradually the court assumes more and more the atmosphere of royal state. David has his bodyguard of Cherithites and Pelethites, hired from Philistia, and reminding us of the Pope's Swiss guard. His table is on a princely scale, providing not only for his extensive household, but also for the pensioners on the royal bounty,

¹ Murray, "Psalms," p. 136.

I I. Chronicles xii. 28.

II. Samuel viii, 15.

among whom we find Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan, whom David maintains for his father's sake. In all the kingdom David's word made the law, for none could turn to the right or left from all that he had spoken.¹

All who came before him to plead their causes, as well as his special counselor, Nathan, prostrated themselves with their faces to the ground. In the war with Ammon, when the capital city, Rabbah, was nearly reduced, Joab does not proceed to the final assault till David appears on the ground and in person orders the storming of the town. The king's eye is upon every industry, and his great officials make their collecting tours in the olive-yards, and the vineyards, and the cattle ranges, and in every department of production and increase.

It is only at two points that we observe the will of the monarch to be restricted. The first is in the matter of the general census of the population; an enterprise which commends itself to our first thought as right and laudable, but which finally David confesses to have been a sinful project.² The explanation is furnished by Oehler,³ who points out that such a consummation was "probably designed to lead to a complete military organization of the nation," thus tending towards a military despotism. As penalty for his offense he is given choice of three calamities: a seven-years' famine to befall the people, a three-months' defeat by his enemies, or for a pestilence to run its course for three days in the land. Unwilling to decide in so momentous an affair, the king chose to "fall into the hand of the Lord,"⁴ and to suffer what the Almighty might lay upon him. In consequence, a plague was sent upon the nation, but on the third day of its ravage, in answer to David's prayer, the death angel stayed his power at the the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. But he was also baffled in his intense desire to build a house unto the Lord — a permanent and fitting home for the Sacred Ark, to replace the frail structure of the Tabernacle. It grieved his heart that he should dwell in a house of cedar, while the Ark of God was still under curtains. But for the reason that he had so constantly been a man of war, he was debarred from this noble and glorious undertaking, which was consigned to his more peaceful son. In this striking manner, even under the old dispensation, God testifies that his religion is one of peace and good will to man. But, though restricted from the actual work of construction of the holy house, the king's last years were

occupied in gathering material, and in laying up treasure, to be employed by his successor.

Yet in the main, David's enterprises were successful. Gradually the royal power became more firmly established, until under his hand Israel has a name in the earth, and ranks beside the great empires of Persia and Egypt. When the tread of the alien marauder ceased to be heard in the land, the people could employ themselves in their various vocations unhindered, and as a consequence the country rapidly increased in prosperity and riches. And the great king ruled over all with a firm yet benignant scepter, confirming justice, advancing the national welfare, and teaching the people the profit of righteousness and the joy of waiting on the Lord.

But before all this came to pass, and the kingdom had settled down into a state of profound restfulness and peace, the king was forced to carry on several important campaigns, in the course of which the realm was greatly extended, and respect for its authority widely disseminated. The prostration of the country after the overthrow of Saul, and during the period of the civil war, had given a coveted opportunity to the neighboring tribes on every side to make serious encroachments on Israeli-tish territory, of which they were not slow to avail themselves. It was in resistance to armed invasion of his kingdom that David took up the sword, for in all his numerous wars we do not once find him provoking a conflict. Only when previously assaulted does he assemble the host, and return blow for blow. The repulse of the double attack of the Philistines has already been described. Other spasmodic risings were attempted on the part of the Cities of the Plain, but were promptly crushed and resulted in David's reducing them to the former condition of Israel; for he removed their arms and munitions of war, and despoiled their towns of their principal possessions.

One of the first of David's foreign wars was with Moab, a pastoral country to the east of the Dead Sea. The occasion of the campaign does not appear, but it must have been of the most exasperating nature from the severity of the punishment which the king inflicted. There is a tradition to the effect that the king of Moab had put to death David's father and mother, whom he had consigned to the care of the Moabite in the period of his difficulties with Saul. But it is far more probable that Moab had made an attack on some of David's outlying districts, and had perpetrated acts of malignant atrocity. Mesha, who ruled in Moab some fifty years after this, tells in his inscription on the Moabite Stone how he had slain every inhabitant in the towns that he had captured, sacrificing them to Chemosh, his

¹ II. Samuel xiv, 19.

² II. Samuel xxiv, 10.

³ "Theology of the Old Testament," p. 371.

⁴ II. Samuel xxiv, 14.

god. Whatever the provocation, David moves promptly, and, having overwhelmed his assailant, makes reprisal for his cruelty by putting to death two-thirds of the Moabitish army. While we wonder at the severity of this chastisement, we must take into consideration the fact that the king had no fortresses on his border, and that the only way he had of guarding against the aggressions of his neighbors was by reducing those who were troublesome to a condition of dependence.

The war with Moab brought on a conflict with Ammon, which presently involved the entire border to the east and northeast; the Ammonites calling to their help the kings of the various principalities, which had grown powerful during the period of Israel's weakness. The immediate occasion of conflict was the gross insult to the ambassadors whom David had sent to express condolence to the king of Ammon on the death of his father. Manifestly Hanun was anxious to precipitate hostilities, for, instead of receiving the envoys kindly, he subjected them to the grossest humiliation on the pretense that they had come to spy out the land. If within our own remembrance all Paris was ablaze at the unfounded rumor that William of Germany had insulted the French ambassador, it may be imagined what a flame of passion would burst forth in Israel when David's men sent word—for their sense of indignity would not permit them to face the court—that Hanun had shaved off half their beards and cut off their robes at the girdle.

Joab was at once ordered into the field, and a great engagement followed not far from Medeba, a town of Reuben, which had been threatened by the enemy. The king of Ammon had subsidized the Syrian kings of Zobah, Maacah, and Tob, who, for the hire of a 1,000 silver talents, sent a force of 33,000 mercenaries to cooperate with him. Marching swiftly over Jordan, before the Syrians could effect a junction with Ammon, Joab places himself between the divided forces of his adversary. He arranges part of his army to face the Syrians to the northward, under command of his brother Abishai, while he leads the main division in person against Ammon, in an attack so fierce that the day is quickly won. The main army of the Ammonites having been routed, the Syrian allies are panic stricken, and, giving way before Abishai, hasten to find refuge within the walls of Rabbah, the Ammonitish capital.

The victory was great, but by no means decisive. Ammon rallies its resources, and the Syrian kings, perceiving that they will be held

responsible for their participation in the former campaign, assemble their best troops for a struggle of life or death. David himself, calling out all the host, marches into the territory of Zobah, and at Helam, a town whose site is unknown, ends the war with a single decisive blow. The fruits of the battle—40,000 footmen and the men of 7,000 chariots slain, 1,000 war chariots captured, the most of which are destroyed, a great store of arms, 1,000 shields overlaid with gold, the supply of copper which was afterward used for the brazen laver and the pillars and the furnishings of the Temple—attest the magnitude of the triumph.

The several Aramean principalities hasten to confess allegiance to so mighty a conqueror, and Israel at once comes into possession of the ancient city of Damascus, and of the whole region to the eastward, stretching as far as the bank of the Euphrates. If we refer the composition of the Twentieth Psalm to this time, we must admire the modesty of a great warrior, who can return to his capital city with his hundred war chariots of Zobah, and the immense spoil wrested from the enemy, to bid his singers chant his remembrance of the Lord,

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will make mention of the name of Jehovah
our God."¹

The glory of the Syrian conquest was enhanced by the results of the campaign against Edom, whose wild tribes had joined with Ammon against David. To bring them into subjection Abishai is sent into the South, where he wins a crushing battle with the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, at the lower end of the Dead Sea, following this by the capture of Petra, the Rock City of the Sons of Esau. At this stage Joab is ordered to the chief command, and carries on the war with relentless severity for six months, until all who resist him perish. One prince of Edom, still a child, is carried by his attendants to Egypt, and is protected by the Pharaoh. But so terrible was the name of Joab in the annals of his race, that it was not till he had heard of the death of the great captain that he ventured to return to his native land.² The whole region was made tributary to Israel, and the country was garrisoned by Hebrew outposts, as formerly Philistia had garrisoned Ephraim and Benjamin. To celebrate this conquest David erected a pillar, or some form of monument, which may have been an inscription, as Geikie suggests, "carved on the rocks of Edom, after the manner of Eastern kings."

¹ Psalm xx, 7. ² I. Kings xi, 21.

³ "Hours with the Bible," III, p. 249.

CHAPTER VII.

DAVID'S SIN, HIS REBELLIOUS SONS, AND HIS PLACE IN HISTORY.

MEANWHILE the war of the Ammonites was not yet finished. When, one by one, their allies had been cut off, they were gradually forced by the Hebrews into their walled city, Rabbah-Ammon, which lay some thirty miles to the northeast of Jerusalem. This was a town of great strength, having an upper citadel and a lower settlement, the latter containing the royal residence. The town was famous as the source of a perennial spring, from which it was known as the "City of Waters."¹

Owing to the abundance of the water supply, and the vigorous preparations of the Ammonites to resist a siege, as well as, no doubt, to the inexperience of the Hebrews in conducting an assault on a well fortified town, the reduction of the place lingered from month to month.

It was during this protracted siege of Rabbah that the event befell which ever after cast its somber shadow over the king's life, and which, though he repented of it and was forgiven of God, remains as the one dark spot on an otherwise charming and admirable character. While his officers were prosecuting the foreign war, David remained at home engaged in the affairs of his kingdom. Walking one evening on his palace roof, which overlooked a portion of the city, he observed a woman, Bathsheba by name, bathing in a tank constructed for the purpose on the roof of her home. She was of surpassing beauty, and the king, in place of resisting his desires, gave way to a violent infatuation, which broke over every restraint. Though she was the wife of Uriah, the Hittite, one of the foremost of his mighty men, who was fighting for the king before the walls of Rabbah, he suffered no honorable scruple to balk his pleasure, and sent his messengers to summon the woman to his harem. As the record goes, nothing indicates any reluctance on her part to accept the guilty honor, though from what follows it would seem that David trusted that the relation might be concealed. When, however, it appears that exposure is likely to occur, the king, with hope to screen his wickedness and the woman's shame, sends for Uriah from the front, as if to obtain news of the war. Uriah comes, but after he has delivered his tidings, the soldier's stern sense of duty kept him at the king's gate, instead of permitting him to retire to his house. All this effort on the king's part to secure concealment of his

guilty course is a striking commentary on his customary rectitude of life, and also on the purity of morals then prevailing in Jerusalem. For in the nations round about it was habitual for the sovereign to summon to his couch, as wife or concubine, whomsoever he pleased.¹ Repeated opportunities being offered the unconsciously injured husband to visit his home, none of which he accepted, the king, led on from one sin to another, sent him with a message to Joab to place him in the front of the battle, and to retire from him that he might die. The fidelity of Joab to his king was unswerving, and he obeyed the mandate to the letter. Uriah was put in an exposed position and fell, murdered by David as much as if the king had stabbed him with his own hand. No sooner was the woman's customary period of mourning past, than David sent for her openly and added her to the number of his acknowledged wives. So far all had passed after the manner of any unscrupulous oriental court; but now a scene follows which has no parallel in the annals of Bagdad or Constantinople, and which stands out as a lasting memorial of the influence of righteousness on the kingdom, and of the better nature of David himself. For when Nathan the prophet comes with his allegory of the poor man and his one ewe lamb, of which his richer neighbor had despoiled him, and makes his sharp application, "Thou art the man," the king confesses his guilt and falls prostrate before God in penitential supplication for pardon.

Two psalms are the product of this experience. In the fifty-first one hears the bitterness of remorse, when the king lifts up his voice to God,

"Against thee, thee only have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight."

How earnestly does he plead for forgiveness, and for return of the divine favor:

"Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God,
Thou God of my salvation;
And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness."

In the Thirty-second Psalm we have an intimation of the duration of David's penitential distress:

"Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me:
My moisture was changed as with the drouth of summer."

But at length, having given himself to God in fresh consecration, he feels the assurance of

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 113.

¹ Geikie, "Hours with the Bible," p. 271.

reconciliation. The accents of a real repentance are in this exclamation:

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid.

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

But though God may pardon, there are evil consequences to follow. Whoever lifts the tide-gates of sin opens the way for floods of sorrow and suffering. David has given occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, so Nathan declared; and the echoes of their evil speaking is still in our ears. As partial expiation, Bathsheba's child must die. During its lingering illness David is inconsolable; not so much, it may be believed, from affection, as from the consciousness that its life is forfeited for his misdoing. And even after its decease his heart is heavy.

The siege of Rabbah progresses, but the king lingers in Jerusalem. Realizing as no other can the occasion of David's indifference to the issues of the campaign, Joab sends the sharp message that he has taken the City of Waters—so the lower town was named—and that the king must come to order the assault on the citadel, lest the honor of its capture go to the captain rather than to the sovereign. Under this pressure David goes to the town, whither he had sent Uriah to die, the sight of its battlements driving the arrow of remorse into his heart. The city falls under the fierce rush of the Hebrews, and the Ammonitish nation is put to hard labor in the timber yards, and the grain fields, and the brick yards.¹ With the subjection of the Ammonites, David's foreign wars, all of which were successful, were ended, and the kingdom was established on a sure foundation.

But while the latter half of David's reign was one of continued splendor, and while the nations about him were glad to count as their friend and ally so redoubtable a conqueror, his court was the storm center of intrigue and commotion, threatening the safety of the throne, and in one instance bursting into open insurrection, in which the king was compelled to flee to the wilderness to save his life.

The source of all these troubles, when traced to their beginnings, is found in the complications of the king's household, and in the natural results of the polygamous relation. Maurice has well remarked how David's history supplies "exemplifications of all the miseries and curses which spring from the mixture of families and the degradation of women in a court and country where polygamy exists."²

¹II. Samuel xii, 31. So this difficult passage is best interpreted.

²Maurice, "Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament," p. 62.

The king had brought to Jerusalem an extensive harem, comprising six wives, besides several concubines. Ten of the latter are mentioned,¹ but they are evidently only part of the number, and to these Bathsheba is added as a lawful wife, and the favorite of all. Most probably the concubines were housed together, as in the harem of the sultan to this day; but apparently the wives held separate apartments of their own, connected with the palace, where they dwelt with their children. Each of these establishments, of necessity, was a nest of conspiracy and intrigue.

It was amid this maze of plotting and counterplotting for the favor of the king, and all the possible advantages arising therefrom, that Amnon, the prince royal, the son of Ahinoam of Jezreel, grows to manhood. He is weak and unprincipled, and so little master of himself that he grows thin and pale through constantly meditating the blackest of crimes.

Absalom and Tamar, son and daughter of Maacah, the princess of Geshur, form another group in the royal circle. Brother and sister are famed for their extraordinary beauty, excelling in this regard all the other children of David, all of whom inherit the personal graces of their father. Absalom is proud, and yet able to bend to the rabble to gain popular favor, and is gifted like Alcibiades with the ready speech which attracts the multitude.

Adonijah, the son of Haggith, the dancer, is bold and self-possessed, and nourishes plans with his secret counselors, who are ready to further his fortunes and their own, if not by fair means, then by foul.

Still another clique in the palace clusters about the graceful Bathsheba, who is David's most intimate confidante, and who now has another son, whom the king, to signalize his trust in God's pardon, has named Solomon the Peaceful. In the accidents of human life it is no impossible thing, particularly in a court where the succession is determined not by primogeniture, but by the will of the king, that this child may come to the throne; and Bathsheba is quick to meet any scheme to her son's disadvantage with another to neutralize its effect.

But even more noticeable, from its influence on events presently to transpire, is the company that stands about the person of Ahithophel, one of David's counselors, and the man who was regarded as the shrewdest and most far-sighted in Israel. He was the grandfather of Bathsheba, and had never forgiven her or the king for their offense against his honor; though for the time he dissembled his hatred, and was daily in the king's presence as one of

¹II. Samuel xv, 16.

his most trusted friends. But like Judas, of whom our Lord makes him a type,¹ he was covering his malevolence in order to have it gather strength for the fiercer flame. The whispers of this astute man were guarded, but each was a barbed arrow, poisoned with the venomous spirit which knows not how to forgive, or, not forgiving, to forget.

In such a labyrinth of conflicting purposes we may not look for peace or innocence. If the king worships God, the most of the princes bend their souls to passion or to ambition. It is no wonder then that Amnon startles the court by the outrage of his half-sister, Tamar, whom the wily Jonadab has beguiled to his apartments under pretense of ministering to her brother in his sickness. The shrieks of the dishonored girl, as she makes her way to the apartments of Absalom, tearing her gaily colored robe,² must have struck dismay to the heart of the over-indulgent king; who, though wroth with Amnon, does not punish the heir to his throne. Two long years of bitter thoughts rankling in the bosom of Absalom follow — of thoughts which sometimes break out into bitter words. All this time the dark scowl³ is never absent from the face of this prince, who is meditating vengeance. At last he strikes his blow, and the court is shocked again by the intelligence that Absalom has slain his elder brother at a sheep-shearing festival, to which he had invited the princes.

For three years Absalom is kept in exile at the home of his mother's father, in Geshur, beyond the Jordan, but at last is permitted to return to Jerusalem, where, however, the king's resentment for the fratricide is so great that he does not see the face of his son. Finally, through the mediation of Joab, a reconciliation is effected, sincere on the father's part, but hollow enough with Absalom, who comes back to plot not only for the succession, but also to add to the murder of his brother the seizure of his father's scepter, though it may cost that father's life. With a perseverance and systematic method worthy of a better cause, he sets about winning the favor of the populace. He rides about the city in state greater than is affected by any of his brother princes. He mingles among the suitors at the seat of judgment in the king's gate, displaying particular deference toward any whom the course of justice has compelled to wait, or who have been disappointed at the decisions of David. By refusing the salutations of those who approached him, and greeting them with an effusive familiarity, he attached them to himself. Ahithophel, seeing in Absalom the rising star, joined himself to his party, and gave him

shrewd counsel in the ways of detaching the popular heart from the king.

Nothing attempted by the infatuated prince shows more clearly the astute counsel of Ahithophel, than Absalom's encouragement of the jealousy of Judah against the rest of the kingdom. For Judah, when it furnished its king to rule over Israel, had expected to hold precedence over the rest of the tribes;¹ but David, in his policy of making Israel a nation rather than an agglomeration of separate provinces, had ignored the tacit claim. Playing upon this discontent of Judah, Absalom gathers adherents throughout the tribe, assisted the more by the fact that Ahithophel was of South Judea, and able to influence his friends in that region.

When at length his preparations are completed, under pretense of worshiping God at Hebron in fulfillment of a vow, an excuse which would best win the consent of David, the prince hastens to his father's first capital. There, after binding his guests to his fortunes by the seal of a joint ceremony of sacrifice, he raises the standard of revolt, and sounds the trumpet summoning all Israel to acknowledge him king in place of his father.

Bad news travels swiftly, and the aged king is soon told, almost to the breaking of his heart, that his favorite son is a traitor, and that his own tribe of Judah has deserted him. Intelligence that Ahithophel, his trusted counselor, has cast in his lot with the rebellion, as it seems to augur the success of the enterprise, makes the disaster more complete.

At once David settles on his course of action. If all the nation is with Absalom, he must not tarry at Jerusalem, lest there be great shedding of blood; and so he concludes to take refuge beyond the Jordan, till the people have recovered from their brief madness. As he takes his way out of the city which he had created, the lamentations of the inhabitants are heard on every side.

Calamity reveals not only the hollowness of false friendships, but also the sincerity of honest faith. How beautiful at this time is the devotion of Zadok and Abiathar, who follow him with the Ark of God; and the steadfast fidelity of Ittai of Gath, who declares that he will follow David for life or death; and the grief of Hushai, who comes in open sorrow, his priestly garment rent, and with dust sprinkled upon his head!

The loyalty of these friends restores a gleam of hope to the heart of David. He accepts the service of Ittai, but bids Zadok and Abiathar return to Jerusalem, where their knowledge of current events may be made useful to him.

¹ John xiii, 18, in reference to Psalm lv, 12-14.

² II. Samuel xiii, 19.

³ II. Samuel xiii, 32; Ewald.

¹ II. Samuel xix, 43.

Hushai he directs to attend at the court of Absalom, where he may match with his craft the treasonable counsels of Ahithophel. Then the sorrowful procession goes forward to be met by the gifts of Ziba, and the rage of Shimei, the latter a survivor of the house of Saul, who walks on the crest of the hill above them, hurling stones and shouting curses, thus venting the pent-up wrath of the old dynasty against its successor.

That evening they reach the Jordan, where they pause for refreshment, but are roused again by messengers from the high priests and bidden to put the Jordan between them and the pursuit of Absalom. Before the morning dawns they have crossed the river, and find refuge in Mahanaim, of Gilead, the former capital of Ishbosheth.

Meanwhile the wisdom of despatching Hushai to Absalom has been justified. Ahithophel, with a view to create a breach between Absalom and David too wide for any chance of reconciliation, had advised the rebellious prince to appropriate his father's concubines—an offense to oriental eyes the worst that could be conceived. To this he added the proposition of pursuing the fugitive with 12,000 men, overtaking him when footsore and weary, and slaying him outright, thus bringing the contest to a speedy termination. When this plan, so eminently sagacious for Absalom, was discussed in the council, Hushai, with the single object to gain time for David, and for the people to take a second sober thought, draws a picture of David's prowess, and the need of attacking him, if at all, with a great army. His words win the general approval. Ahithophel, knowing thoroughly the hollowness of the conspiracy, and that its only chance of success lies in a sudden and forceful blow, retires from the council in despair, and hastening to his home among the southern hills, sets his house in order, and, like Judas, puts a cord to his neck and dies by his own hand.

From the moment that Ahithophel deserted him, Absalom's cause was lost. He led his men of Judea across the Jordan, and there in the "Wood of Ephraim" fought the battle, which, like that of the younger Cyrus, ended the revolt by the death of the prime mover. But while Cyrus fell bravely fighting in the midst of his soldiers, the rebellious prince perished miserably by a catastrophe so appropriate that the good of all ages have esteemed it the act of God.

The forces of David are divided into three bands under Joab, Abishai, and Ittai. They are familiar with the ins and outs of the forest, which is grown up with underbrush, preventing any distant view. The men of Absalom are bewildered in the thickets, and flee

before David's veteran soldiers. Absalom, escaping on his mule, meets a column of his father's troops, and setting off at full speed rides under the spreading branches of a great tree, where he is caught up by his long hair, and left suspended, while the mule goes on. And there Joab finds him, and thrusts him through with three staves, in direct disobedience to the king's order that he should not harm the young man, leaving ten of his men to complete the bloody work.

It seems to have been a kind of poetic justice which permitted the long hair, in which this debonaire prince took such pride, and the royal mule which he had appropriated from his father, to contribute toward his unhappy end. And his burial was no more honorable than his death, for Joab had the body cast into a gully and covered by a pile of stones.

Once more we observe the gentleness of the aged king, for he harbors no resentment against the child who would have slain him like a dog. When he asks of the messenger his tidings, it is with the tender touch, "Is it well with the young man, Absalom?" as if to excuse the rebellion as the indiscretion of irresponsible youth-time. When he learns the sad truth, it is to go aside to the chamber over the gate, and cry aloud with that plaintive cry, whose echoes still move our hearts, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee; O Absalom, my son, my son!"

One convulsive shudder of the rebellion followed. In the assembly convened at Gilgal to accomplish the restoration of David by a renewed popular election, there was a noble emulation of the people to renew their allegiance. But in the midst of their negotiations it was noticed that the tribe of Judah had escorted the king to the convocation. Suddenly the trumpet is blown, and the cry goes up, "To your tents, O Israel!" The jealousy of the northern tribes against the south has burst into a sudden flame that scorches the tie of loyalty. The leader of the new insurrection was Sheba, a Benjamite, a rank partisan of Ephraim. For a few days the rising promised to be unmanageable; for the ten tribes drew away from the king to a man, leaving him to be escorted to Jerusalem by Judah alone, which from now on never fails in loyalty to the royal line. But the bubble bursts when Joab pursues Sheba to the little town of Beth-maachah, and the inhabitants, to escape the horrors of a siege, toss the insurgent's head over the wall. During the remainder of the king's reign, as well as that of his illustrious successor, there was no further attempt to cast off the authority of the crown. In the nearly ten years that follow, affairs were so peaceful as to leave but scant material for history.

The numbering of the people, with a view to stricter military service, which has already been noticed as provoking the restlessness of the nation and incurring the rebuke of God, was undertaken at this time, and abandoned almost as soon as begun. Of principal interest as connected with this incident was the purchase from Araunah, the Jebusite, of his threshing floor as a place for sacrifice, for this spot on Mount Moriah, where the plague was stayed,¹ was ultimately chosen as the site for the Holy of Holies of the great Temple, which Solomon erected.

And it was during these quiet years, while the whole land prospered, that David was amassing material and vast treasure in gold and silver, and laying plans for that structure, which he might not erect in fact, but the joy of preparing for which was not denied him. But calmly as the sunset of his life might draw on, the approach of his three score years and ten finds him sinking under the burden of premature old age. The natural vigor of his originally firm constitution had been shaken by his early dangers and exposures; while the wranglings of the palace, and the blighted promise of so many of his children had worn upon his mind, and through the mind upon the body.

Overborne at length by infirmities, he takes to his bed and is less and less able to attend to the affairs of his kingdom. Adonijah, a second Absalom, takes advantage of the king's weakness to intrigue for the succession after the death of his father, which event cannot be far removed. He rides forth in state, after the fashion of his ill-starred brother, and seeks to win over the populace. He gains the favor of Joab, who has always been faithful unto David, but is not well disposed toward Solomon, who is whispered to be David's choice as heir to the throne. Abiathar, also, the elder high priest, and many of the officers of the army, and the rest of the king's sons, favor the ambitious designs of Adonijah.

Following almost to the letter the plans of Absalom, though omitting to ask the king's consent, Adonijah invites his friends to a feast at a spring outside the walls, in the course of which it is his purpose to assume the sovereignty, claiming that his bedridden father is unable to perform the duties of king. But the bold scheme is balked by the loyalty of Nathan, who, in concert with Bathsheba, wins David's consent to have Solomon proclaimed king, with all show of civil and military authority.

Soon after this, as if his life's work were well done, David composes himself for death. Naturally his mind reverts to the experiences of the past, and to the hopes of the kingdom.

Happily the last hymn of the old monarch, embodying these thoughts, has been preserved in the historical books, though not included in the Psalter. Despite the king's weakness, the same trust in God and the triumph of righteousness, which adorned his earlier verse, breathes out in these rugged lines. He recounts his lowly origin and acknowledges that it was God who gave him the kingdom, and put the words of inspiration upon his lips:

"David the son of Jesse, saith,
And the man who was raised on high saith,
The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the sweet Psalmist of Israel:
The spirit of the Lord spoke by me,
And his word was upon my tongue."

Contemplating the prospects awaiting his son, if he rule righteously, the aged singer continues:

"The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spake to me:
One that ruleth over men righteously,
That ruleth in the fear of God,
He shall be as the light of the morning, when the
sun riseth,
A morning without clouds;
When the tender grass springeth out of the earth,
Through clear shining after rain."

Modestly he confesses that his own rule has sometimes been wanting, but still with joy rests on the sure covenant God has made with him, that his house shall grow and prosper, saying:

"Verily, my house is not so with God;
Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant.
Ordered in all things and sure:
For it is all my salvation and all my desire,
Although he maketh it not to grow."

But there are ungodly men who regard not earthly rulers, nor even the King of Kings—men fierce and sanguinary. Of such, like the sons of Zeruiah, whose hands were too heavy for David his son Solomon must beware. They must be tamed with the strong hand, and yet, despite all their power, they shall be brought to naught.

"But the ungodly shall be all of them as thorns to
be thrust away.
For they cannot be taken with the hand:
But the man that toucheth them
Must be armed with iron and the staff of a spear;
And they shall be utterly burned with fire in their
place."

If, along with the expressions of confidence in the hymn, there seems to be a minor strain of struggle and sorrow, it is no more than what might be expected from a heart that had known what life is, with its oftentimes baffled purposes, and its griefs impinging so closely on its joys. Dean Stanley recognizes it as a faithful representation of David's experiences, and pronounces it the "fitting memorial of the man

¹ See *supra*, p. 364; also II. Samuel xxiv, 16.

who was at once the king and the prophet, the penitent and saint of the ancient church."¹

It was at the age of seventy, according to Josephus,² that David died, having reigned over Judea in Hebron seven and a half years, and over all Israel in Jerusalem for thirty-three. As with Samuel, such was the veneration for his memory that the rigidity of oriental custom respecting burials was relaxed, and his body was deposited in a rock-hewn sepulcher within the city walls. The site of this tomb was still pointed out in the days of Jesus, but has since been lost. But, though remembrance of his burial place is forgotten, the magnanimity of the man, his gentle kindness, his wise rule as king, and his whole-hearted devotion to God, will ever endure. He never usurped the liberties of his people. He did not employ his great powers as king for his private advantage. He did not make his judicial administration the engine of oppression. He harbored no petty revenges. His fealty to the house of Saul, under circumstances that might have warranted the severest reprisals, was unswerving. From first to last he was in sympathy with both priests and prophets, thus showing that he was fulfilling the higher aims of the theocratic kingdom. He found the land distracted and trodden under the heel of a foreign foe, and lifted it to the rank of the ancient empires of Phœnicia or Egypt. The national worship was crude, but he gave it purity and dignity, and a supremacy over the affections of Israel which it never lost. No man ever felt more deeply the superintending providence of God. Maurice

explains this by "the continuity, the successive-ness, of the steps in his history, which assured him that God's hand had been directing the whole of it."¹ Having this conviction, he has sung this consciousness of the divine leading by harp and psalm into the souls, not only of his own race, but also of all, whether Jews or Christians, who are believers in the God of the Bible. If we touch on his one point of weakness, it is well to remember that he was a man like others, and that he ruled in a barbarous time. Wellhausen remarks of this, "Even his conduct in the affair of Uriah is not by any means wholly to his discredit; not many kings can be mentioned who would have shown repentance, public and deep, such as he manifested at Nathan's rebuke."²

Barring this one fault, his career is almost ideal. Because of his abiding faithfulness the Scripture speaks of him as a man after God's own heart. No higher encomium is pronounced on the later conduct of the people than that they walked in the ways of David and Solomon. The Sage of Chelsea, no mean critic of men, is willing to sit at David's feet and listen to his life and history as they stream out through the psalms, "the truest emblem ever given us of a man's moral progress and warfare here below." Carlyle sees here, not moral delinquency, but the "faithful struggle of an earnest soul toward what is good and best; struggle often baffled—sore baffled—driven as into entire wreck; yet a struggle never ended, ever with tears, repentance, true unconquerable purpose begun anew."³

CHAPTER VIII.

THE YOUNG PRINCE SOLOMON.

THE young prince Solomon, to whom the sovereignty had been transferred before the death of his father, entered upon a reign, which, however somber its close, as a whole is justly regarded as one of the most magnificent in the annals of kings. At the time of his accession he must have been about twenty years of age, reminding us in the responsible duties pressing upon his youth of that remarkable circle of sovereigns, who in the sixteenth century were so early burdened with the affairs of nations.³

The child of parents both of whom were renowned for their personal beauty, we are not surprised that the chance allusions of Scripture writers, as well as the traditions of

his people, uniformly represent him as the possessor of rare personal attractions. As to his preparation for his great future, we are to regard him as more fortunate in his ancestry than in his training. In that polygamous household of David the young prince could have had but scant acquaintance with his father; while the character of his mother, Bathsheba, the too-willing paramour of the king, and the ambitious *intrigante* of the palace, forbids the supposition that he could have gained much profitable instruction from this source. From Nathan's interest in securing the succession in his favor it is imagined that the lad may have had this faithful prophet as tutor; and we may well believe from David's delight in music and song that

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 155.

² Josephus, "Antiquities," VII, xv, 2.

³ Henry VIII., crowned at 18; Francis I., at 20; and Charles V., as Emperor of Germany, at 19.

¹ Maurice, "Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament," p. 57. ² "History of Israel," p. 455.

³ Carlyle, "Heroes and Hero Worship," p. 72.

his favorite child was well taught in these accomplishments, as well as in the more active exercises of arms. And yet, as the youngest of David's sons,¹ his early years must have been passed in comparative retirement.

He is brought in a single day from the shadow of obscurity by the rash act of the scheming Adonijah, who, trusting in the cooperation of Joab the captain of the host, and of Abiathar the high priest, and even more in the age and infirmities of the bedridden king, appoints a feast at the stone Zohemoth, not far from the spring Rogel, in the course of which he intends to announce himself king in place of David. But the precipitancy of the act, in not first securing the king's concurrence, defeats the enterprise. For, while his friends are eating of his feast, and are raising the cry, "God save King Adonijah!" Bathsheba and Nathan are carrying the tidings of the incipient revolt to the decrepit monarch.

Justly incensed at the slight against his authority, David swears an oath to Bathsheba that Solomon shall be king after him, and bids Nathan that self-same day seat Solomon upon his own mule, and, taking the royal guard, proceed to Gihon and anoint him there king over Israel. Not a moment is lost in obedience to this eminently prudent instruction. The guard is summoned and the line formed. The young prince is seated in royal state upon the mule that is kept sacredly for the monarch's use, and the triumphal march to Gihon is commenced.

As the line advances and the significance of the pageant is understood, the people follow with every demonstration of joy. At Gihon the ceremony of anointing was performed, Zadok the priest officiating, and using a horn of consecrated oil which he had brought from the tabernacle. At this official act, which confirmed the new king in possession of the scepter, the people piped with pipes, and greeted their new ruler with such enthusiastic exclamation, as the sacred historian declares with oriental hyperbole, "that the earth was rent with the sound of them."

The respective situations of Gihon and Zohemoth emphasize the dramatic situation. If Gihon, as Major Conder insists,² be the spring-head of En-Rogel, it was between Adonijah's company and the city, and when Solomon was crowned he must have been in full view of the presumptuous elder brother and his supporters. In such a case it would hardly seem to have required the friendly offices of Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, to announce to the conspirators that their cause was lost. The city was in the possession of Solomon, and Benaiah, the

captain of the guard, and all of his men were committed to the new allegiance.

At once the terrified guests separate, each going his own way. Adonijah seeks refuge in the Sanctuary, where he catches hold of the horns of the altar in his abject terror. We are happy to recognize in Solomon's first executive act an unexpected magnanimity of spirit. He well understood that if Adonijah had succeeded in his enterprise he would have been put to death, in accordance with settled oriental usage, which still held in Turkey into the nineteenth century. But in his benignant confidence in the impregnable strength of his own position, he pardons his brother, on condition that he plots no further mischief, and generously bids him go to his own house.

Still, to further establish the new administration while David is yet living, a great convocation of the chieftains of the tribes and the principal officers of the kingdom is summoned at the capital, and the old monarch, weak and trembling, presents his son to the representatives of the nation. He commits both prince and subjects to faithful service for God in a speech full of tender pathos, and transfers into Solomon's hands the plans and the treasure laid up for the building of the Temple. The historian records among the notable incidents of the day that the king, in blessing the assembly and the young ruler, stands upon his feet, supported doubtless by his attendants. So, long after, the beloved John, when he could not stand alone, was helped to rise while he breathed forth his beautiful admonition, "Little children, love one another." Apparently this was David's last public appearance before his decease, which followed soon after.

Hardly were the obsequies of the late king over, when a solemn festival of accession was held at Gibeon, the site of the old Sanctuary, where Zadok was ministering at the altar. It was a ceremony long to be remembered, for it was conducted on a scale of profuse magnificence, in a measure prophetic of the splendor of the reign about to be inaugurated. Accompanied by all the dignitaries of the civil and military list, and all the princes and heads of houses, Solomon went in state to the "High Place," which overlooked all the portion that had been assigned to the tribe of Judah. On arrival, through the generosity of the king, a thousand sacrifices were offered, and solemn services of worship held, which must have continued for days.

During this festival occurred the night vision, in the course of which the young ruler made the decision of his life. "Ask what I shall give thee," was the voice of the Lord; and the response of his heart was not for a wider kingdom, not for the heaping up of

¹ I. Chronicles iii, 5.

² "Handbook," p. 335.

riches, not for the crushing of his enemies, not for length of days, but rather for what Dean Stanley calls "the ideal answer for such a prince"¹—an understanding heart to judge his people, so that he might discern good from bad. It was a better choice than the many make, though not by any means the best. David, in his whole-souled dependence on God, would have sought deeper consecration of spirit. Taught by what we observe afterward, we catch the hollow ring of this word "wisdom." Had it included the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, the chronicler would have been enabled to dwell with more edification on the later events of a life which opened so auspiciously.

But unfortunately this prince had been trained more in the form than in the fact of religion, and to regard the magnificent surroundings of an ornate public worship as of greater value than the intimate communion of the soul with God. And yet, because in the main the request was good, and also because, whether asked in vision or sought in the voluntary consecration of faculties on some single purpose, each man is given some supreme desire, whether it be the learning of an Erasmus, the riches of a Cræsus, the conquests of an Alexander, or the souls of men for a Paul, the Lord blessed Solomon with insight and wisdom and such keen penetration of human motives that the memory of it lingers still in our common speech, and in all the traditions of the East.

That the young king was not a mere weakening of the court, but rather a man of singularly ripe discernment, and well qualified to give sound judgment, was soon demonstrated in a way that impressed itself on the oriental imagination. As he sits in his palace gate to decide the causes of the people, two women approach, each claiming the one child as her own. To settle this obscure question of motherhood Solomon calls for a sword and bids his officer divide the child and give a half to each. The one was content with this, but the other cried out to spare the child and give it alive to her rival. At this the king gave the babe to the woman whose heart yearned for the saving it, declaring that she was the true mother. In thus promptly eliciting testimony from the pleadings of maternal affection, the king had judged the case, and honored himself; for the nation heard and respected the ruler's wisdom, rejoicing that God was with him. But that the young king had learned the difficult art of governing, is even more apparent to the western mind from his decision in dealing with Adonijah and the other conspirators, after they

had made a second attempt against him. For the elder brother, in place of feeling grateful for the king's indulgence in overlooking his former attempt to seize the throne, seems to have taken his leniency as a token of weakness. He consults with Joab and Abiathar, and such others as he could reach, and at length wins over Bathsheba, the queen-mother, whose influence in a polygamous court is always commanding, to prefer his request for Abishag, the beautiful Shunamite, for his wife. How he could have imagined that Solomon would be blind to the purport of this petition is not clear. To possess oneself of the late king's concubine leaves but one step to the throne. It has been suggested that, as Abishag was more a nurse to David than a bride, Adonijah may have supposed that his ultimate purpose might be overlooked.

If so, he reckoned without his host. For no sooner does Bathsheba prefer the request than Solomon, in an outburst of justifiable wrath, declares that his brother might as well have asked for the kingdom. It is now no puppet king who holds the throne. Conspiracy may not sharpen its fangs under the shadow of his scepter. Adonijah has abused his pardon, and so Benaiah, the captain of the guard, is bidden to do his office as against a public foe. The abettors of treason are also dealt with as becomes a king. Because of his faithful services to David, Abiathar, the high priest, is spared, but exiled to his patrimonial estate, and Zadok, who had been his coadjutor in the priestly office, is installed as the high priest of the kingdom. Joab's punishment was more summary. At tidings of Adonijah's death, the captain of the host, now a gray-haired old man, fled to Gibeon, and there took refuge at the horns of the altar in the Sanctuary. His life had been filled with violence. He had been faithful to David, but through his knowledge of the king's guilty secret had held a rod of terror over the throne. He had murdered Abner and Amasa, and had slain Absalom in violation of the king's express command. Now, at last, vengeance tracks his footsteps. Although valiant in battle, he now cowers in fear for his life, reminding us of that Jeffreys, who begged the guard not to let the mob kill him, and of the Robespierre, who, after sending so many persons to the guillotine, is condemned by the Mountain to the tumbrel and the knife.

As Joab had slain both Abner and Amasa to maintain his post as commander-in-chief of the national militia, there seems a just Nemesis in his falling into the hands of Benaiah, his most prominent competitor for the honors and emoluments of his high office. The Sanctuary was never intended to protect an outlaw, and

¹ Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 195.

so by order from the throne the cringing Joab is torn from the altar, to be cut down by the captain of the guard. It is a lamentable end,

but it justifies the testimony of the Scriptures respecting the violent man, that his mischief shall return upon his own head.

CHAPTER IX.

SOLOMON IN HIS GLORY.

THE vigor of administration displayed in smothering the beginnings of conspiracy was soon visible in every department of Solomon's extensive realm.

Edom and Syria took advantage of the confusion arising from a change of ruler to raise the standard of revolt; and some of the subject Canaanites, who were restless under the servitude imposed by David, attempted to regain their freedom, and made the little principality of Geshur a rallying place of insurrection. But so weak were their efforts that Benaiah was able to suppress them with his regular force, without necessity of calling out the national reserves. Wellhausen, it is true, complains of Solomon for not having crushed Rezon, after the battle of Hamath, and so prevented his building up a new Syrian power at Damascus.¹ But this judgment is based upon the whole issue of Solomon's reign, with all its later corrupting influences, and loses sight of the policy which the king followed so successfully in his earlier years, of winning alliance by friendship. Had the glory of the kingdom continued, and the attachment of the people not been undermined by the exactions of the tax-gatherer and the introduction of foreign vices, Jerusalem would have had a tributary in Damascus, rather than an active rival.

While engaged in repressing these disorders, the king extends his foreign relations, and makes an advantageous alliance with Egypt, the daughter of whose Pharaoh he espouses, bringing her to Jerusalem with great pomp and festivity. He cements, however, a still more important alliance with the Phœnician realm of Tyre, whose king, Hiram, had sent an embassy to congratulate him on his accession to sovereignty. As the Phœnicians were a commercial and maritime people, occupying a narrow strip on the Mediterranean shore, and skilled in arts and manufactures, but dependent as regards a food supply, the relation between Tyre and Jerusalem became mutually advantageous. A brisk trade sprang up between the two nations, Phœnicia furnish-

ing the precious metals, and cloths of the richest dyes, and timber from her famous cedar forests in the Lebanon ranges, in exchange for the corn, and wine, and olive oil from the upland plains of Israel.

At this time Israel was in its glory. Its territory included all that Solomon had received from his father, extending from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from Hamath on the north to and including Gaza on the south. The population of Jewish origin, not counting the subject Canaanites, who had been reduced to a condition of helotry, numbered some five million souls, or about five hundred to the square mile.¹ As the land was in a state of profound peace, the people had nothing to divert them from the pursuits of industry, and there followed, consequently, a term of marvellous prosperity. The young king reorganized his household and his civil list, and with keen appreciation of character appointed the most capable officials and administrators. He set Benaiah, who had distinguished himself in the wars of David, as commander-in-chief of the army of the kingdom, and Zadok as high priest. He created the office of scribe and appointed two to draw up the royal edicts and record the annals of his reign. The extension of the court also compelled the appointment of a new official, the chamberlain, who was to be superintendent of the household, purveyor of supplies and comptroller of expenditures.

The breadth of this official's responsibility may be imagined when it is noticed that he was supplied with twelve under-officers, one for each month in the year, who were to meet his requisitions by drafts upon the people. The amount of provisions for a single day—some eighteen thousand pounds of bread, 30 oxen, 100 sheep, besides fowl and game—indicates that the great king was feeding daily at his table from 10,000 to 12,000 persons; this number including the inmates of the palace, the officials of the court, the royal guardsmen, and the servants of the household. Another official of more ominous character is appointed to have charge of the forced labor, which the king required in his numerous enterprises. The man chosen for this post was Adoniram, a name which, after his long service, extend-

¹ "So far was he from showing military capacity, that he allowed a new Syrian kingdom to arise at Damascus, a far more dangerous thing for Israel than that at Zobah, which had been destroyed, and which it succeeded."—Wellhausen "History of Israel," p. 456.

¹ Conder, "Handbook," p. 281.

ing into the reign of Rehoboam, came to be regarded with detestation and horror.

As the pomp and circumstance of the throne increases, Solomon raises a force of 12,000 horsemen, and rides in his journeys about the city like the kings of Egypt in his own richly carved chariot, attended by a mounted guard. New as was this consequence of royalty to Jerusalem, it was no less welcome. The fame of the gifted ruler goes far and wide. He governs magnificently but justly. He throttles all misrule and oppression with a firm hand, so that every man dwelt safely under his own vine and fig tree from Dan to Beersheba. He cultivates to some extent the arts of music and literature. Tradition, which busies itself with his "wisdom," credits him with composing 3,000 proverbs, 1,005 songs, and a disquisition on animals, birds, and plants, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall. Of these writings there remain four psalms,¹ whose subjects connect themselves with the king; a portion of the Proverbs, which was compiled with others by King Hezekiah, and the Book of Ecclesiastes, which, with its speech of the vanity of earthly possessions in comparison with trust in God, appears as the fitting expression of the king's old age. If, for various reasons, we may doubt whether Solomon was the author of the Song of Songs, we may still trace its origin to his time and influence. The sententious wisdom of the Proverbs, "gifts to the people, not the produce of the people,"² is precisely what should be expected from the practical mind of a king who comprehended the value of prudence, intelligence, and a fit preparation for life. If, on the one hand, we may agree with Mr. Whitelaw Reid that the best treatise on business for a young man just starting in the world is the Book of Proverbs, we may also thank its author for establishing so clearly that there is no wisdom without goodness and virtue, and that all vicious courses are the synonym of contemptible folly.

But more than in the making of books, the king displays the acuteness of his mind in his measures for extending the commerce of the country. A nation is prosperous when it is most happily and heartily employed. Reference has been already made to the reciprocal trade of Israel and Tyre. This was, however, but the beginning of a more extensive traffic, which reached out for the commerce of the East, controlling the trade between Egypt and Damascus, and sending its ships far over the sea. For once a great king turned merchant, and made commerce a government monopoly.

¹ The Second, the Forty-fifth, the Seventy-second, and the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh.

² Stanley, "Jewish Church," II, p. 267.

To facilitate trade with Babylon he is said to have founded Tadmor in the desert, the town which later became the seat of Zenobia, and the prey of the ambition of Aurelian. From Egypt he brought fine linens, and horses, and chariots, trading them off for gold and silver to the Syrian and Hittite kings, and sending back to the Nile country the rich wines for which Israel was famous.

But Solomon's most audacious foreign enterprise was his sending out shipping from the Red Sea. With the assistance of his royal friend of Tyre, he builds a fleet at Ezion-Geber, which presently becomes a busy port, and the home of many Hebrews.¹ Lading with the products of Babylon and Tyre, the ships sailed away to the East, to return after a three years' voyage, bringing commodities the nature of which shows that their destination must have been the mouth of the Indus, in Asia. The gold of Ophir,² the white tusks of the elephant, the ebony and sandal wood, the hideous ape and the gorgeous peacock, filled with amazement the eyes of the gazers at the returning caravans, climbing the hills toward Jerusalem. The profits of these ventures, conducted on so magnificent a scale, must have been enormous, and soon the land is rolling in riches. Silver became "as stones"³ in Solomon's capital, and the king's great men began to vie with each other in the erection of palaces and the laying out of gardens; and commodities which had been previously unknown, grew first into luxuries, and then into the commonest necessities.

But the king had need of all the treasure which his ships and caravans were bringing, for he was even more a builder than his father, David. On the frontiers he erected cities for his chariots and horsemen, and fortified many places on the lines of travel toward Damascus and Egypt, believing, no doubt, that he enjoys peace best who is best prepared for war.

In Jerusalem he constructs a new palace for himself and his extensive court, that of David having been altogether outgrown. He builds a great aqueduct, at immense cost of labor and treasure, to bring water from Bethlehem. He completes the fortifications of the city, which David had begun, and renders his city impregnable against any foe. On the mountains of Lebanon he constructs a summer palace, munificent in all its appointments. He lays out great parks at Etham, like the paradises of the Persian monarchs; and, showing that he has regard for something higher than the pleasures of the moment, he builds in the capital city a school, or college, for the instruction of the young.

¹ Compare I. Kings ix, 26, with II. Kings xvi, 6.

² Lenormant & Chevalier, "Ophir, the country of Ab hira, near the present province of Guzerat."— "Ancient History of the East," I, p. 145.

³ I. Kings x, 21.

But his most memorable architectural work was the Temple, the House of God, the building of which had been intrusted to him by his father, and the carrying forward of which he had accepted as a sacred duty. Having the plans which David had prepared, and the vast treasure from David's store, and the voluntary contributions of the princes, it was necessary only to organize the workmen and commence the structure. The site chosen was on Mount Moriah, the threshing floor of Araunah, on which David had erected an altar to commemorate his deliverance. Owing to the narrowness of space at the summit of this hill, it was necessary to provide room for the superstructure and the outlying courts. This was done by building up heavy retaining walls on the hillsides, the inner space being filled with earth to the proposed level of the Temple floor. Much of the stone required was hewn from quarries situated underneath the city. The solid limestone rock which forms the mountain is now honeycombed under Jerusalem with galleries from which the stone has been taken, and in one of these can still be seen a huge block, lying as it was left by Solomon's quarrymen. For the master stonecutters, since there was no one in Israel trained to such labor, Solomon was dependent on his friend Hiram, who gave him skilled stonecutters from Gebal—men who could plan the cutting out of the rough ashlar, and dressing them for their place in foundation or wall. Recent excavations at Jerusalem reveal the character of this ancient stonework. The west, south and east walls of the harem inclosure are laid in cyclopean blocks, without mortar; and, starting as they do from the bed rock, are evidently as they were placed by the Temple builders. Many of them have letters painted in red,¹ the markings of the architect to indicate their position in the wall. It is a remarkable confirmation of the accuracy of Scripture, that these quarry signs and mason marks are Phœnician characters,² and have hitherto been found only in Sidon. The timbers for the Temple were cut in Lebanon from the famous cedar groves, were then dragged to the sea, floated in rafts to Joppa, and thence hauled laboriously up the steep slopes to their destination. The heavy metal work, principally in the form of bronze castings for the great laver and the pillars before the porch, was wrought under the supervision of another Tyrian, named like the Phœnician king, but son of a woman of the tribe of Naphtali.

From the moment the corner stone was laid the army of laborers toiled on without cessation. There were 80,000 workmen, under 3,600

overseers, besides 70,000 bearers of burdens. The foundation was laid; the Holy House and its courts were inclosed; the structure was beautified with boards of cedar, with carved figures of flowers, palms, and cherubim, all overlaid with beaten gold. Seven years and six months were occupied in the work, during which time "there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house."¹ All the stones had been fitted in the quarries, and were laid in mysterious silence.

"No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung;
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung."

When an exploration was recently made of the Temple wall, and a shaft was sunk to the bed rock along its face, a mass of black earth was encountered, evidently a deposit made during the building of the Temple, as it contained jar handles and bits of Phœnician pottery. But there were no chippings of stone, as would inevitably been the case had not the stone been dressed before being brought to the place. Mr. Harper, of the Exploration Fund, regards this as "one of the most splendid confirmations of the truth of Holy Writ."²

The entire structure when completed was of surpassing splendor. The Holy House was not of large dimensions, since it was intended solely as the dwelling place for the Most High. In consequence, it was but about ninety feet in length, and thirty in breadth, being in each dimension double the corresponding measurement of the Tabernacle. Its form of architecture was most probably Phœnician, although Assyrian influences seem to have been felt in the construction of the brazen oxen to uphold the great brazen sea.

Approaching the inclosure from the eastern side, the beholder entered a colonnade or cloister, which formed the eastern barrier. This opened upon a spacious quadrangle, set with trees, beyond which was a wall, built of stone and topped with a cornice of cedar. Passing up a flight of steps into the inner court, the visitor would observe before him the great brazen altar, the place of the morning and evening sacrifice. It rose to the height of ten cubits, was twenty cubits square, and was approached by an incline. The altar presented an exterior of bronze, but the inclosing fabric held a mass of stones and earth, in accordance with the Levitical requirement. From its height it was readily visible to the worshipers assembled in the outer court. To the left of the observer stood the great brazen sea, the place of ablutions made necessary by the frequent washings of the priests. We here again observe the wisdom of Solomon in his provision of an ample supply of water for the cleans-

¹ Conder, "Handbook," p. 316.

² Harper, "The Bible and Modern Discoveries," p. 351.

¹ I. Kings vi, 7.

² Harper, "The Bible and Modern Discoveries," p. 352.



EXTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ABU-SIMBEL.

DAVID ROBERTS.

ing of the Temple and the altar, after the frequent sacrifices ordered by the Jewish ritual. Vast cisterns have been hewn out of the solid rock, one of which alone was forty-three feet in depth, and could hold 3,000,000 gallons of water."¹ Beyond the space occupied by the altar and the brazen sea, on an elevation of the rock, stood the Holy House, with its triple row of chambers, for the use of the priests, at the sides, and with its partition within, dividing the Holiest from the Holy Place. The furnishings of this Sanctuary were the duplicates of those in the Tabernacle, though the one golden candlestick was replaced by ten whose branching arms supported the lamps which shed a soft illumination, which it was the care of the priests to never let die out. Everything entering into the construction or decoration of the Sanctuary was of the costliest material, in token that to God belonged always the noblest and the best.

When the work was at last completed, nearly a year in addition elapsed in preparation for the elaborate ceremonies of dedication. From this time on the services at Gibeon were discontinued. As Bossuet has well remarked, "The unity of God was symbolized in the unity of his Temple," and for this symbolism to be felt it was imperative that all Israel should worship at the single shrine.

On the fourteenth day of the seventh month, in the presence of a vast multitude assembled from every part of the land, the old Tabernacle was brought from Gibeon, and the Ark from its resting place on Zion, and the priests and Levites in solemn procession, the king leading the way, bear the sacred relics to their destination within the inclosure. The trumpets sound, the choir in antiphonal chorus sings the praises of the Lord, and Solomon, spreading forth his hands, utters the prayer of consecration, beseeching God to accept the sacrifice and bless the nation. And when he "had made an end of praying," so goes the record, "the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house." The Shekinah, the wonderful manifestation of the divine glory, which had flooded the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle of the Wilderness, now lighted the Holy of Holies with its mysterious effulgence, the visible token of the approving presence of the Most High.

It was the supreme day of Solomon's reign. No other man in the kingdom enjoyed such prominence; for, as king, he represented the majesty of the nation; as builder, he reached the completion of a structure sufficient of itself to immortalize his name; and, as priest, he

offered the sacrifices and blessed the people. For the moment he stood as the type of the One King, who, as Prophet, Priest, and King, was to be himself the One Sacrifice for the saving of men.

The wonderful prosperity of the city and the reputation of its king for wisdom soon became a household word among the nations round about. The multitude of his workmen passing to and fro, the caravans of the merchants, the mariners on distant voyages, all carried abroad the glory of his kingdom, till the fame of it filled the East. Great princes were happy to court his favor, and sent him embassies with rich presents, vases of silver and gold, and armor for the soldiers, and rarest spices and balsams, and pack mules, and horses for the cavalry and the chariots.

Some, not content with the hearing, came to witness this splendor with their own eyes. The most notable of these was that princess, whom Scripture and tradition alike name the Queen of Sheba. She came from her home at the southernmost point of Arabia, with an immense train of camels, and bearing the costliest gifts, the rich spices of her country, and 120 talents of gold. There are old tales current of her tests for the wisdom of the king—the pearl to be drilled, the diamond with the zig-zag hole to be threaded, and the crystal goblet to be filled with water neither from the clouds nor the earth, all of which he solved without delay. And when, besides this, she witnessed all the arrangements of Solomon's extensive household, the throngs of officers in waiting, and the bravery of their apparel; and when, still more, she observed the approach by which he entered the House of the Lord, her admiration passed all bounds, and she declared that the half had not been told her. But we may believe that she had better reason to rejoice in the king's wisdom, when we notice the significance of the statement that she came after hearing of the fame of Solomon "concerning the name of the Lord."¹ The wise man and the earnest woman, when "she communed with him of all that was in her heart,"² consulted on the deeper problems of human life, of duty and hope, and of the nature and providence of God. A memorial of this visit was long believed to be found in the balsam trees of Jericho, which, it was said, were propagated from a plant which she gave to Solomon; but a better memorial appears in the ease with which the Maccabeans propagated their monotheistic beliefs in Southern Arabia, the influences of the purer teaching which the Queen had learned of Solomon having lingered till that late time.

¹ Conder, "Handbook," p. 363.

² I. Kings x, 1. II. Chronicles ix, 1.

CHAPTER X.

SOLOMON'S MAGNIFICENCE ON ITS DARKER SIDE.

BUT all this magnificence of Solomon has its darker side. He imitated the royal state of imperial sovereigns; he copied, also, their vices. It is always perilous for a ruler, or for a nation, to surrender to the seductive influences of foreigners, with their luxurious customs. Persia was stronger in the simplicity of her early virtues, inbreathed with her mountain air, than when with vastly greater resources she had adopted the ways of Babylon. Roman manhood meant conquest; Roman manhood, enervated by contact with oriental sybaritism, meant decline and overthrow by the barbarian, whose blood was still undefiled. A like peril now confronts America, in the possible incorporation into her life of laxities in thought and conduct which the founders of the nation fled to the wilderness to escape. It is best that a people should live its own life, and that, if it assimilates from other lands, it take only those practices which encourage its youth in virtue. The subjection of the once wise king has its warning for all who are reckless respecting the insidious encroachments on the integrity of American manners and institutions.

It was un-Israelitish for the king to marry the princess of Egypt; but, apart from the precedent, she seems to have brought no particular evil in her train. At the time of her espousal Solomon had serious scruples about lodging her in the city, on account of the proximity¹ of the Sacred Ark. Clearly, therefore, at that time the objection to her coming was confined to her own alien faith; and as for her conduct afterward there is no intimation of her having introduced either a priest or an altar of her ancestral worship.

But not content with the single wife, Solomon takes princess after princess from the surrounding nations, until he builds up a harem, in the sharp characterization of Lenormant, already "scandalously full,"² by the influx of a horde of strange women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Hittites, and Sidonians. Drawn away from the simple purity of his faith in God by their influence, he presently sanctions strange worship in his city, and also for himself offers sacrifice to the Sidonian Ashtoreth, to the Ammonitish god Milcom, and to the bloodthirsty Chemosh of Moab.

But this uxorious polygamy, with its resultant lapse into the abominations of idolatry, carried another grievous evil in its wake. To

maintain this vast seraglio, with its multitude of servants and eunuchs, of singing men and singing women, involved an extravagance of expenditure that might bankrupt any kingdom. If these pampered creatures of the court may not have said, like the luxurious nobility of France under Louis XV., "After us, the deluge," they were certainly assisting to bring it on. However justly the king might desire to rule, in the constant drain to which the royal exchequer was subject, the scepter must bear with increasing weight upon the necks of the people.

It is an ominous picture—that of 153,000 slaves, torn from their wives and children, and forced to toil in the quarries of Jerusalem or the forests of Lebanon—but it illustrates the callousness for human suffering which existed in the king's heart at an early period, and which augmented with the natural growth of his necessities. The bitter complaints which the men of Israel preferred to Rehoboam respecting the severity of his father's taxings¹ suffice to prove that the sufferings of the people were almost intolerable. The splendor of the throne had cast its shadow upon the nation, and the extravagance of the palace had resulted in a practical despotism,

"The despotism of vice—

The weakness and the wickedness of luxury—
The negligence—the apathy—the evils
Of sensual sloth—produce ten thousand tyrants,
Whose delegated cruelty surpasses
The worst acts of one energetic master.
However harsh and hard in his own bearing."²

Some intimations of his decline came to the king in his later years. The buoyancy of the people, which had been sustained by the early prosperity of the kingdom and the unity of the national faith, was visibly declining. Under the sun of luxury the rank weeds of effeminacy and presumption had been growing in the hearts of the young men until there was a large class that scoffed at the prudent restraints of their fathers. In a dream Solomon is warned that his kingdom shall be divided because of his apostasy; and Ahijah, the Shilonite, by an impressive rending of his garment, prophesies to Jeroboam that God has given to him the leadership of ten out of the twelve tribes of Israel. At a hint of the aspirations of the young man, Solomon sends to apprehend him, but he takes refuge in Egypt, to return thence after Solomon's death and set up his kingdom over the northern tribes in Shechem.

¹ II. Chronicles viii. 11.

² Lenormant & Chevalier, "Ancient History of the East," I, p. 145.

¹ I. Kings xii, 14

² Byron, "Sardanapalus."

For the rest there is little to say. The chroniclers, who realize that there is little to edify in the king's later years, pass them in silence. Possibly the tales that are current in the East of Solomon's control of the djins of the under world have their basis in his attempting the incantations of magic, and dealing in thaumaturgies and incantations. So Victor Hugo, in his "Solomon," makes him say,

"Child of guilty kisses,
Vast, gloomy is my wisdom: demons shun
To take between high heaven and their abysses,
A judge but Solomon."

But this silence of Scripture respecting one whose morning promise was as the sun rising in his strength, is condemnation. If Solomon was the wisest man, we regret that he failed to put into practice his best intuitions. He was great, and yet, when we compare him with his father, it is a question if the latter was not the greater man. David organized a kingdom out of chaos, and transmitted it to his successor, strong in its peaceful power. Solomon accepted the kingdom, with all its accumulated treasure, and turned it over to his successor, splitting already with the cleavage lines of dismemberment. Graetz, the Jewish historian, alluding to the oriental tales which credit Solomon with the possession of magical powers, remarks that his kingdom was "like a world of magic, upbuilt by powerful genii. The magic vanished at his death. He did not bequeath to his son his magic ring."¹

But as regards influence on the world of mind, while the impression wrought by the magnificence of Solomon is the more brilliant, that wrought by the earnest piety of David is far greater. The one erects the Temple of stone and costly cedars, the admiration of a few passing ages, but which the breath of wars and the

¹ Graetz, "History of Israel," I, p. 366.

torch of the destroyer have laid in the dust; the other in his psalms has constructed a temple of thought and devout consolation, which is more enduring than time itself.

On still another count the thoughtful mind experiences more satisfaction in contemplating the poet-king. If he turned aside from the path of virtue in a single instance, we are happy to feel that he sincerely repented, and that his going out of life was departure into the glory of a happier state. But we do not possess this gratifying assurance respecting David's illustrious son. We are told that he sinned; we are nowhere told that he repented. The Book of Ecclesiastes expresses intelligence of the true wisdom, but it does not convince us that its author followed his own teachings. Farrar has called to mind Oscagna's great picture in the Campo Santo at Florence, in which "Solomon rises slowly and painfully out of his sepulcher at the archangel's summons, ignorant whether to turn to the right or the left, uncertain whether his place is to be among the saved or the lost."¹

But whatever the great king's final destiny, if the workman be saved while the work perish; if it shall prove, as in Browning's optimistic thought, that

"A sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after Last returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best, can't end worst,
Nor what God blest once, prove accurst;"²

still we must regret the errors that shadowed a life of magnificent promise, and transformed its closing picture into the text of a sermon on the "Vanity of vanities," rather than a glowing panegyric on the wisdom and the virtues, which should have brightened with the flight of years.

¹ Farrar, "Solomon, His Life and Times," p. 162.

² Robert Browning, "Apparent Failure."

Mary J. Sumner

BOOK VIII.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE TO THE LAST OF THE KINGS.

BY REV. FRANK M. BRISTOL, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISRUPTION OF THE NATIONAL UNION.

THE history of ancient nationalisms must forever possess a fascinating interest to the student who would know the true and divine philosophy of the world's salvation and progressive enlightenment. No chapter, however, in the long and diversified annals of antiquity presents a more interesting and important subject for the religious mind to contemplate than that which records the origin, development, and decline of the Jewish empire. Unjustly treated as the Jew has been by so-called civilized peoples during all these Christian centuries, the record of that same Jew, the literature, the religion, the great and righteous ancestors of that Jew, are exercising upon this age and upon the civilization of it a more potent influence than the literature, religion, biographies, and national annals of any other race.

Of all that vicissitudinous Jewish history no period is more sadly and significantly instructive than that from the division of the empire to the Babylonian Captivity. This may be called the decline and fall of the Jewish empire. Wonderful, indeed, and beyond parallel, was that national progress of Israel. Three royal administrations—the reigns of Saul, of David, and of Solomon—bring the kingdom to the summit of its greatness. One hundred and twenty years of statesmanship and of providence lift these institutionless tribes of shepherds and agriculturists up to a nationalism whose unity, power, and prosperity become the astonishment and admiration of the world. At Joppa, the harbor-gate of Jerusalem, halts the rich commerce of the seas. Thither the sons of Javan drive the vessels of Corinth with merchandise of brass and corn; the servants of Hiram come with the ships of distant Tarshish “bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks”; the fleets of Ezion-Geber fetch the fine gold of Ophir and precious stones of India, and the mariners of Sidon guide the cedar rafts and purple-laden galleys of old Tyre. At Jerusalem's crowded gates wait the caravans which

bring to her thriving mart the wines and wools of Damascus, the perfumes of Arabia, the sweet spices and rare gems of Ethiopia, mayhap the costly silks from the looms of Assyria and China, and fine linen from Egypt, with horses and chariots. “King Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.”

With all the glory of Jerusalem's material prosperity is mingled the light of a superlative intellectualism and the splendor of a divine revelation. Although Homer is singing his “Iliad” to the Greeks, and Thebes and Memphis hold the mysteries of mighty faiths and noble sciences, “all the kings of the earth seek the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom that God hath put in his heart.”

Alas, that this unwonted national brilliancy should vanish like a meteor and be followed by the night and storm! How true is it, as the poet has sadly learned from human history, that it is “the most difficult of tasks to keep heights which the soul is competent to gain!” and true it is of nations as of men. Swiftly did Israel gain the heights of national prosperity, but, like Lucifer, she fell from her proud eminence to ruin and contempt. This is not a unique national experience of sudden decline from united power to disruption, and from honor to shame. Parallels may be found in the histories of Babylon, of Athens, and of Rome. Of untold magnificence was the reign of Nebuchadnezzar when Babylon became the golden head of the great image of empire; but, though her power spread from the Tigris to the Nile, and in all the arts of peace she rose to a prosperity which was a marvel and a proverb, her supremacy was maintained for only seventy years, and with the ignominy of Belshazzar's overthrow her name became a byword and her greatness but a memory. That golden age of Athens which witnessed the art triumphs of Phidias, learned the sublime philosophy of Socrates and Plato, applauded the eloquence of a Pericles, hailed the dramatic genius of Sophocles—opened with Marathon

and Thermopylæ and closed with Cnidus— was, like the age of Solomon, suddenly plunged into corruption and chaos. Rome exulted in the rise of her proud empire, in the all-conquering sword of Julius Cæsar, the eloquence of Tully, the songs of Virgil and Horace, the wisdom of Seneca, and the taste of Augustus, claiming the dominion of the civilized world from Ethiopia to the Danube and from the Euphrates river to the Atlantic main. But the superiority of her arms, the elegance of her manners, the splendor of her art and letters, and the universality of her dominion scarce exceed a hundred years of history ere Rome trembles with the premonitions of her decline and fall. So soon, alas, may the national vigor be exhausted and the pride of a mighty race be humbled.

The spirit of discontent and rebellion was rapidly developing before Solomon's reign of forty years terminated. In his degeneracy the illustrious son of David not only formed alliances with many strange women and idolatrous nations in violation of the theocratic constitution, but he also heaped oppressive burdens of labor and taxation upon the people. Having lost that early spirit of devotion which made the building of the Temple a willing religious service, the people now looked back upon those levies and those toilings in forests and quarries as hardships and oppressions for which Solomon must be held responsible. To men who have surrendered their religious convictions and turned to a demoralizing and de-intellectualizing idolatry, what had formerly been done for conscience sake and for the glory of the national religion was now reckoned as servitude, wrong, and oppression. Here were men, and the children of men, who had made up the levies ordered by Solomon for the building of the Temple. Thirty thousand men had gone to Lebanon; 70,000 became bearers of burdens; 80,000 were hewers in the mountains; 3,600 were overseers. Hardships were, doubtless, suffered by these 183,000 laborers not unlike the hardships which were borne by the 360,000 men who toiled through twenty years in the construction of the great pyramid in Egypt.

With all the wealth and enlightenment of the age, the people had their grievances, real or imaginary. At the very time when the Temple was the joy of the whole earth, and when silver was as stones in Jerusalem, as at the time when Rome was grand with marble palaces and rich with the tribute of subjugated nations, or as when Athens was flourishing and prosperous in the brilliant age of Pericles, the people were losing, if they had not already lost, their ancient liberties and were being robbed of a just remuneration for their toil. The

displeasure of God, kindled by the idolatrous tendency of the times, and the discontent of the people, inspired by oppression, were very manifest. Ahijah, therefore, the prophet of the Most High, found a willing listener and apt pupil in Jeroboam, the champion of the rights of the common people, a man of mighty valor and of industry. The prophet, by a most dramatic illustration, taught Jeroboam his own destiny and the fate of the kingdom. He met the future king on the highway and, without a word, snatched from his shoulders his new garment, tore it into twelve pieces, handed him ten of the pieces and indicated by an act more eloquent than words that God was thus to tear the kingdom into fragments and destroy the national unity of the chosen people. He indicated further that Jeroboam was to lead the ten tribes in revolt and become their king while but two tribes were to remain loyal to the house of David.

This startling prophecy soon reached the ears of Solomon, who set about to thwart the purposes of God by laying plans to kill Jeroboam, whose valor and industry had heretofore commended him highly to the king's favor. The son of Nebat, this stalwart Jeroboam, with dreams of royalty and with a new-born ambition for power, found it convenient, as it was certainly most discreet and politic, to visit Egypt and seek protection of King Shishak I.

Prophecies, however, were out which were not to be recalled. The partition of the kingdom of David was inevitable. Rebellion, like subterranean fire intensifying its power for earthquake and volcanic eruption, was destined to culminate in revolution. The death of Solomon brought national affairs to a crisis. The elevation of Rehoboam, his son, to the throne, was the signal for the revolutionary fulfillment of Ahijah's prophecy. Jeroboam hastens up from Egypt, still the champion of the people as against the tyrannical oppression of the house of David. As the leader of the growing and politically justifiable rebellion he demands reforms from the new administration which will relieve the people of the heavy and galling yoke imposed on them by Solomon. The conditions were not wholly unlike those which later on in Rome called forth the patriotic Gracchi to champion the oppressed middle and lower classes against the prosperous nobles. Nor did they entirely differ from those conditions which gave Cromwell his opportunity in England. There was at least a call for a Gracchus or a Cromwell; better still, for a Washington. It is true, there was no purely political constitution in existence at that time guaranteeing the rights and liberties of the people. Royalty was absolute. Nevertheless, the people, even so early in the history of gov-

ernment, believed in the right of petition, and when they presented their grievances to Rehoboam they would have been as clearly justified in demanding of him certain guaranteed rights and privileges for the people, and certain checks and limitations to royal prerogative, as the barons of England were in demanding them of King John. Had the highest wisdom prevailed and righteous political ethics been recognized, the result might have been a Magna Charta, which would have preserved the unity of Israel, while Shechem, the scene of this conference, might have become Israel's Runnymede. But no, Rehoboam spurned the petition of the people. Though the old men of political experience who had formed his father's cabinet counseled moderation and reform, the hot-headed young men whom he had called about him advised out-and-out oppression, urging Rehoboam to the tyrannical and despotic utterance: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did load you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." If the people's grievances had heretofore been imaginary, they now were real. And as in the days of George III., the American colonists had their petition for right of grievance ignored and their burdens increased until they were forced to the Declaration of Independence, so the children of Israel were driven by the spirit of haughty tyranny to utter their Declaration of Independence in the memorable words: "To your tents, O Israel."

The catastrophe of national partition came with that shout of the people. In vain did Rehoboam send Adoram, his chief officer, to arbitrate with the rebels. In the insane rage of the moment, that wronged and insulted people stoned the king's messenger to death. This act showed clearly the determination of the revolutionists. Thenceforth, God's chosen people were two nations, at enmity with each other, with God, and with the world. Rehoboam had tested the temper of the people to the loss of his chosen officer and now hastened for personal safety to Jerusalem.

The ten tribes elected Jeroboam king of Israel, while Judah and Benjamin followed Rehoboam, the hereditary king of the house of David. The division of the Jewish monarchy was without doubt the most significant event in the history of that people since the establishment of the monarchy, if not since the original conquest of the land. Rehoboam, though graced with few virtues, was sensible enough to comprehend the terrible meaning of this great revolt against the house of David, and hence he could have possessed but a

craven and unkingly spirit had he instituted no measures for suppressing the rebellion and restoring the unity of the empire. With an alacrity, demonstrative of military genius, he marshalled an imposing army of 180,000 warriors to fight against the house of Israel, put down the rebellion, and restore the power of the Davidic dynasty. Imagination cannot depict the horrors which would have attended a war between these two angered, almost frenzied, sections of one great people. It was a merciful providence that interposed and prevented a most bloody and unnatural strife between brethren. Shemaiah, the prophet of God, revealed heaven's opposition to a conflict of arms; and in the name of the Lord bade the army of Judah disperse and every man go to his home, declaring that this calamity of national partition was of God. War was providentially averted. Nevertheless, in spirit, in their rivalries, ambitions, and hatreds, it may be said: "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days."

We now look upon the formation of the new kingdom of Israel. Whether Rehoboam fully understood the power of the Temple or not, certainly Jeroboam was shrewd enough to see that the most potent influence that would in the no distant future operate to bring the hearts of the rebelling tribes back to the national union was that Temple in Jerusalem and the sacred things it stood for. Can there be a doubt, whether Rehoboam was wise enough to discover it or not, that, but for the cunning of Jeroboam, the chosen people's national religion, the faith of their fathers, embodied in the sublime symbolism of the Temple and its worship, would have proved more powerful than armed legions in subduing rebellion, producing a reaction and finally securing a restoration of the national unity? Jeroboam was sagacious enough to see that if the people who had revolted should continue to worship at Jerusalem, their hearts might turn again to the faith of their fathers and they would be drawn back by their religious convictions to the house of David. To prevent this, a new religion was necessary, a national religion whose symbols and worship should be located within the national domains, easy of access to all the people, and where they could worship without visiting Jerusalem, at which place they would surely fall under the fascinating influence of the grand old faith. If they are to maintain their independence, they must sever their religious connection with the Temple as well as their political relations to the house of David. If they are to be a great nation of internal homogeneity and recognized national autonomy among the nations, they must have at the heart of their nationalism a religion.

And it must be distinctively a State religion. From it royalty must derive its authority, patriotism its inspiration, law its sanction, and the body politic its homogeneity. Jeroboam understood this, and he immediately set about counteracting the subtle, silent, and powerful influence of the Temple by making it unnecessary for the ten tribes of his kingdom to go to Jerusalem to worship. He introduced what may be called a composite worship in a mixture of Hebrew and Egyptian symbolisms. He had just returned from Egypt where he had been impressed with the idolatry represented in the symbol of the golden calf. In the olden time the children of Israel had felt the powerful influence of the same cultus, for, when Moses tarried in the mountain and the people in the Wilderness became restless, there seemed to be a demand for some visible manifestation of divine presence, for some image or symbol of supernatural power. Aaron, to satisfy this unspiritual demand, fashioned the golden calf before which the people worshiped as, doubtless, many of them had been taught to do in Egypt. Jeroboam, not satisfied, as was Aaron, with one golden calf, made two; not with a polytheistic idea that the divine is multiform, but with the political idea that the people must be accommodated, and the place of worship must be made as convenient to the tribes as possible. Therefore, he set up one golden calf at Dan, in the north, and another at Bethel in the south. The entire elaborate system of the idolatrous worship of the bull-image was established, with temples, altars, priests, and sacrifices. Jeroboam was too politic to forsake the entire Mosaic system; such a revolution would have shocked the people and would have created a reaction in favor of the old faith. He instituted a composite religion by mixing the idolatry of the bull-worship with the observances and priestly ministrations of the Hebrew religion. The feast of tabernacles was observed at the temple built on the heights of Bethel. The priests of this new religious ceremonialism were not recognized as of a special class or order, but were chosen from among the people of the lower classes, and as they volunteered or offered themselves. Jeroboam did not profess to introduce an entirely new religion but to restore the old faith of the fathers and the worship of Jehovah, who had delivered them from Egypt and led them safely through the Wilderness. He did not claim to introduce new gods, but he represented the bull-image as the symbol of the true God. His sin lay in his transgression of the fundamental law of the theocratic constitution, the representation of God by an image. His sin was like that of Aaron, which caused the anger of Moses and the destruction

of the golden calf in the Wilderness. The people seem to have acquiesced in Jeroboam's false notion that the golden calf was an image and symbol of Jehovah, although Jeroboam was held responsible for leading Israel into this sin of idolatry. All through the subsequent history of the kingdom, Jeroboam was made to carry the blame for Israel's departure from the true Jehovah-worship, and for her sin of idolatry. On the introduction of the bull-worship and the new method of choosing priests, many who had followed the political standard of Jeroboam rebelled and returned to the house of David and the temple worship. This false step taken by Jeroboam and followed by the people, brought upon Israel the displeasure of God. At the beginning of its history as a new and distinct monarchy the prophecy of Israel's calamities and destruction was delivered by Ahijah, the very prophet who had foretold the division of the kingdom of David and the elevation of Jeroboam to the throne of Israel. God's anger was manifest in the incident of the altar of Bethel, when Jeroboam's arm was withered as he raised it against God's prophet, and the altar was rent according to the prophet's word. Although the king's arm was restored by the intercession of the prophet, and the prophet himself was slain by the lion on account of his own disobedience, Jeroboam did not learn the lesson which these experiences and incidents were designed to teach. Though the curse of God had fallen upon the idolatrous altar of Bethel and upon the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria, the king continued to maintain the false worship which he had introduced and which was eventually to destroy the house of Jeroboam from off the face of the earth. The religion of Jeroboam was to him a political expedient; he supported the idolatry which he had introduced for political reasons. He had not, nor had many politicians of that day, accepted the canon which Daniel O'Connell, in his day, recognized, that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. A test of Jeroboam's real faith in the conglomerate religion which he had established in Israel came when his son, Abijah, fell sick. Then was it that Jeroboam sent his wife not to Bethel, not to Dan, not to the high places of the cities of Samaria, but to Shiloh and to the good old prophet Ahijah. Trouble tests his false religion and it fails him. He seeks the ministry of the religion of his fathers. His idolatry is but an hypocrisy; it may deceive the people, but the king knows it is false—a cruel sham and mockery.

The faithful wife and mother hastens in disguise to Shiloh. Ahijah's prophetic eye pierces the disguise she wears; he knows the woman

to be the wife of Jeroboam. He meets her with "heavy tidings." Not only is the godly child Abijah to die, but the curse of God is to rest upon the house of Jeroboam, and the kingdom of Israel is to be uprooted and ended.

In the fearful threatenings poured forth by the prophet that utter disappearance or annihilation of the ten tribes seems to be foretold, which in its realization has been regarded as one of the greatest mysteries of history.

CHAPTER II.

JUDAH AND HER KINGS.

AS we turn to trace the fortunes of the house of David from the calamitous division of the kingdom, we look upon as sad a record of religious degeneracy as Israel was making under the administration of Jeroboam. Judah turned to an idolatry even more degrading than the worship of the golden calf. This had been tolerated even in Solomon's time and became more widespread and deeply rooted under the reign of the weak and almost pusillanimous Rehoboam. The house of David had lost national control of the ten tribes of Israel as a punishment from God for the foreign alliances made by Solomon, which had introduced these corrupt forms of worship, yet neither Judah nor her king seemed disposed to profit by the lesson. The temple service was continued, it is true, and Rehoboam never permitted any heathen cultus to supplant the State religion. But the various forms of idolatry were tolerated by the State, the people supported them and became the devotees of symbols whose meaning it would be most indecent to explain. With the introduction of these corrupt and corrupting idolatries there came from the surrounding nations the most abandoned creatures that debase society, poison the public morals, and bring reproach to the national name. If there be proof anywhere it is here, that, though "Righteousness exalteth a nation, sin is a reproach to any people." Surely forsaking God and the spiritual worship of the one Infinite Spirit led these nations into the most degrading sins. Their idolatry bore the bitter fruit of the grossest immoralities. The abandonment of the faith of their fathers was the surrender of the purity, the honor, the greatness, and the prosperity of their fathers. National enervation followed national sin. Rehoboam had been on the throne but five years when he was attacked by a foreign power, his armies defeated, his capital taken, and his kingdom plundered. "Shishak, the king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem."

It is quite reasonable to suppose that Jeroboam, the ambitious and revengeful king of Israel, planned this Egyptian foray upon Jerusalem. He had been a voluntary exile in Egypt before the partition of the kingdom

and had there enjoyed the confidence and hospitality of Shishak. He may have incited the Egyptian king to this ambitious enterprise of conquest and spoliation, and he doubtless rejoiced in its success. It is just as probable that Shishak found it necessary to execute some bold stroke to stay his own tottering power and restore the ancient prestige of Egypt by the conquest of the greatest city in the world. He must have seen his opportunity just when the nation had been divided, and while only Judah and Benjamin would resist him. He could count on the sympathetic neutrality, if not the active coöperation, of the ten tribes of Israel.

Egypt had long been waiting for an opportunity to swallow up this nation which had made so great a history in the north. It had been awed by the power of Solomon, who had eclipsed in fame her greatest Pharaohs. The glory of Solomon had now passed away, but the cupidity of a Shishak was excited by dreams of the untold richness of the Holy City, which had never yet been plundered, and of the marvelous value of the gold-embellished Temple, which had never been despoiled of its sacred and costly treasures. The weakness of the dismembered kingdom of Solomon was the tempting opportunity of Egypt. Shishak brought to this invasion a formidable army of 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen, besides an innumerable host of foot soldiers. The power of Judah was not able to resist this mighty tide of Egyptian conquest. The fortified cities fell before the attacks of the invaders and Shishak marched in triumph to Jerusalem, where he plundered the Temple and the national treasures, and took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. These shields and targets, made by Rehoboam's father when Jerusalem was at the height of her prosperity, numbered no less than 500. Of these, 200 contained 600 shekels of beaten gold and 300 contained three pounds of fine gold apiece. The value of these shields has been variously estimated at from \$200,000 to \$2,000,000. But when we consider the fabulous richness of the Temple, and of the treasure which Solomon must have left his son and heir, it would be difficult to overestimate the value of the spoils

which Shishak secured at Jerusalem. Solomon's annual importation of gold has been estimated all the way from \$2,000,000 to \$20,000,000. Of this gold he made the shields and targets, overlaid his ivory throne, plated the twelve lions that stood by the steps of the throne, formed the elaborate drinking cups and royal plate. The treasures of the Temple consisted of the vessels, altars, tables, candlesticks, lamps, tongs, bowls, snuffers, basins, spoons, door hinges, and censers of pure gold, which Solomon made. To these were added the silver and gold vessels which David had dedicated. It will be remembered that David prepared for the Temple 100,000 talents of gold, and 1,000,000 talents of silver. By some writers this gold and silver of David's treasures has been calculated at the enormous value of over four billions of dollars. Though this may be an extravagant estimate, and though the invader may have spared many a sacred vessel, and may have left much of the beauty of the Temple uneffaced, still rich with its golden glory, there can be no doubt that Shishak found the treasures of the Temple and of the royal house of sufficient value to glut his ambition and vastly enrich his own depleted treasury. It would seem that the Egyptian's object was plunder rather than conquest, although the offended God had permitted his invasion as a punishment to the house of David for its idolatries, and had put a limit to his ambitious depredations on account of Judah's repentance. The record of this invasion by Shishak was preserved not only by the Jews, but also by the Egyptians. It was of sufficient historic importance, and its results were of sufficient credit and honor to Shishak and to Egypt, to warrant its preservation in elaborate record on the walls of Karnak. There, Egyptology, in this distant age, translates from mysterious hieroglyphics the eventful annals of that olden time.

Perhaps nothing more strikingly shows the rapid decline of Jerusalem from the age of Solomon than the fact that Rehoboam, robbed of his treasures, made shields of brass for the royal guards to take the place of the golden shields captured by Shishak. It was symbolic of the sudden decline from the golden age to the age of brass.

Rehoboam reigned seventeen years; Jeroboam of Israel survived him only five years. Abijah, the son and successor of Rehoboam, however, took up the cause of Judah, and the very next year after his father's death prepared to engage in war with the kingdom of Israel. The long-smouldering fires of enmity were to break forth. Judah had been greatly humbled and impoverished by the Egyptian invasion, but during the ten or twelve succeeding years

she had rapidly recovered, and now Abijah was able to put an army of 400,000 valiant men into the field. Jeroboam's superior strength was immediately manifest by a quick levy of twice as great an army as Abijah's, and 800,000 mighty men of valor were ready for the conflict. It doubtless seemed that the numerical superiority of Israel's forces must be sufficient to daunt the courage, quench the ambition, and check the warlike inclinations of Judah. But, nothing daunted, Abijah led his forces to the conflict, prefacing the battle with an oration which might have been a credit to Demosthenes when hurling his invectives against the Macedonian Philip. He claimed to be fighting for the cause of God and the faith of the fathers against a nation which had rebelled against both. He went to battle neither fearing the superior strength of his enemy nor placing his confidence in Judah's valor, but crying: "God himself is with us for our captain." In spite of the strategy of Jeroboam, who surrounded the army of Judah with a skillfully planned ambush, Abijah led his valiant men to signal victory, and proved, as has often been proved in history, the fallacy of the epigram: "God always marches with the heaviest battalions." This battle was Jeroboam's Waterloo. Of the 800,000 mighty men of valor who entered the field 500,000 perished — more than the entire army of Judah. Victory was with the weaker army because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. Jeroboam never recovered from this blow, and he survived the terrible defeat but three or four years.

While Abijah's project of subduing the rebellious tribes and restoring the unity of the divided nations failed, he brought great prestige to the house of David and prepared the way for a revival of Judah's ancient glory. Though Abijah reigned but three years, he displayed a remarkable and manifold talent. He was an orator, a statesman, and a general of consummate ability. Although he followed his father in sin, he greatly excelled him in genius. While his zeal for the faith of the fathers and for the cause of God may have been more patriotic and political than spiritual, certain it is that he had the wisdom to see that national idolatry meant national ruin, and the violation of the fundamental law of the theocratic constitution was fatal to peace and prosperity. Hence, his eloquent, thrilling cry of warning from Mount Zemaraim: "O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper."

The faithful in Judah, who had not forsaken the worship of Jehovah for the heathen cults which had been introduced since the days of Solomon and his alliances with the Pharaohs, may have had evil forebodings on the ascend-

ency of Asa to the Davidic throne. He had been educated in idolatry by a mother, or queen-mother, who lent her royal patronage to the support and propagation of a system of idolatry the most unchaste and degrading imaginable. It would not have been unreasonable for the people to expect Asa would yield to the influence of Maacah, especially as he came to the throne in youth. Alexander the Great, though resenting her political interference, admitted the power of his mother's tears, and Charles IX. of France who sanctioned the St. Bartholomew massacre carried out the cruel behest of his mother, Catherine de Medici. What may not young Asa be instigated to do by that idolatrous queen-mother, is doubtless an anxious question by many a patriot in Jerusalem. But Asa, more like young Edward III. of England, who broke away from Isabella's intriguing influence and deprived her of both her power and her liberty, found it necessary to degrade his queen-mother from her royal position and to institute a crusade against the idolatrous abominations which her patronage had done so much to encourage and establish. For ten years after Judah's signal victory over Israel tranquility and prosperity came to the house of David. During this era of peace Asa prosecuted a relentless warfare against idolatry, uprooting the heathen forms of worship and the immoralities attending them, and bringing the people back to the worship of Jehovah. This religious reformation was attended by an industrial revival and a regeneration of popular patriotism. By the natural laws governing the affairs of men this renewal of prosperity and patriotism must ever follow a moral awakening. The idolatries introduced among the people led them to sins of drunkenness and licentiousness which not only enervated them, but also indisposed them to labor and economy and robbed them of the power and the mind to work. When poverty followed idleness and excess, softness and drunkenness, the love of country perished — perished with the love of righteousness and the love of toil. But when a religious revival brought the people back to the good, old-fashioned habits of temperance, honor, and chastity, there followed a new physical life, a new spirit of activity which took to honest industry and the creation of new national prosperity. With peace and plenty smiling upon a land once more basking in the light of God's favor, Asa proceeded to put into practice the political maxim formulated in later ages: "In time of peace prepare for war." Asa, possessing a talent for statesmanship and sovereignty equal to his genius for religious and social reform, fortified the cities of his realm. He thereby gave the regenerated spirit of industry an opportunity to bring contentment and pros-

perity to the people. This king, moreover, formed an army of nearly 600,000 men. His military foresight was demonstrated at the close of the ten years of peace during which he had given the people work to do in building and fortifying his frontier cities. Zerah the Ethiopian, led an army 1,000,000 strong against Judah. This Egyptian army was made up of about the same elements that composed the forces of Shishak — largely Ethiopian. Zerah had doubtless been inspired with the ambition of conquest by the success of his great-grandfather, Shishak the Egyptian, who, years before, had captured Jerusalem and carried away great spoil. The Ethiopian, however, found Judah better prepared to resist foreign invasion than at any time since the days of Solomon, and he met in Asa a military genius such as Shishak did not meet in Rehoboam. Moreover, there had been a great religious reformation since the days of Rehoboam, and the people had been inspired with the ancient faith in God and now went to battle under Asa as Joshua's men, and David's legions, and Gideon's band, and Abijah's army went to battle — in the name of the Lord of Hosts. We now again find the historians using language similar to that which made the old records so eloquent — the language that celebrates the providential deliverance of God's people: "The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah." As Alexander the Great with less than 50,000 men met the Persian host of 1,000,000, and swept them from the plain of Gaugamela like chaff before the wind, so, in the valley of Zephathah, Asa met the overwhelming odds of the Ethiopian host, and drove them before his prayer-strengthened legions, and destroyed them as if they had been leaves to a tornado or stubble to the flames. Not content with merely resisting the Ethiopian invasion, Asa almost literally carried the war into Africa. He invaded the Philistine country and pursued the routed and panic-stricken forces of Zerah as they retreated toward Gerar, capturing the cities as he swept along with the mighty swing of conquest. With great spoil the victorious army of Judah returned to Jerusalem to be greeted with the universal acclaim which voiced the patriotic joy of the people. This battle in the glorious valley of Zephathah was the only instance in which the Hebrews ever met and defeated the army of a great nation in open field battle, and it must remain an ever-memorable event in the annals of the chosen people.

The monuments of Egypt again seem to give us corroborative evidence of this important invasion in the time of Asa. One of the monuments found in the ruins of Bubastis, in Lower Egypt, bears the record of an invasion of Asia,

including Palestine and Syria, by the great-grandson of Shishak I. The time of the invasion comes within the forty-one years of Asa's reign at Jerusalem, and although the Jews gave the invading king of Ethiopia the name of Zerah, which was a common name to them and signifying "the rising sun," the Egyptian records indicate that this would-be conqueror, this new, ambitious "rising sun," was Usarken I. or Usarken II. Champollion, who had not access to this recently discovered record of Bubastis, nevertheless argued that Zerah might have been an Egyptian king of an Ethiopian dynasty. Other scholars have supposed that Zerah was but the general of an army which had been largely recruited in Ethiopia and sent out to invade Syria and Palestine. Asa's splendid victory received the approval of God through his prophet Azariah, who went to meet the king and his army as they returned in triumph from the war. The success which God had granted his arms inspired Asa with still greater zeal for the extirpation of idolatry and the restoration of the true national religion. Idolatry was forbidden, and the worship of Jehovah was enforced by the most severe laws. Upon no form of idolatry did Asa vent his iconoclastic indignation with greater zeal than upon the indecent system to which his queen-mother was devoted. The renewal of the reform which Asa had inaugurated with his elevation to the throne was attended and followed by another season of prosperity, while peace once more blessed the land for many happy years.

When Asa was again called upon to resist a threatened encroachment upon the national rights of Judah he had to deal with the regicide Baasha, who had assassinated Nadab, annihilated the entire house of Jeroboam, and usurped the throne of Israel. Baasha conceived the project of preventing all international trade and communication by building Ramah, a sort of frontier guard-station, a fortified eminence overlooking the country north of Jerusalem. This ambitious usurper may have had dreams of conquest, and the building of Ramah may have been but the first step taken toward an invasion of Judah and the capture of Jerusalem. Be this as it may, the self-crowned king of Israel found more than his military equal in Asa, who successfully defeated his peculiar international policy, scattered Ramah as by a cyclone, and with the debris rebuilt and fortified Geba and Mizpeh.

Although Asa was once more successful in his military operations, he offended God and contradicted his own record by seeking the assistance of Benhadad of Syria. The zeal of his youth seems to have declined, or his long reign of peace and prosperity must have had an

enervating influence upon him, so that he neither had the confidence in his own military strength nor the faith in God by which, without any foreign aid, he had met and repulsed the Ethiopian invasion. Long and prosperous was this reign of Asa, and, although in the last years the king was sorely afflicted with the gout, brought on possibly by high living to which the peace and prosperity of the land were the temptations, he had accomplished a great work for the cause of true religion and for his country which was recognized by the people in the pomp and magnificence of the ceremonies with which he was laid to rest in the City of David.

The sun of prosperity which had so gloriously risen on Judah did not decline with Asa's death. His son Jehoshaphat proved to be a worthy son of an illustrious father. When Edmund Burke listened to William Pitt, the younger, as he entered the British Parliament, he exclaimed: "It is not a chip of the old block, it is the old block itself." So might one have said of Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa. Not only did he display military talent and sagacity equal to his father's, but he also caught the same spirit of progress and reform. Moreover, this enlightened king understood the power of books and the influence of the teacher. He inaugurated an educational movement by sending teachers of the law through the land to instruct the people in justice, patriotism, and religion. He organized a perambulating common school, an itinerant college, or a national university extension movement.

Jehoshaphat saw, as Luther saw centuries after, that a permanent reformation must be based on a universal intelligence, and that good government must find its pledge of support and perpetuity in enlightened reason and educated public conscience. Luther, it is said, brought the schoolmaster into the cottage of Germany. And the Reformation brought the schoolhouse into the community. When the Pilgrims came to New England, side by side with the forge, the church, the home, they planted the common school as early as 1647. The security of this American Republic and the stability of the British empire have been guaranteed by the universal intelligence of a people who have maintained an enlightening and civilizing educational system. In addition to the educational methods which Jehoshaphat adopted, he rehabilitated the judiciary of the country. The courts were purified, and by a very wise civil service judges were chosen for their probity and righteousness. By a correct internal economy and international policy trade revived and commerce flourished, wealth increased and prosperity, both temporal and spiritual, blessed the nation as it had not been

favored since the division of the original kingdom. This was the bright renaissance of Judah. With its wealth, enlightenment, and progress along all the lines of civilization it reminds us of the later age when Lorenzo de Medici was at the head of the Florentine republic, while commerce, art and letters, came to such a splendid development that Italy was recognized as the intellectual torch-bearer of the nations of awakened Europe.

The influence of Jehoshaphat's reign was felt by the surrounding nations, and the Philistines and Arabians paid him willing tribute for the moral and intellectual, no less than for the commercial, benefits which they acknowledged had come to them by his liberal and enlightened administration.

For the first time since the dismemberment, attempts were now made to establish amicable relations between the two great divisions of the kingdom. Jehoshaphat and Ahab formed an alliance and the king of Judah went on a visit to the king of Israel in Samaria, where he was received most royally and entertained with the hospitality befitting his high station and his universal renown. Some such magnificence may have characterized the meeting of these kings in the bright noonday of their prosperity as story relates of the meeting of Henry VIII. of England and Francis I. of France on the field of the cloth of gold, when kings vied with each other in the generosity of their courtesies and in the lavish display of their riches and honors. It was doubtless with the most worthy motive of strengthening the good feeling between the two nations and with a view to their future peace and reciprocity that Jehoshaphat consented to join Ahab in the vain and fatal attempt to take Ramoth Gilead from the Syrians. Still later, and in the same spirit of good will toward Israel, Jehoshaphat yielded to the entreaty of Jehoram, king of Israel, and assisted him in his attempt to subdue the rebellion of Moab. In this patriotic effort to suppress rebellion the prophet Elisha gave the kings assurance of success. This assurance, however, was given for the sake of Jehoshaphat rather than of Jehoram, for, although Elisha was a prophet of Israel, not of Judah, he was inimical to Jehoram's idolatrous policy and in hearty sympathy with the reformatory spirit and policy of Jehoshaphat. It was doubtless the assistance of the king of Judah that would enable Israel to hold Moab, for in this support the help of Elisha and of Elisha's God would be secured. Jehoram had driven Mesha, the king of Moab, to his fortified capital, Kir-haraseth, but was unable to prosecute a successful siege without the aid of the king of Edom and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. Even then the allied armies were threatened

with defeat by the drought until Elisha prophesied a providential deliverance by a miraculous supply of water in the ditches for the famishing men and beasts. The morning saw the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy in abundance of water flowing through the ditches from the direction of Edom. Here was wrought a twofold deliverance: the water supply saved the allied armies from perishing and the appearance of the water deceived the rebels into making a fatal blunder. As the sun rose and shone upon the water in the ditches it gave it the appearance of blood, and Mesha supposed it meant that the allied kings had gone to battle among themselves and this blood was flowing from the field of carnage. Thus deceived, he ordered not an attack of arms but a rush for the spoil. The Moabites in a great mob, without order or discipline, threw themselves upon the allied forces only to be annihilated. Mesha, determined to escape from his capital, rallied a little band of only 700 desperate followers and, with drawn swords, made a gallant dash for liberty, but they were hurled back by the king of Edom. Then in desperation the defeated king, to the astonishment and horror of his victorious enemies, offered his own son and royal heir as a burnt offering on the wall of Kir-haraseth. It was enough to fill the allies of Israel with indignation. The forces of Judah and Edom turned and left the field, forcing Jehoram to raise the siege and give up the attempt to suppress a rebellion, which, after all, seemed quite justifiable. Was the withdrawal of Judah equivalent to the withdrawal of God's favor and the revocation of Elisha's prophecy of success? Moab had been oppressed by the exorbitant taxation of Israel and doubtless had a just cause in striking for their independence. Those simple shepherds of Moab had paid to Israel a bankrupting tribute of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 sheep with the wool, and they could stand it no longer; hence their attempted independence.

Archæology again becomes the handmaid of history in the discovery of the Moabite Stone on which is preserved the record of this conflict between Moab and Israel. For nearly 2,800 years this stone, inscribed with characters similar to those in which David and Solomon wrote, has stood as a monument of Moab's successful rebellion. To this distant time it becomes, even in its fragments, an unimpeachable witness to the veracity of the Hebrew Scriptures. This priceless relic of antiquity was discovered at Dhiban in the land of Moab in 1868; it had been known to the Arabs, doubtless, from time immemorial and was made known to a German missionary, Rev. F. A. Klein, by an Arab sheik. When found, the stone, four feet long and two feet wide, containing about 1,000 words, in

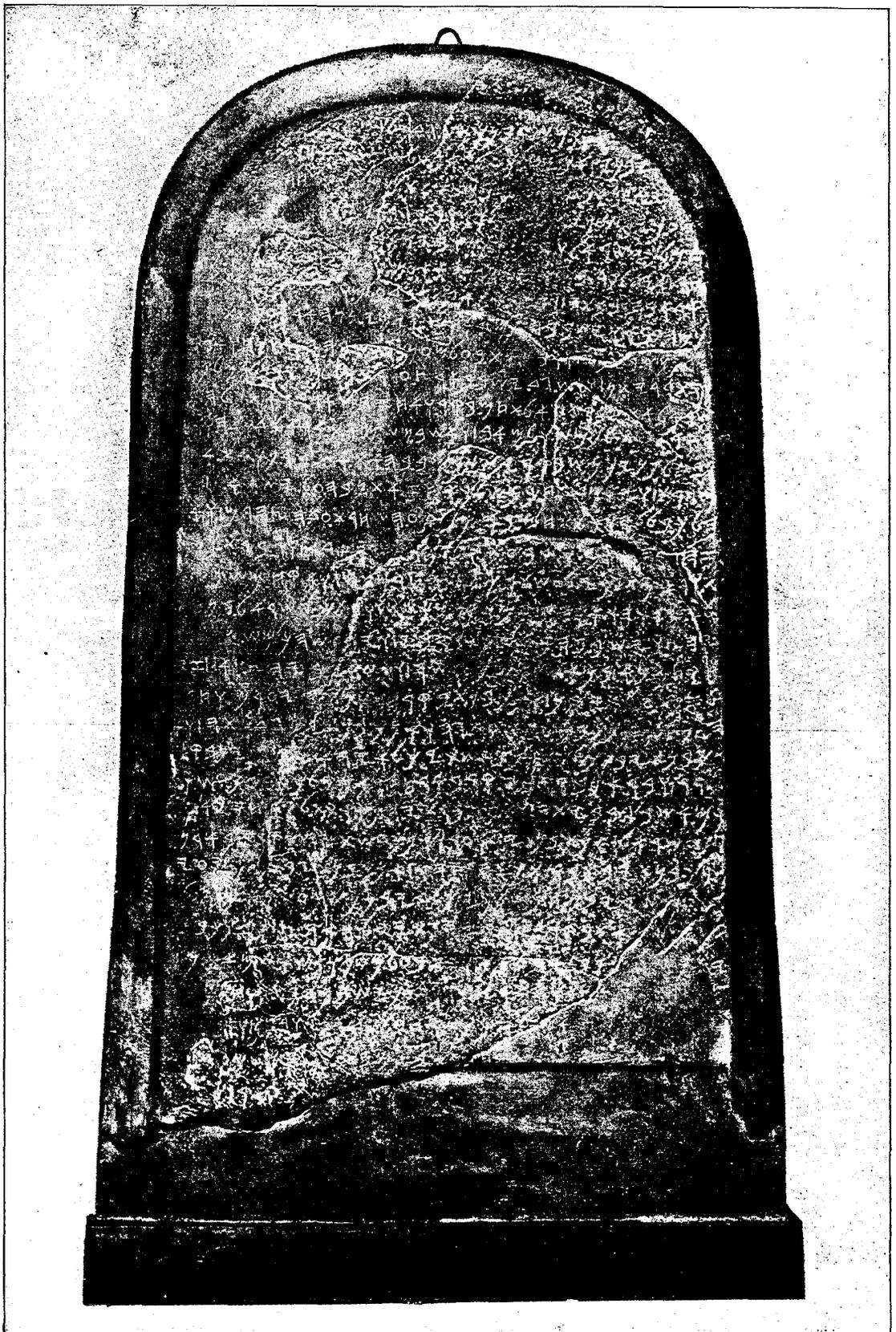
thirty-four lines, was in a remarkably fine state of preservation. But when the French and Prussian consuls entered into a rivalry to negotiate for the purchase of the monument and thereby excited the cupidity of the Arabs and Turks, the Arabs, in revenge for the interference of the governor of the region, heated the stone with fire and then threw water upon it which caused it to burst into pieces. These pieces, however, were collected by French and English travelers and explorers, and, finally, at the suggestion of Dean Stanley, the English turned the fragments in their possession over to the French. Now, in the Louvre, the stone of cemented fragments is preserved. Fortunately, a squeeze of the stone had been taken before it was broken, and thus the record in its un mutilated perfection was secured. This stone, bearing its inscription in Phœnician characters, written before Homer's time, records the deeds of Mesha, king of Moab, the oppression of Israel and the rebellion of Moab against that oppression. It preserves the names of cities mentioned in the Book of Numbers and which existed 1500 B. C. and were still flourishing 900 B. C., but have since disappeared. It is, moreover, in remarkable geographical harmony with the Scriptures of the Hebrews. While this stone mentions names of kings and of peoples found in the Bible, it also preserves a record of the vastly important fact that the worship of Jehovah dates back of 900 B. C. and was well known by the surrounding nations to be the religion of Israel.

Archæology has also apparently discovered the site of Kir-haraseth, the capital city of Mesha, which was besieged by the combined armies of Israel, Edom, and Judah, and on whose walls the king offered his son as a burnt offering. The difficulties which Jehoram and Jehoshaphat encountered in their vain attempt to put down the rebellion of Moab are accounted for in the very situation of Kir-haraseth. It is an inland Gibraltar; a natural fortress, almost inaccessible. Hence, while the invading army was able to "beat down the cities" as they drove the Moabites before them, and on every good piece of land cast every man a stone and filled it, when they came to the capital, to which Mesha retired, it is said: "in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it." The discovery of this ancient city throws confirmatory light upon the history of Israel's attempt to subdue the Moabite rebellion.

As those Moabites felt justified in their rebellion against Israel for levying upon them a crushing tax or tribute, after the destructive but ineffectual attempt which had been made to bring them to submission, they seem to have harbored a feeling of resentment against Jehoshaphat for interfering and assisting Jehoram. The memory of the unjust interference rankled in their hearts until they planned in revenge an invasion of Judah, with an allied army of Moabites, Edomites, and Ammonites. The news of the approach of this vast army filled Jehoshaphat with consternation, and, though he could have put an army of 1,000,000 valiant men into the field under command of his five experienced generals, he proclaimed a fast instead and went to prayer. All Judah stood before the Lord. The remarkable prophecy comes that they shall not need to fight but simply to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Little did they realize what the next morning would reveal to them. Jehoshaphat gave a most remarkable order. He appointed not archers, not slingers, not great generals, but singers! He then commanded them to lead on the hosts of Judah with the voice of praise, singing, not of bravery, nor of country, nor of war, but singing of the beauty of holiness and of the mercy of the Lord. It calls to mind the event of our own times when the German legions in the late Franco-Prussian war rushed into battle singing Luther's well-known hymn:

"Ein' Feste Burg ist Unser Gott,"

or of Cromwell's Ironsides at Naseby and Marston Moor marching to the conflict singing the psalms. But, unlike the German legions or the Puritan Ironsides, the army of Judah had not to strike a blow. As they advanced toward Engedi and came near to the watchtower in the wilderness they were startled by the awful spectacle which greeted them. The battle had been fought. The field was strewn with the slain. The invading army was completely annihilated. When the hosts of Judah began to sing, the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, against whom the Lord had set ambushments, began to slay one another, and the carnage continued among themselves until all were slain or had fled. This remarkable event filled the surrounding nations with awe, inspired them with a wholesome reverence for Jehoshaphat and the house of David, and ushered in a new era of peace, prosperity, and happiness, such as had not been known for seventy-five years.



From a Photograph.

THE MOABITE STONE.

CHAPTER III.

THE APOSTASY OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

HOW has it fared with the ten tribes of Israel since Jeroboam's death? The spirit of rebellion which had created the revolt against the house of David became a menace to the stability of the new kingdom as soon as its founder passed away. We see in the history of Israel a parallel of Imperial Rome after it had begun its decline. Idolatry is attended with social degeneracy, licentiousness, drunkenness, intrigue, assassination, and even suicide in high places. Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, reigns but two years when rebellion breaks out and he is assassinated by Baasha, the general-in-chief of his army. After this regicide usurps the throne he exterminates the house of Jeroboam. So speedily is the prophecy of Ahijah fulfilled and Jeroboam's dynasty ended.

Baasha was succeeded by his son Elah who, like Nadab, reigned but two years when a conspiracy was hatched against him and, while he was drinking himself drunk, Zimri, the captain of his chariots, assassinated him and usurped the throne. Zimri exterminated the house of Baasha. Thus did history repeat itself and the house of Baasha was destroyed as Baasha had himself destroyed the house of Jeroboam. This extinction of the house of Baasha was foretold by the prophet Jehu. Zimri reigned but seven days. He was declared a conspirator and usurper. Omri was elected king by the soldiers and immediately marched against and captured the city of Tirzah. Zimri, losing heart and seeing the fortunes of the day turn against him, set fire to the royal palace and miserably perished in the conflagration. A conflict now arose, evidently between the civilians and the soldiery, as to who should assume the crown. The people were divided between Tibni and Omri. Civil war ensued and there was danger of the kingdom of Israel breaking to pieces. The very spirit that created the division between the ten tribes and the house of David threatened now to disrupt the new monarchy. It had been with the greatest difficulty that this people maintained their unity. Their kings had found it necessary to tax their ingenuity to the utmost to prevent a reunion with Judah. They had to invent a religion, build temples to rival Solomon's, attempt to construct fortified cities between the two nations to guard against the intercommunication of the people, and, with all this, it demanded the best genius of their rulers to preserve internal peace and secure a homogeneous body

politic. Several times in this sad history Israel seemed on the very brink of national disintegration, if not of vicious and brutal anarchy.

It happened here, as it often happened later on in Rome, that the civilians and soldiery were in political conflict. The most cruel and destructive results came from these clashings of civil and military interests. As between Omri and Tibni it was an unequal contest. The soldiery usually won the day at Rome. The soldiery won the day in Israel. Tibni and his civilians, at best but a volunteer army of raw recruits, unused to arms, were not able to stand against Omri and his well-armed, disciplined men of war; therefore, the quaint old record very significantly says: "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned." How dark, cruel and terrible is this history of Israel! How vividly it calls up the later history of the Roman emperors, a race of imperial sots and assassins! Caligula reigned less than four years and was murdered in a conspiracy. Claudius reigned twelve years and was poisoned. Nero committed suicide after a reign of fourteen years. Galba was assassinated seven months after he assumed the purple. Otho committed suicide at the end of three months. Vitellius was executed after reigning eight months. Domitian ruled fifteen years, but was then assassinated. Commodus was strangled to death in his bed at the end of a twelve years' reign. Pertinax was beheaded ere he had been emperor three months. Then the throne was offered to the highest bidder at auction. The successful purchaser, Didius Julianus, lost his head at the expiration of two months. Surely these two pictures, though separated by a thousand years, resemble each other in their dark, cruel, and bloody aspects, and show with what struggles and agonizings humanity has found its way to social enlightenment, to just government, and to universal brotherhood.

We have found the name of Omri on the Moabite Stone, cut thereon 900 B. C. He was the soldiers' king and came to the throne by the twofold power of the ballot and the sword. His reign was characteristically military. He saw with a soldier's eye that Tirzah was not the best location that could be chosen for the capital of the empire. David had displayed true military wisdom in planting the capital of the United Kingdom at Jerusalem. Omri, with equal sagacity, saw the military advantage of the hill of Samaria, purchased it, and there built the city to which he transferred the seat of government. With a taste for war rather

than for the higher and more refined arts of peace, Omri permitted the nation to sink deeper and deeper into the abominations of idolatry, and, as though the wickednesses which he tolerated were too gross to be put upon record, the historians seem to pass by his reign of twelve years with averted faces, content with declaring him to be the most dissolute and heathenish king that had as yet disgraced the throne of Israel. The nation plunges swiftly to its fall. The apostasy comes to its climax of impiety and reaps its most vicious harvest in the reign of Ahab. This degenerate son of a degenerate father seems inspired to out-Nero Nero, and make the sins of his predecessors insignificant as compared with his own enormities. He marries Jezebel, a Zidonian, and introduces Baal-worship as the national religion and associates with it the worship of Astarte, the Assyrian Venus, with the groves, and the high places, and the Baal temple with its altar and ceremonialism. The worship of Jehovah becomes a thing of the past, and with that pure, spiritual worship have vanished the sturdy righteousness, the chastity, and the honor which in the days of old made men proud to boast that they were Israelites.

Virtue, however, had not utterly disappeared except from high places. Now and then a brave, great soul appears like a star breaking through the universal cloud, or a comet shooting, bright and glorious, athwart the impenetrable gloom. The people, however, do not long remain wiser and purer than their leaders. Can a Pericles, a Nero, a Lorenzo de Medici, a Louis XIV. become licentious without corrupting the social body? Do not the Athenians ape their leader? Do not the Romans, high and low, plunge into Claudian vices? Do not the Florentines, from the workshop to the convent and from the kitchen to the nunnery,

catch the infection of Medicean worldliness? Do not the Parisians in all ranks of society take their cue of immorality from the reigning Bourbon? And do not the Israelites look to Ahab and Jezebel for instruction in unrighteousness? Wickedness had strengthened itself in the alliance of an Ahab and a Jezebel. Society's tendency to corruption increases tenfold when a corrupt and vicious woman becomes the power behind the throne. The immoral influence of Aspasia upon Pericles and Athens has been looked upon as more subversive of the social integrity and the national honor, even in the Golden Age of Grecian culture, than the calamity and demoralization of political intrigues and of war. The Roman republic fell, not before the ambition of a Julius Cæsar, but before the shameless profligacy which had become fashionable through the influence of Marc Antony, who had been bewitched by the voluptuousness of a Cleopatra. The Claudian orgies which set the fashion for social Rome of imperial times were the invention not only of the bestial Cæsar but also of his almost inhuman consorts, Messalina and Agrippina. Louis XIV. was not alone responsible for the fact that during his reign in Parisian society "the ten commandments were at a pretty pass." There were such profligate powers behind the throne and surrounding it as Montspan and her associates.

The Zidonian Jezebel was the power behind the throne of Israel—the idolatrous, licentious, wicked power. All society was poisoned and corrupted by her influence. "If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch." There is not only a ditch, but a yawning, bottomless gulf of chaos and destruction opening before that God-forgetting, Baal-worshipping nation, and they are blindly, madly rushing into the chasm, following the fashion in vice set them by Ahab and Jezebel.

CHAPTER IV.

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE.

NOW is the time for the appearance of a great man. He is the offspring of a common and imperative need. He is rocked in the cradle of national peril and nursed at the bosom of angered righteousness. A great reformer is the child of an important, critical transitional epoch. He is a Noah when the floods threaten universal devastation. He is a Joseph when the famine stalks abroad. He is a Moses when oppression crushes and the time is ripe for a mighty exodus. He is a Daniel when the conqueror's yoke becomes heavy. He is a John the Baptist, to preach repentance

and herald a new kingdom. He is an Alfred or a Charlemagne when empires must be lifted from the shifting sands and planted on new and sure foundations. He is a Savonarola to rebuke the worldliness of the age, and save the letters, arts, and manners from corruption. He is a Wycliffe, a Huss, a Luther of protest when ecclesiastical tyranny is riveting shackles on human conscience and reason. What an age was this! Truth bound to the stake; Religion on her face and weeping in the dust; Morality a laughingstock; Virtue an outcast; Error wielding the scepter; Unbelief wearing the

crown; Vice victorious; Crime conqueror; the gulf yawning; the times drunk with idolatry and licentiousness; the nation doomed. It is the time for the appearance of a great reformer. And he comes. He appears suddenly as if he had just stepped from a chariot of fire, let down out of heaven. Suddenly, as a thunderbolt, he leaps into the presence of the king. A strange man with an eye to make kings quail; heavy brows; long, thick hair flowing over his back like a lion's mane; a girdle of leather about his loins; a mantle of sheep skin thrown across his brawny shoulders; a voice that has learned its elocution from the thunder— "Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead." This is the first appearance of this remarkable man, who looks as if he has power in him and a purpose. He utters but one sentence: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew or rain these years, but according to my word," and he is gone. One blinding flash of lightning, and Ahab is left alone there, trembling like Belshazzar, later on, when he saw the writing of his doom on the palace wall.

Elijah was no diplomat of the Talleyrand school; no oily policy characterized his methods. His words had a "siss" to them, like hot bullets; his manner was quick and blunt, like a cannon's. He had the courage to bring an unwelcome message, to hurl a bombshell of rebuke right into the royal palace and into the midst of the idolatrous foolery of the times. He put all he had to say on that first occasion into one sentence. They sometimes get a great deal of danger into one torpedo. Ahab must have thought so when that sentence struck his conscience: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew or rain these years, but according to my word."

Like John the Baptist, this Elijah was an ascetic, a recluse, a stern, uncompromising man, full of moral iron, and powder, and electricity; sent into the world evidently to explode: to blow things up and to turn the world upside down. There must have been some such consternation in the City of Samaria as Savonarola created in Florence, when, with his thunder-toned eloquence, he predicted famine, pestilence, and war, as the punishment of God upon the worldly city and its sinful people! An English statesman said at the close of his career: "Were I to begin life again, it would be as an agitator." Elijah began his life as an agitator, and was a reformer from the first day he unsealed his volcanic lips in holy rebuke and retributive prophecy.

Here is an incarnation of the grand conviction, "the Lord, he is God." He is set against the degrading idolatry of his time. The worship of Baal was an offense that stirred his

heart to fiery indignation. It was not enough that he should utter solemn warnings; he must prophesy calamities and judgments. The very clouds obey him, as the sun and moon of old were obedient to the command of Joshua. He is in league with the God who rules the heavens, whose power can turn a garden to a desert waste or transform a barren land to fruitfulness, God has spoken through men only to be unheeded; now he will speak through nature in answer to his servant's prayers. The rain and the dew are withheld from the pastures and vineyards of Israel; the lilies wither in the valley and the roses fade on Sharon's fertile plain; the vine droops fruitless on the sunny slopes of Carmel and the pools become stagnant and dry before the panting flocks, while drought, famine, and death stalk through the land. During the drought God takes care of his prophet; he has still other work for him to do. "I will command the ravens to feed thee," is his promise. The miracle by which the barrel of meal and cruse of oil of the widow of Zarephath failed not during the long famine, and the still more wonderful miracle by which the widow's dead son was restored to life were but incidental. Elijah did not come to perform miracles, as the Christ did not; these were incidental to their ministries and confirmatory of their divine authority. Elijah, by the display of this miraculous power, became sufficiently accredited as a prophet of Jehovah. Not only the widow of Zarephath, but every man and woman in Israel, even unto Ahab and Jezebel, should by this manifestation of power be able and willing to say: "Now, by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." This Elijah is to speak again. A second time he faces the king to denounce his idolatry, to show the hollowness of the Baal-worship and to demonstrate the genuineness of the Jehovah religion. There is a serious misunderstanding between the prophet and the king. Ahab indignantly charges Elijah, the prophet, with the trouble into which the nation has been plunged, too blind to see that these woes are the result of his own wickedness. He has been sowing to the wind and is now reaping the whirlwind. Jezebel has helped to sow for this harvest of calamities. She has introduced indecent idolatries, brought the priests of Ashtoreth to her own table, killed the prophets of God, and instigated the destruction of the altars of the divine religion. But Elijah had been felt. From Bethel to Dan and from the royal palace to the humblest shepherd's cot, that name "Elijah" had become a terror in the land. There was a spirit of inquiry abroad; calamity had set the people to thinking, questioning, reasoning, and there seemed to be a growing

disposition to discuss the philosophy of their serious national condition. This was a good sign. Undoubtedly Elijah understood the temper of the people when he issued a challenge to the whole nation to come and discuss the situation. Ahab was enough of a politician to see that in accepting the prophet's challenge he was but voicing the sentiment of the restless, suffering, discontented public. Elijah throws down the gauntlet to all the priests of Baal and to all the priests of Jezebel's abominable and indecent idolatry. The great question shall be decided in the presence of all the people. No closed doors; no tickets of special invitation—except to the priests of Baal, and they come 450 strong. The cunning prophets of the groves remain away. But all the nation come; no tent can hold them; no temple is large enough to give them standing room; they swarm up the dry slopes of Carmel, pouring in from all the land. It is a strange multitude, wan and hunger-pinched. Their flocks are perishing; their land has yielded no harvest; their horses, mules, and beasts of burden, all are dying. A commission has been sent forth to gather forage, but all in vain. Carmel is yellow; the plains are parched and the valleys are streamless with the drought. The people come by hundreds and by thousands, anxious to see and hear this prophet who foretold their calamities, and whose word kept the heavens closed against their flocks and fields. And now, only one man stands up against the world to defend the truth, to prove the divinity of Jehovah-worship, to confound the champions of infidelity and to overwhelm the powers of a demoralizing, nation-ruining idolatry. The learning of the land is against him; the wealth of the land is against him; the political power of the land is against him; and the people of the land are against him.

"There stood one faith against the whole world's unbelief."

It is one of the most dramatic scenes of human history, with the mountain for the stage, Elijah and the priests of Baal for the actors, and a whole nation as awe-struck spectators. The prophet, with a magnificent faith and courage, thunders forth the startling proposition: "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." At last the people speak; their pent-up feeling breaks all the barriers of restraint; they have been conquered by the majestic confidence of the prophet, and with excitement they cry in response to the fair, logical, eloquent proposition: "It is well spoken."

In that far-off time there was to be a demonstration of Abraham Lincoln's homely axiom, "You can fool some of the people all the time, you can fool all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

The people had been fooled long enough. They now demanded that something be proven and settled. Halting between two opinions must cease. The challenge is accepted, the altars are prepared with their sacrifices. The priests of Baal have the first argument—they lead the debate. They cry to Baal for a demonstration of his power; they cry and slash themselves with knives and in frenzy leap upon the altars. From morn till noon and from noon till night they make a spectacle of themselves before the assembled nation. In the midst of their cries of frenzy, a loud, almost hilarious voice is heard above the din. Elijah mocks them. For once his grim countenance relaxes; his sides shake with the laughter of triumphant ridicule, and he fairly roars out: "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." One of the few witticisms of sacred record, but a masterpiece of sarcasm and a telling argument. The people must have felt its overwhelming logic. Raving, panting, cursing, bleeding, and despairing, the priests of Baal desist in very exhaustion. No fire has come from heaven. Breathless, the weary, wan, and long wronged people wait on the mountain as the shades of evening gather over the land. It is the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, a ceremony of hallowed, historic associations, recalling blessed memories of the olden time. Do not the spirits of the fathers hover about the mount? Does not the very air palpitate with the agitated feelings of the people? Do not 10,000 sad, penitent hearts pour forth their faith and longing into Elijah's prayer as he stands by the altar and lifts his voice to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel? There shall be no frenzy, no cursing, no slashing with knives, no leaping upon the altar, no waiting long and weary hours. A calm, majestic prayer, lifting poor Israel up to God, and all the mount is lighted up with the glory of celestial fire. The altar, with its sacrifice, has been consumed. One mighty shout that makes old Carmel tremble, then all is still and dark. The people are on their faces, and—"the Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God!" The pretensions of idolatry have exploded, the teachers of error have been confounded and slain. Baalism is, for the time, shattered and the people have at last come to their senses.

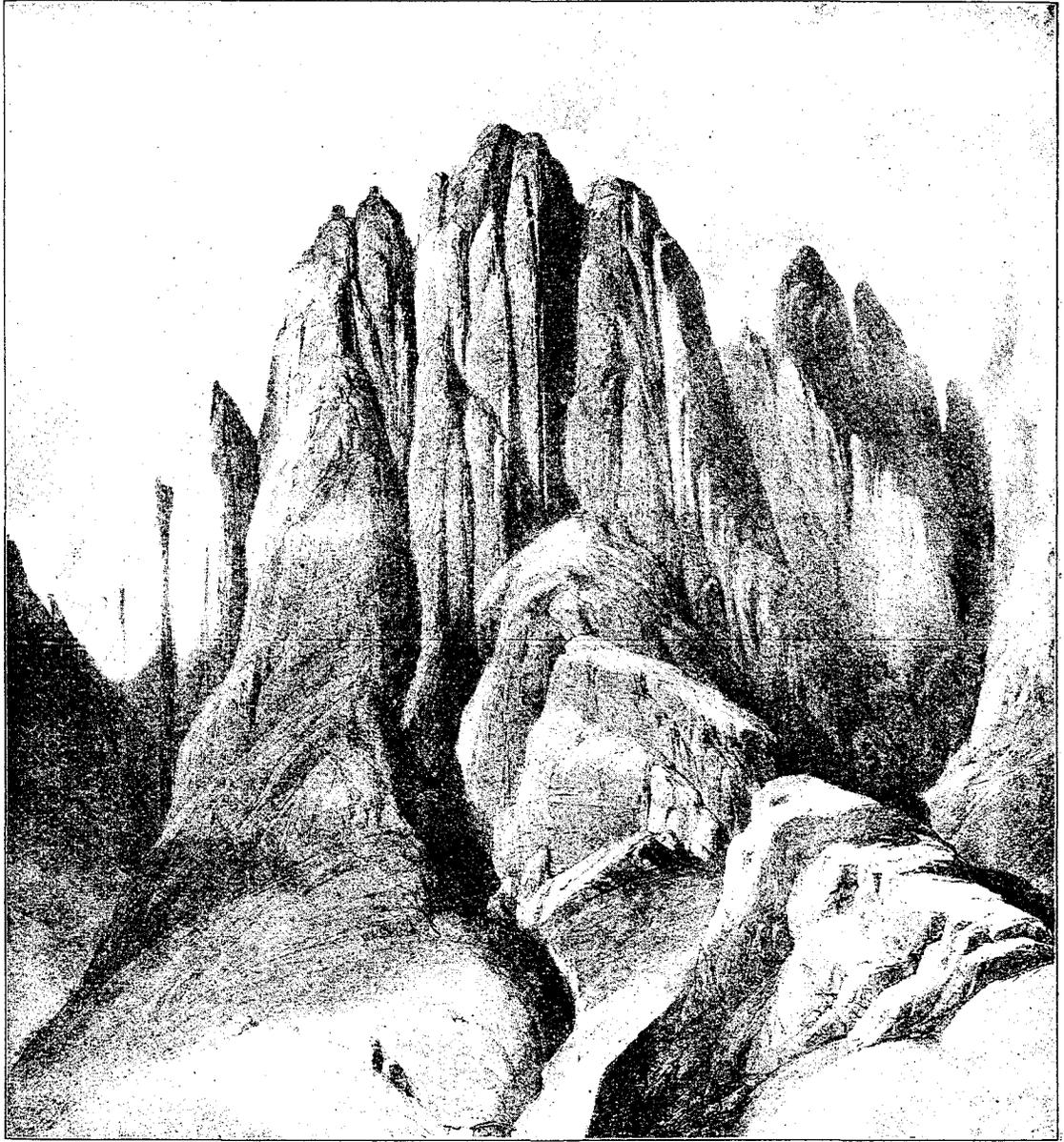
Three long, weary years have passed since Elijah predicted the drought. All this time the prophet has been a hunted man. Once more he is called to deliver a divine message to the people. On this occasion he carries a very different prophecy—he is to make the joyful and welcome announcement of the coming of rain. Good news to the thirsty land!

On this happy mission was he bound when he met the king and invited the nation to the controversy on Carmel. The people have acknowledged Jehovah with one universal shout, and now the prophet's voice is heard, thrilling as a trumpet's peal, "there is a sound of abundance of rain." Not a cloud in the sky, nor had there been for three years; not the faintest sound of the most distant thunder! Ahab could not hear the sound; the poor, famishing people could not hear the sound; the perishing flocks could not hear the sound, but Elijah heard the sound of abundance of rain. Ahab went to eating, but Elijah went to prayer. Doubtless Ahab would rather eat than pray, but Elijah would rather pray than eat. It was the praying that brought the rain. Napoleon once said, "Stomach rules the world." Ahab, doubtless, believed it long before. But Elijah was proving that conscience, faith, and prayer had a place in the world's government and in the shaping of its destiny. The man of prayer is the man of power. Ahab was the typical man of appetite; Elijah, the typical man of prayer. How differently they seem impressed with the demands of the hour! Nero fiddling over burning Rome is not more detestable than Ahab feasting, when he, too, should have been praying for his people and for his country. In the darkest day at Valley Forge, Washington is found kneeling in the snow of the forest absorbed in prayer, and in the gloomiest hour of the American civil war, Abraham Lincoln is found in his room at the White House on his knees before God. The men who stand nearest God, stand nearest the people and the country, and prayer may succeed after powder and plow have failed. The fire has leaped from heaven in vindication of the truth, and the champion of the truth. The people are on their faces in repentance, and the prophet of Jehovah is on his knees yonder on Carmel's height commanding the clouds to empty their treasures into the valleys and the kindly heavens to bathe the thirsty hills with dews. The order was sent to Ahab to hasten down the mount as fast as his chariots could bear him before the rain should stop him. Then Ahab and Elijah started for Jezreel. Ahab in his chariot, Elijah afoot; the eating man riding, the praying man running. There is no evidence that Ahab invited the weary but triumphant prophet up into his chariot, as the Ethiopian eunuch long after had the good breeding to do to Phillip. But the prophet kept ahead of the chariot for sixteen miles to the entrance of Jezreel.

It might now be supposed that Elijah would be the most popular man in Israel, greeted by the hosannas of the people and honored by

royalty. Have not the rains descended like music on the parched fields? Have not the dews fallen in holy benediction? Springs leap out of the old rocks, and brooks swell and flow singing down the valleys. In happy prospect the children gather the lilies again and Sharon is all ablush with roses; Carmel's slopes are green with thrifty vines and the cattle on a thousand hills grow sleek and fat; gaunt famine has vanished and sweet prosperity goes laughing and dancing through the land. But Jezebel has sworn an oath. Maddened at the recital of the prophet's triumph on Carmel, enraged at the slaughter of the priests of Baal, this royal tigress sends hissing through her teeth a desperate vow, to kill Elijah. For once in his life the brave old prophet turned and fled. The famine could not frighten him; the storms of the mountains never made him quail; the king could not disconcert him; 450 wild, howling priests of Baal never made him tremble, but when Jezebel spoke her mind, "he arose, and went for his life." He left Jezreel at as quick a pace as he entered when he beat the chariot of Ahab; he was now straining every muscle to distance the chariot of Jezebel. He flees to the wilderness, and in the solitude beneath the juniper tree for once seems to lose his self-poise, his superb, all-mastering confidence. He had been an independent, fearless, self-sufficient man, standing against the fashionable tendency and drift of the times; but now, where he was strong he becomes weak and uncertain. The strain has been too much even for his rugged moral constitution and he is ready to give up and die. In his zeal and in the flush of success he imagined he was doing it all, that no one else was taking any important part in the reformation, and it was most discouraging. Again, even the strongest, most independent men who are aiming to advance the public weal like to be appreciated. But, if, after a faithful, heroic battling against evil and a successful work of good done for the people, one is not appreciated and hears no words of commendation and sympathy, but becomes the target of abuse and the victim of a revengeful fanaticism, he will be apt to lose his courage and his public-spirited ambition.

While Elijah, as a refugee, is seeking safety in the solitude of the wilderness, God still keeps him. While Jezebel is hunting him, angels are ministering unto him. Ordered to Horeb he finds a cave there and lodges in it. Strange place for so large a man! Trying to get away from Jezebel and the world; trying, also, to escape from conscience and from the Guardian Angel, from duty and from God, like the philosopher, Hobbes, he would, if it were possible, find a hole to crawl into out of the world. He is suffering the temptations of dis-



DAVID ROBERTS.

MOUNT HOREB.

couragement. What small places discouraged men do sometimes creep into! "What doest thou here, Elijah?" It is the voice of God or conscience. Your place is not in the cave, but on the mountain. And there he stands once more—on the heights. A tempest sweeps in fury down, the rocks are riven by the thunderbolt, but Elijah heeds it not. An earthquake follows the storm, and Horeb reels and staggers, but Elijah seems all unmindful of the awful and sublime spectacle. Then fire leaps out of the sky and flames up from the bowels of the mountain as though it were an *Ætna* or *Vesuvius*, but Elijah stands unmoved. After the thunders are hushed and the mountain has ceased to rock with earthquake convulsions, and the fires have subsided, there comes "a still small voice." The prophet starts from his reverie, hides his face in his mantle and hurries toward the cave. A voice, the "still small voice," arrests him, and he realizes he is with God in that awful solitude. He there bitterly complains of the corruption of the times and the universal apostasy, claims to be alone in the work of reform, and that he is living in constant peril of his life. Then he learns a great and wholesome lesson, for he is given the assurance that he is not the only living man who is in sympathy with the reform movement. The silent prayers of 7,000 in Israel were daily going up to God, and in the scenes which he had witnessed on Horeb the lesson was taught him that in those prayers there was more power than in all the fierce and awful demonstrations of Carmel, or in the outward pomp and ceremony of religious formalism, or even in the afflicting providences that had visited the land. Elijah was not alone. No other man came forth to champion the cause of God before the people; no other lifted his voice in stern denunciation and warning; no other called down fire from heaven; no other challenged the apostate nation to the test on Carmel; but many were still praying to God who did not bow the knee to Baal, and in those prayers there was a silent power of which the hot-souled and impetuous man of action was ignorant.

Elijah went from Horeb a braver, stronger soul than ever. He found in Elisha a sympathetic fellow-reformer and with him toiled, like Luther with Melancthon in a later age, for the suppression of vice and unbelief, the overthrow of superstition, and the enlightenment of his country. Undoubtedly the work of the reformers had created a reaction against idolatry and in favor of Jehovah-worship which resulted in new displays of God's favor and protecting providence. The successful resistance of the Syrian invasion led by Benhadad was a proof of God's favor, since Ahab's tri-

umph had been prophesied. Ahab himself, however, proved a most cowardly, unpatriotic, and pusillanimous general and king during the whole affair. He offered to surrender at the first demand of Benhadad, but the more patriotic senators and people would not have it so. The attack on Samaria was repulsed, the Syrians fled before the young princes of Israel, and Benhadad, reeling from his tent too drunk to give a sensible command, struggled into his saddle and with drunken frenzy escaped for his life. In the second invasion at the return of the year, Benhadad was repulsed and 100,000 Syrian infantry were slain in a day. Ahab displayed very inferior military genius and demonstrated his lack of loyalty in the conditions of surrender which he accepted from Benhadad, and by the unholy alliance into which he entered with the Syrians. But the basest wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel manifested itself in the robbery and murder of a private citizen whose thrifty vineyard bordered on the royal domain in sight of the palace at Samaria. The murder of Banquo and of Duncan, the king of Scotland, by the ambitious Macbeth, and the assassination of Henry VI. and Edward V., instigated by Richard III. of England, were royal in character as compared with the conspiracy which Jezebel instigated against Naboth, resulting in his death and the confiscation of his vineyard. Ahab had proposed that Naboth commit a crime against his own heirs and against the law of the land by trading him the vineyards which he had inherited, and which by the law of tribal inheritance could not be sold or given away. Unable to secure the vineyard by the illegal method proposed, the king was in great distress of mind until Jezebel took it upon herself to secure the coveted prize by a conspiracy which ended in the murder of Naboth.

So atrocious was this crime, committed against an humble citizen by royalty itself, that Elijah was once more roused to a fearful pitch of holy indignation and met the king with a scathing rebuke for his crime of murder and robbery, and prophesied to his face his violent death and the utter extinction of his royal house. Soon after this, Ahab sought the aid of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, in an ambitious design to capture Ramoth Gilead from the king of Syria. Even in this enterprise the mean and villainous character of Ahab manifested itself on the field of battle. Evidently he had premeditated the sacrifice of Jehoshaphat, equal to an out-and-out assassination. For, with a cunning worthy of him, he went into battle disguised, but suggested that Jehoshaphat array himself in royal uniform. By this plan he hoped the king of Judah would become the target of the enemy's arrows and

be slain, while he would himself be protected by his disguise, and thus escape. As he had anticipated, the enemy's attack was directed against the person of Jehoshaphat by special command of the Syrian king, who mistook him for the king of Israel. Jehoshaphat saved himself by revealing his identity. But Ahab did not escape; there flew across the field a chance arrow from an unknown bow; it found the joint of Ahab's harness, and wounded him to the death. Although he lingered through the day and did not leave the field, he sank at evening in his blood-stained chariot. His army gave up the fight and bore their dead king to Samaria where, as they washed the royal chariot, the dogs licked up his blood as Elijah had prophesied they would.

Ahaziah's reign, following Ahab's, was of short duration. A fall from his upper chamber resulted in injuries from which he died two years after he ascended the throne. Elijah appears again in this reign to prophesy the death of the king, and when the king sends out a company of soldiers to bring the prophet in a prisoner, he again commands the very fires of heaven, which smite the soldiers as with the lightning of death. When at last he comes into the king's presence he rebukes him for sending to a prophet of Baal instead of to the prophet of the Lord to learn the issue of the injuries he had received from his fall. Again he predicts the king's death, which prediction is soon fulfilled and Jehoram succeeds to the throne of Israel.

CHAPTER V.

ELISHA.

ANOTHER prophet is now about to inherit the mantle of Elijah—Elisha, the husbandman. The first time we see him he is plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in a locality of the valley of the Jordan called "The meadow of the dance." As he plods along after the lolling cattle, with no ambition beyond that of being a thrifty farmer, with no dreams but of harvests and plenty, a strange man comes striding toward him across the field; a dark, hairy, stern-browed man, who, without a word, throws his mantle upon the plowman and strides on and out of sight. In this eccentric fashion Elijah has called Elisha to become his successor in the line of the prophets. No more plowing for this farmer of the Jordan valley. He makes a feast of two of his oxen, burns his plow, and gives himself up to a preparation for his great mission. No man ever with firmer resolution shut off his own retreat from duty by burning the bridges or the ships behind him than did Elisha when he burnt his plow and roasted his oxen.

The divine wisdom often picks up a man for use just where human conceit would not be apt to look for him. Providence took a cattle-raiser in Abraham and made him the sire of a mighty race. He took a slave in Joseph and made him a prime minister. He took a foundling in Moses and made him history's greatest law-giver. He took a shepherd in David and made him a poet and a king. He took a captive in Daniel and made him a liberator. He took a fisherman in John and made him the Revelator. He took a tentmaker in Paul and made him the apostle of Christianity to the Roman empire. He took the son of a swarthy miner in Luther and made him a reformer. He

took a tinker in Bunyan and made him an inspired dreamer. He took a spinner in Livingstone and made him the light of Africa. He took a frontiersman and railsplitter in Lincoln and made him the Emancipator. He took a plowman in Elisha and made him a prophet. We hear nothing of him until seven or eight years later, at the close of Elijah's career, when we find him a constant companion of his grand old master. He seemed to be looking for an uncommon and triumphant close to Elijah's career and he acted as though the glorious end were not far off. Elijah is not to die of hunger in the wilderness, nor beneath the juniper tree of grief and disappointment, nor in the gloomy cave of the rocks, nor in dungeon and chains, nor by the fire or sword, nor even on the mountains, as did Moses in the olden time. Did his quick ear once catch the far-off sound of abundance of rain which no other ears could hear? And now, while walking on Jordan's banks with his loved disciple, and passing dry shod through the stream which parted its waters before the sweep of his mantle, does not the keen-eared old prophet catch the distant sound as of the opening of mighty gates, the trampling of swift hoofs, and the rumbling of golden wheels beyond where the thunders sleep and the glorious stars keep sentinel? Watch him! Look at him once again! Majestic man! How tall he looks, and grand, and kingly! No poet ever fancied nor artist ever delineated so noble a form. Not Angelo's "Moses," not the Rhodian "Colossus," not Phidian "Jupiter," not Homeric "Agamemnon" wears half the dignity, and strength, and nobleness of this great prophet of the living God as he mounts the gleaming chariot of Israel and sweeps, a plumed

jah in the line of the prophets. It had been Elisha's prayer, that double the spirit of Elijah might rest on him. When the grand and heroic old Tishbite ascended in triumph from Jordan's banks, his faithful disciple cried: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." This was doubtless a common phrase, expressive of the power and influence of the great man of God, and was equivalent to saying: "The strength of Israel has departed." Elijah was to the nation its truest defense and its greatest power, its "chariot and horsemen."

It is not seldom that one man comes to be recognized as of more value to the nation than all the chariots and horsemen of war. Philip of Macedon was made to stand in greater fear of Demosthenes and his oratory than of all the armies and navies of the Athenians. The invading nations came to dread the power of God's prophets more than all the chariots and horsemen of Israel, for, when an Elijah or Elisha foretold the triumph of Israel's army, the enemy knew they were doomed, because the God of the prophets fought against them and for the children of Israel. When a veteran commander of the Greek navy was approached by his men with the discouraging intelligence: "The ships of the enemy number more than ours," he replied: "How many ships do you reckon me?" So might Elijah have said: "How many chariots and horsemen do you reckon me?" When an old soldier in Spain caught sight of Wellington as he passed by him for the first time after his return to the army, he cried out with enthusiasm: "Bless my eyes! I had rather see thee come back than see 10,000 men come to help us." When Elisha saw his master vanish, he felt that the power and very salvation of Israel had departed, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." But no; God had not withdrawn himself, nor had he recalled the spirit of prophecy. The mantle of Elijah fell at Elisha's feet, the prophetic office remained, and with it the spirit and power of the supernatural, for as Elisha caught up the sacred mantle and smote the waters of Jordan, lo! they parted as when Elijah himself wrapped the mantle together and smote them. The sons of the prophets, beholding the miracle, hailed Elisha as a true successor of Elijah, and as they shouted: "The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha," they bowed before him in acknowledgment of his divine endowment with the prophetic spirit, and in recognition of the fact that supernaturalism as a force in history was perpetual in its providential activity. In proof of his divine mission Elisha wrought miracles which, in number and importance, were not inferior to the works of his master. By the power of

God in him the son of the Shunammite widow was raised to life, the poisonous pottage was rendered harmless and wholesome, the twenty barley loaves were multiplied to feed bountifully an hundred persons, the iron axe was made to float upon the water, Naaman, the Syrian general, was healed of his leprosy, and many other wonders were wrought. But no doubt Elisha himself was the greatest miracle of his age; a miracle of character, of righteousness, of faith. Nations do not see until the great life has been lived and has become a conspicuous part of the best history of the past that that life is the greatest thing in that history. The power of such a man is not understood; people generally are as blind to the supernatural or providential influences accompanying a righteous soul into history as was the servant of Elisha blind to the prophet's power when the Syrian host descended upon Dothan to seize and take him away captive. Alarmed at the multitude of horses and chariots that compassed the city, the fearful servant cried: "What shall we do?" when, in proof of the fact that "they that be with us are more than they that be with them," Elisha prayed God to open the young man's eyes, and he saw "the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." If there had been need, doubtless there were times when God might have opened the people's eyes to see not horses and chariots of fire but ministering angels, seraphs of mercy, round about the prophet. While the king was hunting him, and the king's servant was commanded to behead him, the good prophet was praying for and prophesying better times. In answer to that prayer and in fulfillment of that prophesy the Syrians raised the siege, deserted their camp, and in their precipitate haste left behind them sufficient provisions to relieve the city of its distress and famine.

Elisha proved himself a veritable king-maker, extending his prophetic jurisdiction over Syria as well as Israel, and in fulfillment of his word, Hazael, one of Benhadad's generals, succeeded him on the throne of Syria, though he assassinated the old king by smothering him in his bed. The courage and faithfulness of God's prophet were fully tested when the forebodings of the calamitous results of the fulfillment of his prophecy broke his patriotic heart and caused him to weep as he addressed the Syrian general. He foresaw that Hazael would become a powerful scourge to the children of Israel; a barbarous, heartless, and cruel invader; yet he could not shrink from his high duty of foretelling Benhadad's downfall and Hazael's ascendancy.

The fears of Elisha were soon realized, as Hazael proceeded with dispatch to invade the

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It is not seldom that one man comes to be recognized as of more value to the nation than all the chariots and horsemen of war. Philip of Macedon was made to stand in greater fear of Demosthenes and his oratory than of all the armies and navies of the Athenians. The invading nations came to dread the power of God's prophets more than all the chariots and horsemen of Israel, for, when an Elijah or Elisha foretold the triumph of Israel's army, the enemy knew they were doomed, because the God of the prophets fought against them and for the children of Israel. When a veteran commander of the Greek navy was approached by his men with the discouraging intelligence: "The ships of the enemy number more than ours," he replied: "How many ships do you reckon me?" So might Elijah have said: "How many chariots and horsemen do you reckon me?" When an old soldier in Spain caught sight of Wellington as he passed by him for the first time after his return to the army, he cried out with enthusiasm: "Bless my eyes! I had rather see thee come back than see 10,000 men come to help us." When Elisha saw his master vanish, he felt that the power and very salvation of Israel had departed, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." But no; God had not withdrawn himself, nor had he recalled the spirit of prophecy. The mantle of Elijah fell at Elisha's feet, the prophetic office remained, and with it the spirit and power of the supernatural, for as Elisha caught up the sacred mantle and smote the waters of Jordan, lo! they parted as when Elijah himself wrapped the mantle together and smote them. The sons of the prophets, beholding the miracle, hailed Elisha as a true successor of Elijah, and as they shouted: "The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha," they bowed before him in acknowledgment of his divine endowment with the prophetic spirit, and in recognition of the fact that supernaturalism as a force in history was perpetual in its providential activity. In proof of his divine mission Elisha wrought miracles which, in number and importance, were not inferior to the works of his master. By the power of

God in him the son of the Shunammite widow was raised to life, the poisonous pottage was rendered harmless and wholesome, the twenty barley loaves were multiplied to feed bountifully an hundred persons, the iron axe was made to float upon the water, Naaman, the Syrian general, was healed of his leprosy, and many other wonders were wrought. But no doubt Elisha himself was the greatest miracle of his age; a miracle of character, of righteousness, of faith. Nations do not see until the great life has been lived and has become a conspicuous part of the best history of the past that that life is the greatest thing in that history. The power of such a man is not understood; people generally are as blind to the supernatural or providential influences accompanying a righteous soul into history as was the servant of Elisha blind to the prophet's power when the Syrian host descended upon Dothan to seize and take him away captive. Alarmed at the multitude of horses and chariots that compassed the city, the fearful servant cried: "What shall we do?" when, in proof of the fact that "they that be with us are more than they that be with them," Elisha prayed God to open the young man's eyes, and he saw "the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." If there had been need, doubtless there were times when God might have opened the people's eyes to see not horses and chariots of fire but ministering angels, seraphs of mercy, round about the prophet. While the king was hunting him, and the king's servant was commanded to behold him, the good prophet was praying for and prophesying better times. In answer to that prayer and in fulfillment of that prophesy the Syrians raised the siege, deserted their camp, and in their precipitate haste left behind them sufficient provisions to relieve the city of its distress and famine.

Elisha proved himself a veritable king-maker, extending his prophetic jurisdiction over Syria as well as Israel, and in fulfillment of his word, Hazael, one of Benhadad's generals, succeeded him on the throne of Syria, though he assassinated the old king by smothering him in his bed. The courage and faithfulness of God's prophet were fully tested when the forebodings of the calamitous results of the fulfillment of his prophecy broke his patriotic heart and caused him to weep as he addressed the Syrian general. He foresaw that Hazael would become a powerful scourge to the children of Israel; a barbarous, heartless, and cruel invader; yet he could not shrink from his high duty of foretelling Benhadad's downfall and Hazael's ascendancy.

The fears of Elisha were soon realized, as Hazael proceeded with dispatch to invade the

victor, to the skies. Out of that sad, degenerate age rose the grandest character that adorns the history of God's prophet's in the earth, showing that the grace of God may conquer circumstances and environment and make characters more just and noble than the times, and inspire lives which are in sublime contradiction of the false philosophy which may dominate society. During the reign of the Athenian tyrants the wise and virtuous Socrates teaches his philosophy; in Nero's dark and bloody time Seneca gives forth his light in Rome; out of the political turmoil, ecclesiastical corruption, and religious degeneracy of the thirteenth century Dante rises in Italy; when Florence is given up to worldliness and social impurity a Savonarola appears to preach righteousness; in the cruel, oppressive, and superstitious days of Richard II. of England a Wycliffe becomes the morning star of reformation; during the reigns of Israel's wicked, idolatrous kings appears the prophet Elijah.

If it was ever proved true that "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," it must have been during the unhappy and eventful reign of Jehoram, who succeeded his brother Ahaziah on the throne of Israel. Rebellions that were brewing even so early as Ahab's reign now broke forth in all their fury. This king inherited trouble. Invasion, rebellion, and famine combined to bring distress upon the rapidly declining kingdom. For reasons of state Jehoram refused to give in his personal adherence to the Baal-worship which had been so earnestly supported by Ahab and Jezebel, but he still adhered to the calf-worship instituted by Jeroboam. During this reign the Moabite rebellion, led on by Mesha, broke forth, and Jehoram, though aided as we have seen by the kings of Edom and of Judah, was not able to subdue it. The Syrians, moreover, kept up a series of predatory incursions into the land which culminated in a most determined siege of Samaria by Benhadad and his allied chiefs. This siege was attended by a famine which brought upon the people indescribable suffering, so that they were driven in their insanity to most horrible and inhuman extremes to satisfy their hunger.

At that time as much as \$5 was demanded for a quart of beans and \$20 for the head of an ass, nor could food be had for love nor money. Women, in that frenzy of starvation, boiled and ate their own children. This famine was but one of the 350, or more, that have visited humanity in the course of history, but it was one of the most distressing. In studying the philosophy of these dreadful evils it has been found that they have resulted from such various causes as drought, frost, storms, earthquakes, destructive insects, ignorance of agricultural science, and war. In this instance war and

drought combined to bring scarcity of food and the consequent miseries. Rarely have people been pushed to the extremity of eating human flesh, but this instance does not stand alone in the cruel history of famines. In England, since the beginning of the Christian era, the people have at times been driven to the necessity of eating the bark of trees, of making bread of fern roots, and even of eating the flesh of horses, dogs, cats, and vermin. Dufresnoy is authority for the statement that in the fifth century Italy was visited by such destitution that parents ate their children, as Josephus declares was also done in Jerusalem during the siege of Titus. As late as the eleventh century of the Christian era, Egypt suffered a seven years' famine, during which the people not only devoured dogs and cats, purchased at a high price, but even ate animals that died of diseases, and finally hesitated not at making food of human corpses. The calamity that befell Israel had its natural causes; it was of the Lord, but of the Lord because according to natural laws. The people's idolatries had enervated them. Sensuality had been introduced with the Baal and Venus worship which caused a rapid deterioration of the physical strength and moral vigor of the people. They could no longer marshal a large and victorious army of soldiers to resist invasion. Nor could they put a great industrial army into the field to develop the resources of the land. Their men were puny, effeminate, cowardly creatures, whose sensualisms had sapped their energies and quenched their spirit of honor, valor, and true manhood. Hence, the perpetual invasions of neighboring nations encouraged by their weakness, and hence in large manner the famine in spite of the drought was the result of industrial enervation, physical deterioration, and the generally demoralizing influence of base, unchaste idolatries.

The king, blinded by his own sensualism, could not understand the philosophy of Israel's misfortunes. To his shallow mind, Elisha, the prophet of Jehovah, was responsible for the famine. Just as the corrupt politicians of Florence blamed Savonarola for the calamities which he only predicted, and as Ahab made Elijah responsible for the woes which he had prophesied, so Jehoram accused Elisha of bringing the famine upon Samaria, and vowed he would have the prophet's head. While in this national decline "one woe doth tread upon another's heels," the people were witnessing displays of God's power by their devoted prophet which should have convinced them of the error and sin of idolatry and won them back to the old paths of faith and righteousness. One light shone brightly and steadily in the darkness and storm of those troublous times. Elisha was a worthy successor of Eli-

dominion of Israel. Jehoram was joined by Ahaziah, the king of Judah. They met the Syrian invader and engaged in battle at Ramoth Gilead, where the Syrians proved victorious and Jehoram was wounded. As the king of Israel, suffering from his wound, accompanied by the king of Judah, returned to Jezreel he little dreamed that disaster and death were there in store for him. While Jehoram was resting and recovering at Jezreel revolution was brewing in his army.

Elisha foretold the enthronement of Jehoram's general Jehu, as king over Israel, and he sent a son of the prophets with oil to anoint Jehu and reveal to him his royal destiny. The captain of the king's hosts was accordingly hailed as king by the army. He immediately proceeded to make good his claims to imperial power by leading his legions to Jezreel where Jehoram was visiting his mother, Jezebel, and Ahaziah, the king of Judah.

Jehu was a man of great dash and impetuosity, a sort of Marshal Ney, or Sheridan, who came on like the whirlwind or struck the enemy with the suddenness and force of the thunderbolt. The watchmen knew he was advancing on Jezreel, for he drove furiously like Jehu. After the king had sent messenger after messenger who had not returned, but had been consigned to the rear of the advancing army, he mounted his royal chariot and went forth in person to inquire the cause of the army's approach. When he learned Jehu's mission and discovered treason and revolution, expressing his fears to Ahaziah, he turned to retreat, but the general's arrow flew unerringly to his heart and as he sunk in his royal chariot Jehu's captain hurled the dead body to the ground, and lo! the place was in the vineyard of Naboth which Jehoram's father and mother, Ahab and Jezebel, had appropriated by robbery and murder. Ahaziah was also overtaken in his flight and slain, and his body was borne in his chariot back to Jerusalem for burial.

Jehu had overthrown two kings and captured a throne. As the soldier-king advanced triumphantly into Jezreel, the wretched Jezebel, painted and bejeweled beyond all modesty, greeted him tauntingly from her window, but ere the words of insult were out of her mouth she was hurled to the pavement below to be trampled on by the war horses of Jehu and to be torn to pieces by the dogs of the city. Elijah had foreseen this awful fate of the idolatrous Zidonian wife of Ahab who had brought such corruption, disaster, and misery to the nation. The prophet had foretold, some fifteen years before, that the very dogs should eat her by the walls of Jezreel. Jehu exterminated the family of Ahab. Wholesale slaughter fol-

lowed his victory. He was a man of blood; a ferocious soldier who seemed to think he was doing God service in destroying all the workers of iniquity. He was an iconoclast and began to uproot and destroy the detestable Baal-worship which had been so universally substituted for the worship of Jehovah. By a cunning and deceitful piece of strategy, he destroyed the worshippers of Baal in Samaria. The multitude had, by royal edict, been called to the place of idolatrous worship. They came unsuspectingly to join in the service which, they were given to understand, was not only sanctioned but commanded by the king. When the place of assembly was crowded with the devotees of Baal, a general massacre was ordered. The soldiers rushed in and hewed down the people with the sword. The image of Baal was shattered, and the very building was torn down and rebuilt as a draught house. Jehu, however, did not return to the pure worship of Jehovah, but still tolerated and sanctioned as the national religion the calf-worship, or the the cult of Apis, introduced by the first king of Israel, Jeroboam.

It was during the reign of Jehu that the signs of the times indicated the beginning of the end of Israel's national power and history. "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short." Idolatry had almost run its course; it had well-nigh sapped the nation of its virtue and its life. The arms of Israel grew weaker every hour; the strength of the invading nations became more and more irresistible. Hazael began to be felt in all the coasts of Israel, but Jehu seems to have lost his dash and vigor and made no determined or successful resistance as the insolent and inhuman Syrian smote them from the Jordan eastward. This Syrian devastation continued through the reign of Jehoahaz until the army of Israel was reduced to 50 horsemen, 10 chariots, and 10,000 footmen. What a decline of military power from the days when Jeroboam was able to put into the field 800,000, or at lowest estimate 80,000, mighty men of valor! What a comment on the degenerating influence of a sensual idolatry! Nations that had stood in awe of Israel a century before now held her in contempt. She seemed for one spasmodic season of revival in the reign of Jehoash to reassert her pristine independence and military spirit. Three successive times, in fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy, Jehoash met and defeated the Syrian invaders and regained lost territory. When Amaziah, king of Judah, insolently challenged him to war, he met him face to face at Bethshemesh, defeated him and took him captive, marched upon Jerusalem, broke down the walls, and despoiled the Temple and the royal palace of their treasures of silver and gold.

For the first time in the history of this national division had Israel been able to overcome Judah so completely; for the first time did Israel's arms assail and destroy the walls of the Holy City; for the first time did the descendants of Jacob lay profane hands on the Temple and rob it of that precious furniture which symbolized the faith of a high and righteous ancestry. No reacquisition of territory, no spoils of sacred temple and royal palace, however, could compensate Israel for one great loss which she suffered in the reign of Jehoash. Elisha the prophet, who had been the light of Israel for many years, who had been divine truth, wisdom and power to five eventful reigns, passed away. The king bowed weeping at his bedside and cried, as Elisha himself had cried when Elijah ascended: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." Royalty acknowledged that the strength of Israel was not in her arms or in her revenues, but rather in the prophet of the living God. It was in those last moments that Elisha promised deliverance from the power of the invading Syrians. He commanded the king to bring bow and arrows and open the window of the sick chamber toward the east. Then as the king placed the shaft to the string, held the bow with a strong, firm hand and drew the arrow to the head, the thin, trembling hands of the dying prophet rested on the hands of the king and Elisha huskily cried: "Shoot!" Away sped the arrow. It meant that Jehoash should free the land from Syria. The king grasped the remaining arrows at the bidding of the prophet and struck the ground three times in token of the three several victories which he should gain over the nation's enemy. Elisha was disappointed; the king should have continued to strike until there had been given the promise of the utter destruction of Syria.

But Elisha's work, and Jehoash's as well, passed on to others. The prophet, however, in his death, was still the embodiment of supernatural energy. The dead coming in contact with his lifeless body were reanimated and the miracle of resurrection occurred in his very tomb. Did it not mean that the power of the good man survived him? In the memory of him perpetuated, is there not the inspirational power of new life? Others shall touch that life if only in thought, if only by study and contemplation of its virtues, and be raised

thereby out of nothingness, out of oblivion and death, into a virtuous self-assertion, into positive being, into great purpose and high aim, into immortal activity. At the tombs of the great and good the generations of progressive humanity catch the spirit and power of fresh life. Ambition of the high and holy sort is kindled anew when men walk among the tombs of poets, heroes, philanthropists, and statesmen, who sleep in stately Westminster of England, in Santa Croce of Florence, in the Pantheon of France. And when the nation's children lay the flowers on the graves of our soldier dead there seems to come from this laureled and sanctified dust the power of a new patriotism, the awakening inspiration of an immortal heroism, an energy that creates within the spirit of self-sacrifice and brotherhood.

Oh, that a dying nation might have touched that prophet's tomb and caught therefrom the power of a new life! As Robert Hall said: "I buried my materialism in the grave of my father;" how grand it would have been if Israel could have said: "We buried our idolatry in the tomb of our prophet!" They might have been able to say, if they would: "From that tomb, from the last touch of the good and mighty man, from thinking on him as he slept and on the life he lived, the power he had, the truths he taught, and the light his spirit shed abroad, we have come endowed with a new purpose, a new faith, a new life."

There was power in Elisha's bones to raise the dead, but it had been proved that, with all his divine illumination, his prophetic spirit, his gift of miracles, his divine wisdom, he had not the power morally to revive a nation dying of idolatry and sensuality. Israel had two great prophets during the history of her separate national existence. These prophets—Elijah and Elisha—were endowed with the twofold gift of prophecy and miracles. They were not men of letters, but of action. They left the world no contribution to literature; their names belong wholly to the history of events. They had no history to write, but much to make. They were oral teachers of the truth which inspired them, and in this respect differed somewhat, if not quite significantly, from such prophets as Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, whose names hereafter belong to the literature of God's people as well as to their history.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROPHETISM.

THE progressive evolution of prophetism may be traced through a thousand years or more of sacred history. The functions of the prophetic office become more and more numerous and diversified, while the power of the prophet grows in historical significance with the unfoldings of Hebrew nationalism and the culminating development of the Messianic idea.

The prophet, in all this providential history, has been a medium of divine communication. Through him has poured the stream of moral light by which the divine wisdom has revealed to the world the paths of righteousness and truth.

In the far-off time of the Abrahamic beginnings of sacred history, in a dream, God designated Abraham to Abimelech as a prophet. The prophetic function was then apparently limited to the gift of intercessory prayer. When Aaron was appointed as Moses' prophet doubtless it was intended that he should be no more than a counselor of his chief, or, possibly, his spokesman, since Moses had originally no such gift in public, diplomatic, or forensic speech as Aaron. When the children of Israel were in the Wilderness and were murmuring against the manna, which had become a very monotonous if not almost nauseating diet, Moses sought God for aid to bear the burden of responsibility which was crushing him down. It was then that Moses, in obedience to God's commands, called together seventy of the elders and officers of the people, and they received an endowment of the same spirit which rested upon Moses, therewith to share with him the burdens of official responsibility. When the spirit came upon them they began to prophesy. This may signify, simply, that they began to speak and to teach the people by explaining the ways of God, exhorting to faithfulness, and encouraging them with promises of coming good. This spirit fell upon the elders and officers as they were assembled at the tabernacle. Others received the same endowment; although they did not observe the formality of meeting with the elders they were evidently fit men to be intrusted with the power of exhortation and the spirit of prophecy. Eldad and Medad gathered a company of the discouraged and complaining people about them in the camp and broke forth in prophecy or exhortation, haranguing them in cheerful, hopeful terms and helping them to look toward the brighter future. A complaint was lodged against these two sanguine stump-speakers of

the camp, these optimistic prophets of better things, which brought from Moses the exclamation: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." Would that they all were looking on the bright side of things, talking hopefully and teaching the true doctrines of providence! Here, for the first time, appears the idea of special spiritual endowment for the exercise of the prophetic function. The spirit that rested on Moses was imparted to the elders, and without any ceremony or ecclesiastical formality it came upon Eldad and Medad. The possibility of all the Lord's people becoming prophets in that limited sense may be implied from the exclamation of Moses; the fitness for that work was but the endowment of the Spirit: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them." The gift of miracles of visions, of dreams, or of foretelling future events need not have accompanied, save in exceptional cases, the spirit of prophecy. Evidently the gift of visions was early bestowed upon certain prophets who were at first called Seers. When God appeared to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam in the tabernacle at Hazeroth, he said: "If there be a prophet among you, I, the Lord, will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."

The seeing of visions and the dreaming of dreams appears to be a new function of the prophetic office. God's communication with Moses was not by dream or vision, but face to face. That privilege was granted to Moses only. From this time on, the prophet who became the agent of a divine communication to the people must have received the communication by the vision or dream, or by such an endowment of the spirit as came upon the seventy elders. When the time was ripe for this kind of communications, and the prophetic office assumed an essential importance in the development both of the monotheistic and Messianic idea, God promised his chosen race a prophet from the ranks of the common people. The people had requested that God reveal himself no more by fire nor by strange and supernatural voice. In answer to this request, which was inspired by their awe and fear, God promised to raise them up a seer from their midst into whose mouth he would put his words. Thus the prophet came to be more than a gifted teacher or preacher; he came to be the inspired medium of the communication of God's thought to man. He began to speak as he was moved by the Spirit, and he spake the word which

God, by inspiration, put into his mouth. He was the oracle of God. The power to foretell events becomes now a gift inseparable from the prophetic office. One of the tests of the true prophet—a negative test it is true—was to be recognized in this, that “when a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet had spoken it presumptuously.

So important was this office that the people were held responsible for their treatment of the divine communications which proceeded from the prophet's lips. “Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” Moreover, death was the penalty for the presumption of speaking a word in God's name which God had not commanded to be spoken. The person whom God called to this high and holy ministry was more than a gifted philosopher, lawmaker, teacher, or poet; more than a Plato, an Aristides, a Lycurgus, a Homer. The poetical afflatus did not constitute him a prophet; philosophical acumen did not make him a seer; learning, logic, and eloquence did not authorize him to speak in the name of God. The gift of the Spirit and the gift of the divine word to speak to men, were essential to prophetic authority and power.

As Hebrew theocracy developed toward institutional government and a definite monarchical nationalism, this office became a more clearly defined institution and shaped itself to become an essential part of the new nationalism. Samuel was the last prophet of the Jewish theocracy and the first of the Jewish monarchy. He both witnessed and largely helped to effect the religio-political transition from a government of judges to a government of kings. With Samuel the sacred office took on a new importance, and the prophet became a most potent political and historical factor. A school of the prophets was established, where men were educated for the high and influential functions of national teachers. What the university or theological seminary is to the Gospel ministry of to-day, that school was to the ministry of the old dispensation of law and symbolism. The sons of the prophets or the students of those schools prepared themselves to perform whatever duties of the prophetic office God called them to. They became the preachers and teachers of the nation. They explained the law and were recognized as the exponent of the theocratic principles of their religio-political constitution. To them the people looked for instruction in ethics and righteousness. All of them were not necessarily endowed with the gift of miracles or of visions, or with the power to foretell future

events, nor were they all so filled with the Spirit as to become the inspired *medii* of verbal communications from God. Many of them were like the preachers of to-day, only learned, righteous, thoroughly consecrated men, who spoke the truth as they understood it, explained the law as they had the genius to do, and exhorted the people to right living with all the native earnestness of good and holy men, but without any special divine illumination or inspiration which made them the infallible oracles of God. From among them, however, God called certain men to exercise such power as working miracles, seeing visions, dreaming dreams, conveying definite, inspired verbal messages to the people and the nation, and foretelling future events.

This latter class became conspicuous in the eventful history of Jewish nationalism. From their ranks rose the men who wielded greater power than kings in national politics, and mightier influence than generals on the field of battle. From these chosen few came the poets, musicians, historians, and ethical writers who created the national literature and directed its taste and culture. The history of the prophets, therefore, cannot be less interesting and instructive than the record of the kings and military heroes of the Jewish people. Had not Homer as much to do with the upbuilding of Grecian civilization as Themistocles, or Demosthenes as Miltiades? Were not Phidias, the artist, and Plato, the philosopher, as liberal contributors to Athenian greatness as Pericles? The greater history of Germany cannot be written, with all her emperors and generals, if we leave out of the record the names and work of Luther, Goethe, Kant, and Beethoven. The glory of France comes from the Calvins, Pascals, Fenelons, and Victor Hugos, no less than from her Turennes, Colignys, Mirabeaus, and Napoleons. Then, with all the pride which England takes in Alfred the Great, Elizabeth, and Victoria; in Nelson, Wellington, Marlborough, and Cromwell, how little, after all, would be her boast if she could not inscribe on her resplendent scroll of fame the names of Wycliffe and Chaucer, Bacon and Hooker, Shakespeare and Milton, Wesley and Tennyson. Short as the history of the American Republic is, we are glad to put beside the names of Washington, Lincoln, and Grant the equally glorious names of Mather and Roger Williams, Asbury and Channing, Whittier, Longfellow, Bryant, and Lowell.

The prophets of that olden time stood for the intellectualism of their age and country. They dreamed the nation's dreams, and sang the nation's songs. From them came the inspiration of learning, taste, and art. To them is due the credit for the nation's immortality in

written and perpetuated history. It was Samuel's high distinction to anoint Saul as king of Israel and, after him, great David. But higher still was his honor when he established those schools of the prophets from which the true light of learning and culture was to shine, blending with the beauty of poetry, the charm of music, the fascinations of art, and the grandeur of history, all the glory of inspired promise, heavenly revelations, and divine righteousness. Whence came the first suggestion of a temple—a temple worthy at once of the purest artistic taste of the age, the noble monotheistic conceptions of the race, and the Messianic significance of Jewish symbolism, Jewish prophecy, and Jewish history? That first conception was born in the brain of Nathan. All the plans of David and all the achievements of Solomon which resulted in crowning the sacred mount with the temple of cedar and gold, the highest triumph of Hebrew taste and art, if not of Hebrew devotion and hope, were but the blossom and fruit of the seed-thought first planted in the mind of Nathan the prophet by a divine inspiration. Where will you look for the center of the nation's musical culture and find the first endeavors of that sublime genius which was to fill the Temple with lofty strains on the day of its memorable dedication? In the school of the prophets. If Samuel was not the founder of the first musical college, he was doubtless the first to introduce the study of music into the curriculum of the school of the prophets. By Samuel's direction, Saul, the king, once found himself among the prophets, and as he met them, a great company coming down from the hill of God, their exercises of worship, prayers, and praises were accompanied by the music of psaltery and tabret, pipe and harp which they carried before them. Thus the sons of the prophets recognized music to be one of the accomplishments of, and, possibly, made the mastery of some instrument a part, of their preparation for their ministry.

The more highly developed functions of prophetism—which created the great mass of the national literature, foretold distant events of that history which was yet to be, and set forth the signs of the fulfillments of Messianic hope and promise—appear almost at the lowest pitch of national decline. In the darkest political days of all this Jewish history shine forth the brightest predictions of the Christ to be. Out of the most hopeless and distressing times comes the finest and most characteristic literature of the Hebrew genius. With the worst kings are found the noblest seers. In the blackest sky of national misfortune and

degeneracy shine the brightest stars of prophetic song and eloquence. Many of the prophets following Samuel, and who were remarkable for their deeds, made no contribution to the national literature, no contribution to the Inspired Scripture which was to be the Word of God to all nations and to all ages. Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Jehu, Elijah, and Elisha were intimately related to the kings and by their influence helped to fashion the character of their times. Thus we associate as history-makers, Nathan with David, Ahijah with Jeroboam, Shemaiah with Rehoboam, Azariah with Asa, Jehu with Baasha and Jehoshaphat, Elijah with Ahab, and Elisha with Jehoram and Jehoash. None of these prophets were authors of writings which have come down to us. They were all men of action, men of special oral power, who concerned themselves with passing events, but some of them wrote no living word for future times, nor seemed endowed with the power of foretelling far distant events. They prophesied the outcome of a battle or of a king's illness, or of an international conflict, but saw not the far-off thing which must come to pass, and had no gift of Messianic prophecy.

But now we come, in the evolution of prophetism, to what may be called the literary prophets—the creators of the Hebrew prophetic literature. The works of sixteen such writers have been preserved. These have been divided according to their importance into greater and lesser prophets, as the painters of early art history have been divided into the ranks of the great masters and the little masters.

The greater prophets are Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and, possibly, Daniel. From the standpoint of literature, these must rank first as having left the nation and the world the most extensive and important writings. Undoubtedly much of the old Hebrew literature has been lost, and from reference to books no longer known to exist the Scriptures indicate that Nathan, Gad, and Jehu were literary prophets. But such productions as "The Book of Nathan, the prophet," "The Book of Gad, the seer," and "The Book of Jehu" have disappeared. It is possible, however, that the future will bring to human knowledge these lost books, or fragments of them, or more extensive quotations from them than are preserved in the present Scriptures. The archaeological research which is rescuing from oblivion the literal correspondence of the kings of those ancient times may at some most fortunate moment find on tile or stone, long buried, the song of some forgotten poet or the lost prophecy of one of the inspired seers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MINOR PROPHETS.

JOEL, in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, was doubtless the first of those prophets who have contributed to the literature of the Jews the highly colored word-pictures which will ever be recognized, not only as the most reliable history of their troublous times, but also as the true philosophy of that history. Plato reasons well when he holds that poetry comes nearer the living truth than history. When Joel, with a marvelous flow of impassioned metaphor, simile, and allegory, describes the religio-political condition of affairs, it is as though some masterful artist like Vernet were painting the history of his own age for the Luxembourg of the national literature. Whether the prophecy of the coming of the palmerworm, the locust, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar is to be literally or figuratively interpreted remains a difficult question. Whether the coming of these pestiferous insects represented the invasions led on by Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmanezzer, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, or stood for the four great political powers, Assyrian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman, or were actual and historical attacks of these various species of the locust, may not be so important as the doctrine taught by the prophet that these attacks, and the consequent famine and suffering, were the natural and logical results of turning from Jehovah-worship to idolatry. While the prophet cries: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountains," and with divine eloquence warns the nation of its imminent dangers and calamities, he sees far down the coming years the light which fills his poetical soul with rapture, and ere his short but intense and powerful strain is ended he foretells the happy time when God shall pour out of his spirit upon all flesh; a time of deliverance and salvation; a time which Peter, 700 years later, believes has dawned when the spirit comes with power upon the disciples of Jesus Christ on the memorable day of Pentecost. One fact is evident in these orations, or poems, of the literary prophets: in their Messianic hope they all seem inspired, ages before Tennyson caught the magnificent thought, to foretell

"That one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."

Joel may be accepted as the type of the literary prophet, although it will be found that while he makes more or less of an impression upon his contemporaries and successors, nevertheless Amos, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, and Habakkuk, as well as the greater prophets, Isaiah,

Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, have marked characteristics of their own, individuality of style and temper, thought and aim, which preclude the supposition that they were copyists of Joel. With their diversities of style, they all had in common this high, uncompromising spirit of patriotism and righteousness, and hesitated not, in the name of Jehovah to denounce idolatry and its attendant corruptions and crimes. They feared not the face of man, but boldly, before the people and before princes and kings, rebuked all forms of unrighteousness and predicted the inevitable punishments which God was preparing for the nations.

Amos was a simple herdsman of Tekoa, down in the country south of Jerusalem, and gave some attention to raising fruit. He was, in his own language, neither "a prophet nor the son of a prophet"—that is to say, he was not trained in the schools for that profession or calling. God called him as he followed the flock similarly as he called Elisha at the plow. It is significant that when corruption smites a nation the little virtue that at any time remains is generally found in the humbler ranks of society, with those who drive the plow, swing the axe, beat the anvil, and herd the kine. Why this is true, why corruption seizes first upon the upper classes, so-called, it may not be difficult to discern. The process seems to be this: Power acquires wealth; wealth emancipates from toil and sanctions ease; ease demands amusement to prevent ennui, and luxury to satiate desire; luxury develops effeminacy and sensuality. History is full of lessons, one of the most important of which is this, that the only security of society, and of the Church itself, is the preservation of a religious virtue and a virtuous religion that will inspire a ceaseless mental, industrial, and spiritual activity and prevent the people from falling into that ignoble ease which smites everything with decay and death. Though Amos, down there with his sheep and fig trees, living a simple, temperate, industrious, and devout life, knew little of it, the age was one of refined corruption and corrupt refinement. There had come in the reign of Jeroboam II. a revival of prosperity and culture. It was an age of wealth, wine, and ivory couches; of music, pleasure, and idolatrous ceremony.

The rustic Amos received the call from God to go prophesy to this people—Israel. It took some time to find just the right man for the important work of the hour. He did not appear among the priests of Bethel; he was not

to be found in the palaces of Jerusalem; he had not entered the school of the prophets; none of the clubs or social circles seemed to know him. But God's eye fell on a bronze-cheeked, rough-handed, home-spun man away down in the Tekoa country, where a farmer had to put two shekel's worth of work on every shekel's worth of wool or of figs he raised. This uncultured son of toil, who had slept on the mountains, fed on the wild fruits, and heard the lions and the thunders, was sent to preach to a people who were reclining on ivory couches, dancing and singing to the music of the viols, drinking themselves drunk with wine foaming in golden bowls, feasting and gluttonizing, and worshipping—a calf. When this farmer-prophet opened his lips he proved to be a veritable Boanerges, and cried: "The Lord will thunder from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither," and on the prophet goes, peal after peal, flash after flash of what has been called a thunderstorm of prophecy. It was indeed a thunderstorm. It began with a roll of thunder; it closed in sunshine falling upon the rain-covered grass, and fruits, and flowers. When this thunderstorm was at its height there came this peal: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." And as the heavens are lurid with the lightnings of prophetic woe, even Amaziah, the high priest, is so terrified that he would have Amos banished the kingdom as an enemy of the commonweal and a conspirator against the king. But the climax of the prophecy has been reached. Soon the light breaks through, the clouds drift away, and all the land lies like a garden after rain, for the promise of blessing shall fall upon the righteous remnant.

Amos was the Robert Burns of the prophets—sanctified and inspired. He hated pride, cant, hypocrisy, and oppression, and was the singing champion of the wronged and suffering, the rustic lover of all honest men, as inveterate a foe of the golden calf as the Scottish plowman of the formal Kirk.

Hosea was a contemporary of Joel and Amos, a native of the northern kingdom, but later a resident in Judah, where he wrote his book—one of the most perfect and artistic productions of Hebrew literature. For some reason, which is not clearly apparent, the kingdom of Israel from the time of the partition produced greater prophets than Judah; the power of prophetic vision was there more conspicuous from the beginning. No prophets had risen in Judah with such power to determine events and shape history as Elijah and Elisha possessed in Israel. Hosea's book, with all its artistic completeness, is but a cry of despair. Nothing appears of a higher poetical order in all that literature.

Sad, elegiac, burdened with a true poet's and a true patriot's lament, it holds the mirror up to nature and bears the very form and pressure of the time. With a truly oriental imagination, Hosea enriches his prophetic strain with the most delicate and exquisite, and, again, with the boldest and most sublime imagery to be found in any literature. With incomparable outbursts, not only of splendidly figurative rhetoric, but also of sincere, heart-burning eloquence, he sets over against the idolatry and moral degeneracy of the age the infinite love of God. He foresees with a prophet's eye the inevitable overthrow of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, but recognizes, as a profound student of the philosophy of history, that idolatry is working this national ruin. Little heed is given to these outbursts of impassioned poetical feeling and inspired prophecy. Degenerate as the times may be, however, the prophets and poets are true—Dante, lifting his voice against the darkness and against the sins of Church and State which bring the darkness to Italy and Europe; Milton, pouring forth his sturdy, puritanical song upon the frivolous ears of the weakest generation of English history; Whittier, singing the song of freedom and labor when a nation is consenting to law-protected slavery and hesitating to make the Declaration of Independence mean what it declares; Hosea, true though all the age is false and all horizons black. Like a bright and golden thread woven through the coarse and somber fabric is this pure line of inspired prophetic vision running through from the beginning to the end of this dark and tragic history of Hebrew nationalism. But hope triumphs, in the end, over sadness and regret, and on the clouds from which fierce lightnings have leaped at last rests the rainbow of promise. The prophecy of captivities is followed by prophecies of return; the land made desolate shall rejoice with the lilies and the corn, the olive and the fir of a new spiritual life and prosperity.

Micah prophesied concerning Samaria and Jerusalem during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He was doubtless a disciple and pupil of Isaiah. There is hardly less dignity and elevation of literary style in the writings of the pupil than in those of the master, and the Messianic character of his theme is not less definite and prominent. With the Assyrians lifting their strong arms to deal a crushing blow to Samaria, and with the more distant fate of Jerusalem clearly manifest to his prophetic vision, he raises his voice to a nobly hopeful theme, and sings of the blessed time when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither

shall they learn war any more." This prophecy's fulfillment belongs to our century of Gospel enlightenment, of international laws and treaties, of reciprocity and arbitration. But what a bold, audacious prophecy for such a time as that, in which Micah, Hezekiah, and Sennacherib lived! It is recorded that, when Charles Sumner delivered his oration on "The True Grandeur of Nations," in Boston, July 4th, 1845, and made a magnificent argument against war and in favor of universal peace, Jeremiah Mason said he should as soon think of getting up a society against thunder and lightning as against war. But Micah, the Charles Sumner of the ancient Jews, prophesied the day of universal peace, even when all the horizon was black with the dust of marching warriors, and all the earth was trembling with the shock of contending arms. In that old prophecy the angels found the keynote of the Gloria in Excelsis of the advent morn, and from the inspired Micah learned to sing: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

This prophecy of universal peace was made possible by still another, which has had an import as significant and influential as any to be found in the literature of prophetism. Taking his eye from Samaria and its fall, from Jerusalem and its approaching doom, he fixes it, glowing with prophetic fire, on little Bethlehem, and behold! it assumes a glory which never belonged to the proud capitals of Judah and Israel: "Thou Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Seven hundred years after these words were written they became luminous, burning words to the eyes of the Magi, who, journeying from the East to Jerusalem, and thence to little Bethlehem, guided by the star that rained its white splendor on the cradle of Jesus Christ, there presented gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, in celebration of the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy, the advent of the long expected "Ruler in Israel," of him that is "born King of the Jews." If not as original in style as Joel or Hosea, it will not be questioned that Micah equaled these prophetic writers in greatness of theme and the Messianic spirit dominating his work.

The "burden of Nineveh" which was imposed on the prophetic spirit of Nahum does not contain the internal evidence of the date of the prophecy, or of the dwelling place of the prophet. He is called the Elkoshite. There are two graves honored as the resting place of Nahum; one in Galilee north of Tiberias, and the other in ancient Assyria, now Kurdistan. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the

prophet was a descendant of captives led away by Tiglath-Pileser. It certainly gives vividness to his writings for us to imagine Nahum as living at Nineveh, or in its vicinity, and as describing the city and portraying the character of its affairs preceding its downfall, from the standpoint of an eyewitness. He knew the "Bloody City" was "full of lies and robbery." He heard "the noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots." Foreseeing the desolation to be wrought by the ascendancy of the Chaldean power and the decadence and overthrow of Assyrian empire, the prophet has a mighty faith in Jehovah which stays his heart, and comforts his own captive people, even yonder in the land of bondage: "The Lord is good; a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." Perhaps no prophecy has been more accurately and undeniably fulfilled than Nahum's prediction of the downfall and obliteration of Nineveh: "Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her?"

A single perusal of the short book of Habakkuk makes so profound an impression on the reader's mind that he cannot but wish that the story told of Benjamin Franklin relating to it were authenticated. It is said that Franklin pretended to a company of infidels, one day in Paris, that he had found quite a remarkable old book, which, to his thought, was incomparable in its literary style. He read the book, and the savants were lavish in their praises of its force, spirit, and eloquence, and demanded the name of its author. Franklin, to their chagrin, told them it was written by the prophet Habakkuk, and was a portion of the Bible, which they had been denouncing. Zephaniah, who prophesied in the days of the good Josiah in Judah, had foretold the Chaldean and Scythian invasions, and the havoc to be wrought by their conquering arms. Habakkuk wrote, after the dreaded hosts of the conquerors had poured down upon the devoted land, and had commenced their devastating work. Zephaniah's vision was greeted with a dark, hopeless picture of coming desolation. He predicted judgments and punishments. These were not intended for the Jews only, but also for the Philistines, the Ethiopians, and the Assyrians. In the midst of universal upheavals, revolutions, and national destructions, one people shall be preserved—"the remnant of Israel." The prophet, looking down the centuries to wonderful spiritual manifestations, to the fullness of time, to God's great day, breaks forth: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel,

even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more." Habakkuk sees what is taking place in the ravages of victorious invaders. He realizes that the spiritual decline of God's people is the cause of all their distresses and afflictions; hence his prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." Then, seeing the desolation as the result of the visitation of divine judgments, the prophet rises to one of the most sublime heights of faith in God to be

found in Hebrew literature: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation!" What can be more impressive than the mighty faith and stern righteousness, the abiding hope and integrity of those prophets of Jehovah who, in the midst of universal moral and political chaos, sang of the peace and of the Christ to be!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAJOR PROPHETS.

PROPHETISM reached the climax of its literary perfection in the work of Isaiah, whose ministry of nearly half a century extended from Uzziah to Hezekiah and included the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz. Unlike Amos, the rustic of Tekoa, Isaiah could boast aristocratic, if not royal, blood. The vision of God's glory which was granted him opened his prophetic eyes, by contrast, to the sinfulness of the people, and when the angel flew from heaven and touched his lips with a burning coal from the altar he was ready to respond to God's call for prophets, and cried: "Here am I; send me." There was a consecration to God, to truth, to country, and to martyrdom which redeemed that age and nation in some measure from utter disgrace and contempt. How truly one pure, heroic soul may save the reputation of a race! With this divine touch of fire and of power which sent Isaiah forth a messenger of inspiration, was associated, by consecration, the noblest natural gifts and highest scholastic attainments to be found combined in any one character of that age. Isaiah was the prince of prophets. His golden pen bore sceptered sway over the whole varied world of literary style and prophetic theme. This monarch in the realm of inspiration, from his throne of intellectual and spiritual authority, looked out upon the doings of kings and subjects, upon great national transitions, world movements, political convulsions, moral and religious transformations, historic evolutions, the march of eventful centuries, and the sway of those mighty forces which providence has set in operation for the solution of the problems of human destiny.

The style of this prophet is rich and varied. If Hosea is the Raphael, and Ezekiel the Leonardo, Isaiah is the Michael Angelo of artistic literary prophetism. His book is the Sistine Chapel of Hebrew literature. Or, if Jeremiah is the Dante and Amos the Robert

Burns, Isaiah is the "myriad-minded" Shakespeare of the prophets. What instruments of poetical expression was he not master of? From shepherd's reed, and minstrel's harp, and temple organ he sounded all the notes of simplest and sublimest music. With the subtlety of the dialectician, the profundity of the philosopher, and the serene contemplativeness of the mystic, he combined in his work the eloquence of the orator, the imagination of the poet, and the divine illumination of the seer. The biographer of kings — for he wrote the life of Hezekiah and also of Uzziah — the historian of empires, the prophet whose happy vision had been blessed with the manifestations of God's glory, the patriot-saint whose loyalty, courage, and exalted purity were a rebuke to the wickedness of high places and the unrighteousness of the age, Isaiah stands out conspicuously as the noblest individual combination of moral and intellectual manhood in the history of literary prophetism.

Though at times this great soul seems to take a most pessimistic view of national affairs and of general historical outcomings, and though vividly to impress the people with the certainty and sadness of approaching disasters he assumes the garb of an ascetic and hermit, going about barefoot and clad in sackcloth, yet in the darkest day he sees the far-distant light, and sings of better times. Here the Messianic idea blazes forth in its full-orbed splendor, and Isaiah becomes the evangelical prophet. So clearly and unambiguously did he set forth the character, works, and mission of the Messiah that Philip, centuries later, when seated in the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch who was reading the book, was enabled from its teachings to preach unto him Jesus. Jesus read this book and declared himself to be its fulfillment. With all the discouragements of the time in which he prophesied and with his gloomy forebodings of impending disaster, Isaiah still

saw the purpose of God making for righteousness and a world's salvation through the agency of the remnant of the chosen race. So, while he prophesied captivities he also, in harmony with his co-prophets, foretold the return of the Jews to Zion.

Isaiah is not a mere literary recluse, a study prophet, a library seer. He is a man of activity. He moves among men. He is in touch with every phase of this national life. He knows what is going on as well as what is coming on. His keen, intelligent eye is on national and international affairs. He foretells Sennacherib's defeat, rebukes Hezekiah's indiscretions, but also prays for his life. He is no celibate; he rears a family; greets his wife as a prophetess, and looks upon his sons not only with a father's affection, but also with a patriot's hope and pride. Here is the scholar in politics, type of the Adamses, Burkes, Gladstones, Sumners, and Lowells, whose college training and book learning, whose historical knowledge, esthetic taste, classical erudition, or poetical genius, rather than disqualifying them for higher politics, fitted them the better to serve their country and add luster to the national name. If the tradition that Isaiah was put to death by being sawn asunder at the command of King Manasseh may be trusted, that crime alone would be a very significant index of the degeneracy of the times and a proof of the heroic and martyr spirit of the prophets. A nation cannot poison a Socrates, behead a Paul, burn a Huss, banish a Dante, send a Cranmer to the stake, or saw asunder an Isaiah until it has lost both its righteousness and intellectualism, its power to appreciate the lofty character and the God-like mind. Those lips which the seraph had touched with a live coal from the altar of heaven were ever faithful to speak with burning, holy eloquence the word of God to men.

Jeremiah, while yet comparatively youthful, was called to the prophetic office. Josiah, but twenty-one years old, was on the throne of Judah. From his coronation at the age of eight years he had proved himself a reformer bent upon uprooting idolatry and reviving Jehovah-worship. The prophet and the king saw eye to eye in the hopeful reaction from the degrading and demoralizing Baalism which had driven both nations to the brink of destruction. The hopes of the righteous and patriotic few, however, were soon dashed to the ground. Josiah, at the early age of forty, was slain in the battle of Megiddo while resisting with patriotic valor the hostile invasion of the Egyptians. What Jehoahaz, the choice of the people, might have accomplished in the way of reformatations inaugurated by his father we only surmise, as his short reign of three

months ended with his being kidnapped and sent in chains to Egypt, where he died in exile. The Egyptian power placed Jehoiakim, the elder brother of Jehoahaz, on the throne of Judah. The oppression of labor, the extravagance and profligacy of royalty, and the general demoralization which followed gave Jeremiah his prophetic opportunity. He found himself face to face with a new problem. He was now called upon, not to assist in a glorious reformation, but to resist an inglorious reaction from reformation, and his word of exhortation, encouragement, and hope became a cry of woe, alarm, warning, threatening, and lamentation. The untimely death of Josiah called forth his lamentation, and the prophet was instrumental in inaugurating a day of national mourning for this virtuous, God-fearing king.

Jehoiakim, the usurper, proved to be an enemy of true prophetism, while he encouraged that counterfeit or false prophetism which had grown up and had been encouraged by wicked kings and wicked people to cry "peace, peace," when there was no "peace," and to speak unto them "smooth things" when the rugged truth would not be tolerated. That age would not hear its apostasy denounced; it was deaf to all the warnings of danger. Jeremiah, therefore, found himself held in daily derision, mocked and insulted by a people who had in their fickleness soon forgotten the virtues of Josiah and the beneficence of his reign, and had surrendered themselves to the tyranny of Jehoiakim and the indecencies of Baalism. Jeremiah, the prophet of this time, was preëminently a thinker and teacher, of somber, melancholy mood. Austere, fearless, denunciatory, and logically pessimistic, he stood out in bold relief from the background of social frivolity and national degeneracy. He was no Democrat, to laugh away the follies of his time. He was, rather, the Diogenes of prophets, vainly looking through the streets of Jerusalem for a single man that loved righteousness. The lantern of truth and justice was ever lighted and in his hand, nor did he

"Gently scan your fellow man."

He could not speak smooth things; rough things were the only medicine for the maladies of the age. He was no compromiser, no political or moral juggler. He never learned to

"Suit the truth to ears polite,

And snugly keep damnation out of sight."

National damnation was before them. How could he, as a patriot and a prophet of the Most High God, do otherwise than lift up his voice and cry aloud and spare not? He stood as a wall of brass, to use his own apt figure. He tried to influence the national mind by the power of thought and the authority of truth. His literary work, in its sad, pathetic spirit,

full of tears and woes, became the vehicle of the most intense and spiritual prophecy. No inspired writer reached profounder depths or seemed to be more completely mastered by the authority of the divine purpose than Jeremiah. If he possessed less of Shakespeare's myriad-mindedness, and of Milton's starry splendor, than Isaiah, he revealed greater Dantean depth and seriousness.

The discovery of the long-lost book of the law when Josiah was repairing the Temple made a profound impression upon the people and gave a mighty impetus to the revival of Jehovah-worship. Jeremiah's message came just at that time of new spiritual awakening and received willing, eager attention. But when the reaction set in the prophet became unfashionable, irritating, and intolerable. He foretold the Babylonian Captivity, and, seeing the inevitable calamity, he advised submission to Nebuchadnezzar as the only policy that would save the people from untold suffering. The overthrow of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem were so clearly foreseen that he hesitated not to prepare the people for the calamity, and to make the suffering and misery as light as possible. Pashur, the governor of the Temple, smote the prophet on the mouth for his outspoken convictions, and then put him in the stocks to become the butt of ridicule. Enraged by his warnings, the people in power and place sought again and again to kill him. The spirit of gloom and discouragement which overtook Elijah under the juniper tree finally took possession of Jeremiah, and he cursed the day he was born. He prophesied the universal conquests of Nebuchadnezzar. In the significant symbolism of wooden yokes, which he made and sent to the kings of the surrounding nations, he set forth the subjugation of the world to the power of Babylon. To teach by this same powerful symbolic action the subjugation of Judah, he wore a yoke and chain upon his own neck. He was regarded as a madman, and his arrest was ordered. Jehoiakim decreed his death for his supposed hostility to the throne and sympathy with the enemies of his country; whereas he was, with breaking heart, only foretelling by divine inspiration the inevitable results of the nation's apostasy. Of all the noble and fearless prophets who had foreseen the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the chosen people, Jeremiah alone was compelled to witness the fulfillment of the prophecies, the siege and downfall of the Holy City. While the conqueror was thundering at the gates of Jerusalem, he was fearlessly and yet regretfully preparing the people's minds for the worst, even for the triumph of Chaldean arms and the subjugation of Judah. For this he was imprisoned, and Zedekiah gave him up

to those who hated him and thirsted for his blood. He was thrust into a loathsome dungeon, where he sank into the mire a most pitiable object, the victim of the nation's idolatrous insanity. He was still in prison, though he had been released from this most foul pit, when the captain of Nebuchadnezzar, by order of the Chaldean king, released him. How truly was history giving wisdom and authority to the proverb: "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country"!

Nebuchadnezzar honored the prophet; he could see that this righteous, gifted man was superior to his people and to his age. By order of the Chaldean conqueror, Jeremiah was given his choice of residence either in Chaldea or in Judah. He patriotically elected to remain in his native land. Here he counseled the governors who had been established by the Chaldean power, and became to them, as previously he had been to the kings of Judah, the warning and advising voice of God. He continued, also, to counsel his own countrymen. The upper classes, and the more useful middle classes, comprising the artificers and skilled workmen, had been carried off into captivity, not only to weaken the nation, but to populate certain undeveloped regions of Nebuchadnezzar's dominions, and to strengthen the arts and industries of Chaldea, while Chaldean colonists had been settled in the land; and this stern policy had reduced the remnant of Judah, although still numerous, to despair. But when an exodus into Egypt, under the advice and leadership of Johanan, was proposed, Jeremiah protested, and exhorted the people to remain where they were. The prophet's advice was not heeded, and when the people fled into Egypt, Jeremiah accompanied them. There he prophesied, and there, virtually a captive in the very land whence Moses, centuries before, had led the chosen people, he spent his last days in humiliation among the humblest remnants of a once proud and mighty race. His death was a martyrdom. If the traditions may be relied upon, Jeremiah was buried in that foreign land, the national *bête noire* of the Hebrew race. In later times Alexander the Great, who had once gone to visit Diogenes, the philosopher, and said: "Were I not Alexander, I should choose to be Diogenes," had the bones of the Hebrew prophet reinterred at Alexandria. The greatest pagan kings, Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander, were high-minded enough to respect, honor, and revere, not only the genius but the virtues of a prophet whom the Jewish kings had become too blind, too ignorant, too bestial, even to understand or to tolerate. This sad, sublime life — this majestic, melancholy character — must ever impress the student of history as a rebuke to a nation's depravity, a contrast to corrupt

imperialism, and proof of the fact that even in the darkest hour of social and national degeneracy God hath not left himself without a witness. At all times there are in every land, among every people, great, potent, light-bearing individualities who become in their own degree and measure, with all their human limitations, the incarnations of God's truth, the monuments of his grace and the epitomes of the redemptive, sanctifying possibilities of his purpose and his word. The Book of Jeremiah is the prophet's autobiography and the nation's obituary.

Ezekiel, the last of these mighty men who created the prophetic literature of the Hebrews, prophesied in captivity. Jeremiah had not gone with his people over into Chaldea, but God raised up from among that captive people a true successor of the weeping prophet. He may have been a pupil of Jeremiah.

Yonder on Chebar's mournful banks, Ezekiel is for the first time blessed with visions—visions more startling, grand, and awe-inspiring than any that had ever before greeted the inner eye of God's inspired seers. As the gift of miracles was to Elijah, so was the gift of visions to Ezekiel, the striking, impressive characteristic of his prophetic mission. Visionary prophetism reaches its zenith glory in the dreams of Ezekiel. This writer was highly educated and his work was purely intellectual. He was the scholar-prophet; not the scholar in affairs, in politics, in action, like Isaiah. As Elijah sought the solitude of the cave or the mountain, Ezekiel enjoyed the seclusion of the study. If the former was the hermit of the wilderness, the latter was the hermit of the library. What an intense intellectualism penetrates all his rhetorical forms! What dramatic fire glows in all those figures! What audacity of thought! What fearful, awful heights the sweeping pinions of his imagination dare attempt! It is the end, the utmost limit, of literary prophetism—not the perfection of it, but rather the extravagance, the exaggeration of it.

Ezekiel went beyond the limits of the purest

literary art in prophetism. But was his not a message, which, in its sweep and power, its awfulness and sublimity, transcended art and shook off the shackles of esthetic limitation and restraint? Did not the spirit and genius of prophetism at last soar out and beyond the earth and the skies, free, lost, to be consumed a sacrifice in the heavenly fires from which it came?

It was a dark time. The Holy City was in ashes. A nation's glory had been quenched in blood. A once mighty people were in chains; their harp was on the willows and the yoke was on their necks. The glorious past was far away; the glorious future farther still. But in the darkness there was hope. The prophet, truest friend of God and truest friend of the people, brings words of comfort to a nation's broken heart. Ezekiel's book was a light to the people in exile. Although in his first prophecies he foretold the overthrow of Jerusalem, which soon followed, and although he unerringly predicted the universal triumph of Chaldean arms over the surrounding nations, there was running through all those prophecies of war, ruin, conquest, and subjugation, a gleam of light which burst at last from out the clouds and gloom into the full and joyous splendors of the Messianic hope. Standing in the midst of desolations, the crashing of thrones and the wrecks of empires, this great-eyed man of prophecy, penetrating the future, beheld the rise of the empire of righteousness, the everlasting and universal Kingdom of God.

The post-exilic prophets, with all their hopefulness and spirituality, reveal the decline of literary prophetism. The golden age had passed. The glory of Hebrew letters, like the might of Hebrew arms, was of the yesterdays. That favored race was never more to know a military prowess like David's, to boast an art like that which culminated in the creation of Solomon's Temple, to produce a prophetic literature equal to that which came from the inspired genius of Joel, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DECLINE AND CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL.

IN fulfillment of the prophecy of Elisha, King Jehoash gained three notable victories over the Syrians before he passed away and left the royal power to his son, Jeroboam II. This name, Jeroboam, has a startling significance to the kingdom of Israel. There was no king of their sad, eventful history who was more responsible for the partition of the origi-

nal kingdom and for the conglomerate system of worship which had been established and maintained as the national religion than the first Jeroboam. For this worship of the golden calf, which had never been uprooted, God blamed him. He it was who caused the people to sin as he led them to substitute this heathenish idolatry for the Jehovah-worship,

which had been their religion since God raised them up as a people.

The reign of Jeroboam II., lasting forty-one years, might have seemed, at a superficial glance, to be characterized by a revival of the pristine military and industrial vigor, but a more careful study of the national conditions must have convinced any philosophical mind that the nation was not rising to a substantial and abiding prosperity, but was riding on the crest of a wave that was about to dash it to fragments against the might of foreign conquerors. It was a reign of greater light than Israel had known for years, but that new light was the last flame that leapt up from the smoldering embers, ere they lost their fire forever and were swept as ashes before the whirlwind. It was the last convulsive throb of the national heart, ere it sank into death and oblivion. The restoration of many of the ancient boundaries, made possible by the weakening of the Syrian power and the encroachments of the new power of Assyria upon this ancient enemy of Israel, gave Jeroboam II. a prestige which had not been enjoyed by any other king since the founding of Israel. With this reign began the higher literary life of the new kingdom. Amos and Hosea appeared with their poetical prophetism to teach a new intellectual life, as well as to inspire, if possible, a revival of Jehovah-worship. The hopes which the reviving taste, intellectualism, wealth, and military power kindled, were soon quenched by the misfortunes that followed the brilliant reign of Jeroboam.

Zachariah reigned but six months when he was assassinated by the rebellious Shallum. This usurper, who had captured the throne, lived to enjoy his cruelly earned power but a single month when Menahem dispatched him and grasped the scepter, which he wielded for ten years. A more detestable, cruel, inhuman wretch never sat on Israel's throne. His brutal treatment of women was enough to brand him a monster. Pekahiah, his successor, could maintain his supremacy but two years when Pekah, a son of one of the king's captains, killed him. After twenty years this murderer was murdered and Hoshea seated himself upon the tottering throne, destined to fall with it and with the kingdom before the conquering power of the Assyrians. The invading nations had been growing more bold and insolent as they saw the decline of Israel, resulting from internal degeneracy and the corruption of the throne. As Rome in her decline tempted the ambition of conquerors who watched and waited for the opportune moment in which to sweep from the north with overwhelming force to complete the conquest of the once mighty empire of the Cæsars, so Syrians, Egyptians,

and Assyrians watched with greedy, ambitious eyes the waning of Israel's power and saw the near approach of her inevitable subjugation.

A national power had been developing in the East which was destined to swallow up all other powers and assume universal empire; Syria, Egypt, and Israel were doomed. Assyria was rising to assert dominion over the world and was rapidly advancing her haughty arms to the consummation of this ambitious design. Great Babylon was in the ascendancy. During the reign of the inhuman Menahem, Pul, the king of Assyria, came against Samaria with a force which proved irresistible, except by the power of bribery. Gold has often been a more effectual resisting agency than steel, and many an invader has been bought off who could not have been fought off. The cruel and unjust object of historic warfare appears almost invariably to have been subjugation and tribute. Nations have built their own greatness on the ruin of others. They have replenished their own treasures by impoverishing and robbing their neighbor countries. The most abundant source of national wealth and prosperity by the old system of political economy was conquest and plunder. Hence the people were educated to war rather than to peaceful industry. The development of the natural resources of a country has often been neglected for the development of military power. A study of the great kingdoms of ancient history reveals the fact that statesmen, rulers, and people have recognized conquest, oppression, and tribute as the true philosophy of national wealth. So Assyria maintained, and the Macedonian power, and Rome, and Carthage. The strong nations did not hesitate to conquer the weak, despoil them of their meager wealth, and exact unwilling tribute from subjugated and impoverished peoples. To-day, however, in this more enlightened age, every great nation should be able to glory in the fact that she never humbled a weaker power, oppressed a sister State, or robbed any people to enrich herself. Let her boast that the philosophy of her wealth is the intelligent industry of her citizens, and that by the development of her natural resources and the inventions of her genius, rather than by the terror of her arms, she builds up her national greatness and teaches the new political economy that the only legitimate source of national wealth is to be found in honest toil and enlightened, creative thought.

Pul took money—1,000 talents of silver—and left Menahem in possession of his throne. The Assyrian, doubtless, obtained all he came for, and was content, without the shedding of Assyrian blood, to bring his invasion to so profitable an issue. The ambitious and greedy power which could exact such terms of the

kingdom of Israel had another very satisfactory proof of Israel's weakness and rapid decline. Assyria was, therefore, but the more encouraged completely to despoil the falling empire of her remaining wealth and hasten the catastrophe of her ruin as a political factor on the earth. The invasion of the Assyrians led by Pul was soon followed by the still more important, and disastrous invasion of Tiglath-Pileser in the reign of Pekah. It is very difficult to place this Assyrian, Pul. His name does not appear in the Assyrian records. He may have been a general who, in the name of the Assyrian king, made conquests. He may have been Tiglath-Pileser himself. Rezin and Pekah had formed an alliance, offensive and defensive, between Syria and Israel, much to the alarm and apprehension of Jotham and Ahaz, kings of Judah. This alliance was formed with the intention of waging war against Judah and overthrowing the Davidic dynasty. It was through the solicitations of Ahaz, richly backed by money considerations, that Tiglath-Pileser essayed the conquest of these allied powers. He came on with the might of his victorious arms and swept all opposition before him, assaulting and taking city after city, and leading away captive tribe after tribe of that once proud and mighty, but now degenerate and contemptible people, who still, in their shame and national humiliation, boasted the haughty name of Israel. It demanded no great genius to overcome the tottering kingdom which from the beginning had been founded on the sand of a demoralizing idolatry. Long had God been patient with this people, while in defiance of his laws and his prophets they had been sowing to the wind. Now, the harvest time in God's providential years has come, and by the inevitable logic that belongs to the operation of moral principle in society this careless, defiant race is beginning to reap the whirlwind. A comparatively insignificant creature becomes their captor. The tradition is that Tiglath-Pileser did not belong to a race of kings. Although he was the founder of a new dynasty, he had risen from the humble occupation of a gardener to the trade of conquest and sovereignty. Here the pruning hook is beaten into the spear, and the plowshare into the sword, and the cultivator of vegetables becomes the conqueror of nations and ruler of empires. Again the dry and dusty lips of archaeology speak in harmony with the ever-living word of inspiration, and from the very ashes of vanished kingdoms, from the graves of extinct nations, and the almost forgotten mausoleums of ancient civilizations comes a voice of testimony to corroborate the voice of prophet and historian. Tiglath-Pileser is a name familiar to archæ-

ology as it is found on slabs and cylinders which have preserved, through more than twenty-five centuries, the records of that olden time, and with his name are associated the names of the kings of Judah, Israel, and Syria, who came to dread the swift power of his arms, as in later times the Romans trembled at the name of Attila, the Hun. Broken and shattered by these two Assyrian invasions, Israel was soon fated to receive the third and final blow which would seal her national doom.

Pekah, after an unfortunate but eventful reign of twenty years, was assassinated by Hoshea, who succeeded, after great opposition and bloody civil war, in establishing himself upon the throne. He was destined to be the last of a line of kings, beginning with Jeroboam, whose reigns were characterized by the most revolting political crimes and the basest social and religious impurities that stain the records of ancient history. Blow after blow had fallen upon the wretched people. Assyria's mighty arm gathered strength by conquest until at last Shalmanezar completed what Pul and Tiglath-Pileser began—the destruction, subjugation, and captivity of the ten tribes of Israel. Hoshea, the last king of Israel, in his extremity and despair sought the aid of So, the king of Egypt, and made a futile endeavor to shake off the yoke of Assyria which had been imposed by Pul and Tiglath-Pileser in their successful invasions. After a siege of three years or more, Samaria was taken and destroyed. Sargon ended the conquest inaugurated by Shalmanezar, and drove the children of Israel into captivity. The record of this siege and captivity is preserved in the Assyrian inscriptions. The number led into captivity is stated on the Assyrian monuments to have been 27,280 men.

While Israel was declining, Assyrian civilization was advancing rapidly toward its culminating power and splendor. Sargon embodied the spirit of the new national power, and proved himself to be the most progressive and enlightened monarch of his age. The internal improvements of his empire spoke as highly of his genius and character as his military exploits of his ambition. He developed the resources of his dominions and peopled unpopulated districts with the captives taken in war. He built and embellished cities, encouraged the arts and sciences, waged extensive and important wars against the greatest powers and became, if we may judge by Assyrian sculptures, inscriptions, and monuments, one of the most powerful and progressive of the Assyrian monarchs. What a contrast to any one of those kings whose crimes and ignorance hastened the decline and sealed the doom of Israel! Hoshea, who had assassinated a king to capture a crown and

usurp a throne, was taken by the Assyrian and ignominiously put to death. The throne was empty. The kingdom was destroyed. The people were led away captive to colonize the banks of the Euphrates and develop the agricultural resources of a strange land, which was to be enriched more by the industry of a subjugated and captive people than by the spoils of war, the tribute of vassals, or the golden treasures of plundered palaces and temples.

The Israelites were undoubtedly the best of agriculturalists, if not the foremost artisans and mechanics, and they must have introduced a much needed element of prosperity into the practical, political economy of Assyria. They were given positions of trust, and, as with Moses and Joseph earlier in Egypt, and Daniel and Zerubbabel in Babylon, their best men were honored with responsibilities of office. The masses of the captive people, however, were doubtless put to agricultural pursuits for the development of the material resources of the land. Herein, moreover, they became to the Assyrians most helpful instructors in the industrial sciences.

Rennel finds an historical analogy, if not parallel, between the policy of Sargon of Assyria and Peter the Great of Russia. The latter sent the captive Swedes into Siberia, not only to reclaim the dreary waste and develop its natural possibilities, but also to introduce to the native inhabitants the superior arts, sciences, and manners which had been cultivated by the Swedes. It may be supposed that Sargon was too sagacious to lead all Israel away captive—that would have been an undertaking of very questionable policy, if not a commissary impossibility. The expatriation of at least 1,000,000 of people would have involved difficulties of transportation and expense which might well have daunted the wisdom of a Sargon. If, as the Assyrian inscriptions indicate, only about 28,000 were expatriated, or about one out of every thirty-five, then it is quite reasonable to suppose that Sargon was as wise as Nebuchadnezzar, who, in after times, led away into captivity only picked men—men who stood in the first rank as artisans, warriors, scholars, agriculturalists, and laborers; the able-bodied and able-minded of Israel. He could not have been so impolitic as to have emptied all the poverty, viciousness, and incompetency of that degenerate nation into his own land to poison and degrade it. If the conqueror, however, despoiled Israel of her best social, intellectual, military, and industrial elements, and left behind him in the subjugated land only the base, incompetent, and worthless, how completely shattered and ruined must the conquered nation have been!

The fate of the ten tribes has been one of the

most perplexing problems of history, and theories without number have been invented to account for their whereabouts subsequent to their captivity and settlement in "Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." The Afghans, the Tartars, the Nestorians, the Mexicans, the North American Indians, and even the Anglo-Saxons, have been recognized as the descendants of the "lost ten tribes" by theorists who have considered the solution of this problem one of the most essential achievements of the historian. But it is coming to be admitted more and more conclusively that the national and tribal identity of the ten tribes of the Assyrian Captivity has been absolutely destroyed—destroyed through social, political, and even religious absorption and assimilation by other nations and peoples.

The ten tribes had established their independent nationalism on a new religious basis, and, by the act of Jeroboam in instituting the bull-worship as the national religion, they repudiated the fundamental principle of the ancient theocratic constitution. From that point they began their departure from true Israelism—from true national, and religious, and even racial Israelism. The introduction of a foreign and idolatrous cultus was an introduction of heathenism into the social life and national character. They were no longer a separate and peculiar people. Their alliances—military, commercial, and even matrimonial—separated them more and more widely from the original Israelitish type. When the picked men of the nation were expatriated, Sargon sent over into the conquered land colonies of Assyrians, who introduced their foreign customs and religions. This mingling of Assyrian and Israelitish elements reduced still more the fraction of original blood and genius. Possibly many of the remaining Israelites were absorbed by Judah after the Assyrian, and before the Babylonian Captivity.

The captives were also doubtless assimilated by the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians, and, by intermarriage, lost their tribal and even racial identity. Many of those captives may have preserved and handed down to their children their Israelitish characteristics, and when Judah, in after years, was led away into captivity, the descendants of these faithful few may have mingled with the newly expatriated tribes, to be finally absorbed by them, and on the return after the seventy years' exile they may have lost their tribal identity in the one new Jewish type which remained to carry out the will and purpose of God until Shiloh came.

Whatever may be the true philosophy of the disappearance of the ten tribes as a distinct and historic national organism, the true sig-

nificance and the divine meaning of it seems to be, the fulfillment of the word of prophecy. The Lord removed Israel out of his sight—suffered its national annihilation. And thus

perished forever a form of nationalism which denied the spirit of righteousness, forsook the living God, and based itself on a cultus of superstition, idolatry, and sensualism.

CHAPTER X.

JUDAH AT WAR.

THE high national expectations which had been inspired in the southern kingdom by the genius and devotion of Jehoshaphat were destined to vanish like the baseless fabric of a vision. Joram came to the Davidic throne under most favorable auspices. His illustrious father had made the name of Judah honorable among the nations, and the surrounding world stood in wholesome awe of her prowess. Internal harmony and prosperity, with external peace, united to furnish the conditions for great commercial, intellectual, and spiritual progress. But Joram, the heir of wealth and royalty, displayed none of his father's virtues, nor had he the ability or inclination to carry out the improvements and reforms inaugurated by Jehoshaphat. It is little in extenuation of his idolatry and crime, that one may argue the dominating influence of his wife. But what better could have been expected to come from his alliance with Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel? It was through her influence that Joram turned from his father's religion, accepted idolatry—the religion of his father-in-law—quenched the fires of spiritual and intellectual revival which had leaped to new life, murdered his own brothers, and proved himself the antithesis of his father in character, and worthy in all wickedness of his idolatrous consort.

No more revolting sins and crimes have ever been perpetrated than those which have been instigated by conscienceless and vicious women. The record of wifely influence would form a most instructive chapter in the political and religious history of this world. Man has never accomplished more glorious deeds than when under the influence of noble, virtuous, and devoted woman, nor has he ever sunk to lower depths of infamy than those to which the influence of vicious woman has had the power to plunge him. The character of Esther, shining with the beauty of her personal charms and her transcendent virtues, becomes a power in history and an element in the philosophy of a nation's destiny by the influence which she exercises so righteously over the illustrious Ahasuerus. The high-minded Calpurnia, whose name was the synonym of virtue in Rome, swayed an almost imperial scepter over the will and judgment no less than over the

stern affections of Julius Cæsar, and it was in disobedience of the request of that devoted wife that he went forth unsuspectingly to meet assassination on the fatal Ides of March. Trajan owed his enviable and unique title of "the good emperor" to the influence of his chaste, intelligent, and patriotic wife, Plotina. The military triumph, if not the imperial ascendancy, of Septimius Severus was largely due to the charming and truly womanly influence of Julia Domna. When the Christian missionaries first appeared in England it was through the solicitations of Bertha that Ethelbert admitted to Kent the religion of his Christian wife, and made possible the evangelization of the English people. A similar influence Clotilda had over Clovis, the first Christian king of the Franks, who, in the midst of battle, called upon Clotilda's God, and, winning the battle, became a convert to Christianity, and aided the barbarism of the Franks to yield to the refining, civilizing influences of the Gospel. What a contrast appears when the student turns to a consideration of the influence of Messalina over Emperor Claudius; Lady Macbeth over her husband, the Thane of Cawdor; of Jezebel over Ahab; and of Athaliah over Joram! The murder of Joram's brothers was instigated by Athaliah, whose ambition was more ungovernable and cruel than a Jezebel's or a Lady Macbeth's.

The long and happy era of international peace which Judah had enjoyed through the closing years of Jehoshaphat's reign came to a sudden end when the idolatrous Joram had finally seated himself upon the throne. Wars broke out in which it was soon demonstrated that the surrounding nations had no longer to stand in awe of the power of a Jehoshaphat or fear the arms of Judah. The Edomites were emboldened by their very contempt of Joram to strike for their independence, which they successfully achieved. The idolatry and wickedness of this king called forth a remarkable letter from Elijah, who, though a prophet to Israel rather than to Judah, felt himself called upon to rebuke the sins of Joram as he had warned and reprimanded Ahab. The stern, uncompromising Tishbite forewarned the profligate and idolatrous king of the plague which was to destroy his wives and children and

bring him to a most horrible death. Deaf to the voice of God, Joram continued in his corrupt career until one distress followed another in quick succession—rebellion, invasion, the ravages of Philistines and Arabians, the captivity of his wives and children and the destruction of his entire house, with the single exception of Ahaziah. This unhappy heir of a polluted throne, Ahaziah, reigned but one year, when, on his visit to Jehoram, the king of Israel, he was slain in the conflict which ended Jehoram's reign and vested the imperial power of Israel in Jehu. The death of Ahaziah brought his mother Athaliah once more into prominence, and her ambition became more than ever notorious, unpatriotic, and vicious. She inhumanly grasped political power by the butchery of her own kindred, putting out of the way every obstacle to sovereign authority by killing all that remained of the house of Joram. One only person escaped her cruel purposes—that was her little grandson Jehoash, whom she had tried to kill, but who was saved through the instrumentality of his aunt Jehosheba. For six years the boy was hid in the Temple. When, at the age of seven, Jehoash was proclaimed king, Athaliah, who called the young ruler's pretensions treason, was put to death. A child was now on Judah's throne, but he had been educated from infancy by the righteous priest Jehoiada, who came to be the power behind the throne. A reaction set in against the idolatry which Joram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah had revived. The temples of Baal were torn down, the house of the Lord was repaired, and the worship of the fathers was restored. The idolatrous tendency of the nation, however, was soon manifest; the revolution inaugurated by the boy-king was only temporary and superficial. On the death of the good priest Jehoiada, who had been the real reformer while the king had been but an instrument in his hands, the influence which surrounded Jehoash proved him to be most fickle and irresolute, without a mind or a policy of his own. The strong undercurrent of idolatrous tendency soon became the uppermost current and swept the king along into the very maelstrom from which it had been vainly hoped he would save the nation. It seems almost incredible that this king, brought up in the very Temple and educated for the throne by the godly Jehoiada, should live to see the son of that faithful priest stoned to death for teaching, as his father had done before him, the pure and holy religion of Jehovah. Nay, the king himself ordered that Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, should be thus cruelly requited for his faithful and fearless warnings. The calamities which were predicted by the martyr-priest, as he lay dying

in the court of the house of the Lord, were speedily visited upon Judah and her king. Twice did the Syrians come up against the kingdom of Judah. In the first instance they were led by the fierce Hazael, who exacted enormous tribute as the price of sparing Jerusalem. In the second instance the forces of Jehoash were overwhelmed; his princes and courtiers were slain, and Jerusalem was sacked. The king, who began his reign as a reformer, then fell from his high eminence into idolatry with all of its attendant vices, became the ungrateful, cruel murderer of the good priest Zechariah, and finally ended his career in humiliation and disgrace at the feet of his Syrian conquerors and as the victim of assassination. Not on the field of battle, defending his country and the faith of his fathers, was he permitted gloriously and patriotically to die, but while he slept in his bed he was murdered by his servants.

Amaziah, the son of Jehoash, came to power with a military talent which was hardly commensurate with his ambition. After having visited punishment upon the assassins of his father he proceeded against the Edomites and Amalekites with an army of 300,000 young men, the glory of Judah and Benjamin. He sought in this enterprise the assistance of Israel. For the specified amount of 100 talents of silver he secured 100,000 allies. Here, however, was shown the regard which was still paid to the prophetic office. Amaziah had begun his reign in the spirit of a reformer, giving hopes of an anti-idolatrous administration. He was, accordingly, respectful to the prophets, weighed well their advice, and profited by their instruction. When, therefore, this alliance was formed with the still more idolatrous kingdom of Israel in the expedition against the Edomites, the prophet protested and warned Amaziah of evil consequences. The king took warning, and although he had paid over the stipulated price of 100 talents he dismissed the 100,000 Israelitish soldiers, in obedience to what he regarded as the command of God, and went forth in the favor of the Lord to conquer his enemies and enrich his empire with the spoils of war. But now a remarkable spectacle is presented to the student of those changeable times and fickle peoples. After having overcome the military power of the Edomites, the king of Judah is himself overcome by the idolatry of the conquered nation, and the humiliating spectacle is witnessed of Amaziah's bowing down before the idols of Edom. This is not unparalleled in history; other instances may be cited wherein the conquerors have accepted the religion of their conquered enemies. A conspicuous instance was the conversion of the Goths and Vandals by

the Christian Greeks and Romans whom they had subjugated. This, however, can hardly be cited as a parallel case to that of Amaziah's perversion to Edomite idolatry. What an opportunity that king had for teaching the conquered nation the pure and spiritual religion of Jehovah! How thoroughly permeated with the spirit of idolatry he must have been when, though repudiating the idolatry which was cursing his own land, he accepted the superstition of a less enlightened people! It seemed to be in the blood of the people—an hereditary tendency to idolatry which had come from a long and persistent disregard of the very laws and revelations of which they were the divinely appointed custodians. The virus of idolatry was poisoning the life-blood of the whole body politic, and the nation, in her rulers and people, was losing God and power.

The conquest of Edom emboldened Amaziah to attempt a more ambitious enterprise—nothing less than the invasion of the northern kingdom, the subjugation of Israel, and the reunion of the dismembered empire on the ancient political if not theocratic foundation of the Davidic nationalism. This was not an unworthy ambition, save in the methods proposed. That, however, was not a time of international amity, nor had diplomacy come to be one of the fine arts. International questions, in those rough and bloody days, were settled at the point of the sword; might made right. Amaziah proposed no diplomatic palaver, no congress of statesmen and prophets, to discuss the restoration of a united empire. He boldly and self-confidently sent a challenge to Jehoash, the king of Israel, to meet him face to face in battle—that is to say, army to army, and nation to nation. It was a challenge to international duel. He threw down the gage of battle with an insolence and a braggadocio quite unbecoming either a soldier or a king. He must have been startled by the proud and courageous reply of Jehoash. That king was not to be trifled with, for with all his faults he was no coward that he should tremble before the noisy threats of a braggart. The reply which the king of Israel made to the challenge of Amaziah was significant, not to say picturesque. It was certainly a very pointed bit of military rhetoric, reminding us of the pictorial correspondence carried on between Alexander the Great of Macedon and Darius the Persian. When Alexander scornfully refused to pay Darius III., surnamed Codomannus, a tribute of 1,000 golden eggs, the Persian sent him a bat and ball, to ridicule his youth, and a bag of seeds, to warn him of the numbers of the Persian army. Alexander replied: "With this bat will I strike the ball of your king's dominions, and," giving the seed to a fowl, "thus will I devour

his army." He also returned to Darius a wild melon whose bitterness was emblematic of the woe and sorrow they should be forced to endure. When Darius Hystaspes invaded Scythia and demanded earth and water in token of submission, the Scythians promptly and defiantly replied by sending to him, by messenger, a bird, a mouse, a frog, and a bundle of arrows, which meant: "Fly into the air like birds, hide in the ground like mice, dive into the water like frogs, or our arrows will pierce you." When Amaziah sent the challenge to Jehoash of Israel: "Come, let us look one another in the face," Jehoash returned the significant answer: "The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle." If we consider this a reply to Amaziah's proposition for the union of the kingdoms, backed by the threat of force and war, it evidently means that the king of Israel looked upon himself as the majestic cedar and upon his kingdom as the daughter of the cedar, while he regarded Amaziah as the contemptible thistle or brier, and the kingdom of Judah as the son of the thistle. The wild beast rushing through Lebanon meant war in its ravages, and if war came it would tread down the thistle, it would crush Amaziah. Jehoash acts a very manly part in warning the king of Judah to curb his ambition and be content with his conquest of Edom, but the hot-headed Amaziah spurns advice and at Beth-shemesh reaps the bitter consequences in an overwhelming defeat and the complete rout of his army. He was himself made a prisoner and led a disgraced and humiliated captive to his own capital, which was plundered by the victorious army of Israel. That sad story, so often repeated, is told once more of how the walls of Jerusalem were broken down, the very Temple was despoiled of its silver, and gold, and sacred vessels, the treasury of the king's house was looted, while hostages were taken away into Samaria. Thus was the "thistle of Lebanon" trodden down by the "wild beast"—Amaziah and his kingdom crushed and laid waste by war!

The record of the conspiracy which was hatched against Amaziah becomes interesting at this time from the fact that archæology is bringing to sight the ruins of the long-hidden Lachish to which Amaziah fled, where he was assassinated, and whence they brought him on horses to be buried in Jerusalem with his fathers. This Lachish was an ancient city which Joshua besieged and captured in his time, fully 700 years before the days of Amaziah. Rehoboam evidently rebuilt or restored and fortified it, but it afterward fell into the hands of the

Assyrians. The last mention made of it was not later than the time of Jeremiah, fully 2,500 years ago. But to-day the spade of the archæologist is bringing the ruins of this ancient city to light and verifying in a measure the Word of God by proving that Lachish had an existence in harmony with the Hebrew records. Sixteen miles east of Gaza and twenty-three miles west of Hebron stands Tel el-Hesi, a mound which the explorer has proven to be a mound of many cities. The ruins of one city rise above another, until eight separate and distinct cities are identified, the first of which was founded 500 years before the children of Israel conquered and occupied the land. Each city has left the evidences of its character to be interpreted by this age. The implements of war and industry in stone, bronze and iron; the pottery, statuary, idols, tablets, cylinders, and scarabs speak of their Amorite, Phœnician, Egyptian, or Greek origin. As the excavations progress, more and more evidence appears in support of the position taken by Doctor Petrie that this is the site of ancient Lachish, which, during the many centuries of its existence, passed through all the changes which the influences of various civilizations wrought in its character. Here it was that Amaziah sought asylum from the conspirators, and here he was slain. Possibly the further explorations of this Tel may bring to light records of Jewish import to confirm still more positively the history preserved in the Holy Scriptures.

Isaiah's biography of Uzziah has been lost, else might we have a complete and satisfactory history of the next reign, which was distinguished for its brilliancy. It would not be claiming too much for Uzziah, the son and successor of Amaziah, to say he brought to the throne extraordinary powers of mind, if not true genius. Nor was his virtue inferior to his intelligence. Although but sixteen years old when he assumed the crown, he immediately won the favor of the Lord and the good will of the people who had called him to the throne. He devoted himself to the much-needed internal improvements of the kingdom, and proved himself the friend and benefactor of the husbandmen who reared the flocks and tilled the soil. He was a lover of husbandry, and doubtless understood that a nation's wealth and prosperity must come from the soil by the noble science and art of agriculture. Like Cincinnatus of the old Roman days, Uzziah appreciated both the delights and profits of agricultural pursuits, and rejoiced in his own thrifty vineyards. He was in no wise unfitted for the high position of political sovereignty by the love he had for the farm. Among the internal improvements which Uzziah inaugurated were wells dug in the wilderness and towers built for the defense

of flocks which suffered from the attacks of wild beasts and robbers. The walls of Jerusalem were repaired; cities were fortified, and while all the arts of peace were revived and the wealth-producing farmers, and cattle-raisers, and wool-growers were given every advantage for prosperity that Uzziah's truly economic genius could devise, at the same time the possibilities of war were kept in view, and the invasion of hostile nations was carefully provided against. The king raised a magnificent army and thoroughly equipped his soldiers for aggressive and defensive war. Here Uzziah displayed an inventive no less than an economic and military genius. It would seem that Uzziah was the inventor of the first machinery for attacking and defending fortified and walled cities. Although it is claimed by some writers that the catapult, an engine for throwing great stones, was the invention of Dionysius of Syracuse in 399 B. C., and the battering-ram for demolishing walls and fortifications was invented by Artemon, a Greek, and first employed by Pericles in 441 B. C., it would seem from more reliable data that these siege engines were invented by Uzziah 400 years earlier, and were adopted by the nations generally, with improvements. As these engines are not mentioned by Homer in his description of the siege of Troy, they were evidently unknown among the Greeks in the poet's time. With the smaller implements of war, such as spears, helmets, slings, shields, and bows, which the king furnished, mention is made for the first time in history of an engine for shooting arrows and hurling great stones from the walls of Jerusalem. Then the significant record that in his war against the Philistines he broke down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, would clearly indicate that one of the military engines of his invention must have been the battering-ram.

The Edomites, Arabs, Philistines, and Ammonites were all made to feel the power of Judah's arms, and Egypt stood in wholesome awe of the name of Uzziah—a name which must ever shine with brilliant distinction on the same scroll of fame with the names of Solomon and Jehoshaphat. That this king should spend his last days in misery must be the regret of all who have admired his patriotism, talent, and devotion. In the beginning, as a lad of sixteen, he sought God, and, by the record, so long as he sought the Lord he prospered. What a light such words throw upon that national history to give us the true philosophy of it! Was it not ever so? While the people were true to the law of righteousness, faithful to the religion of their fathers and the worship of Jehovah, the nation prospered both in peace and war. Their calamities and misfortunes fol-

lowed their apostasy. As they offended God and transgressed the laws of pure religion, they sank into vices which enervated and impoverished them, and made them the easy prey of invaders and ambitious conquerors. In the pride and exaltation of his success and prosperity, Uzziah presumptuously, if not sacrilegiously, assumed to exercise the functions of the priestly office, and boldly entered the Temple to burn the incense upon the altar. Rebuked though he was by Azariah, the chief priest, and violently resisted by four-score priests, the king angrily persisted in his act of trespass upon the sanctuary. As he raised the censer to burn incense he was smitten with leprosy. To the dismay of all, that dreadful white spot appeared in his forehead. This king, who had accomplished so much for Judah by his piety, intelligence, military and inventive genius, and by his loyalty to all the interests of the people and of the nation, spent his last days in the leper hospital, separated from the world. The administration of State affairs passed to his son Jotham, whose regency gave such satisfaction that the people were warranted in crowning him king on the death of his illustrious father, Uzziah.

Jotham carried out the same policy which had made his regency acceptable to the people, and seemed animated with the progressive spirit of his father. He continued the internal improvement of the kingdom, constructed towers and castles in the forests, built cities in the mountains, fortified Jerusalem, and built the high gate of the Temple. He maintained the military strength of the kingdom, and secured vast tribute from the Ammonites. At the close of his rather prosperous reign of sixteen years,

his kingdom was invaded by the allied forces of Syria and Israel under the leadership of Rezin and Pekah. This conflict, however, did not reach a serious form while Jotham lived; he bequeathed it to his successor, Ahaz, who proved quite incompetent to carry it to a successful issue. In his sore distress, as we have found, Ahaz formed an alliance with Tiglath-Pileser, and then met the united forces of Syria and Israel with the allied armies of Assyria and Judah. Ahaz proved himself fully as able to form alliances with foreign powers as Pekah of Israel, and he met the invaders with the overwhelming might of Tiglath-Pileser's Assyrian hosts. While Israel never recovered from this thunderbolt which Ahaz hurled against her, though she invited it by her own ambitious design to subvert the southern kingdom, the alliance which Ahaz formed with Assyria proved a most disastrous one for Judah, since the price which Ahaz paid for the assistance of Tiglath-Pileser was no less than Judah's humiliating submission to the Assyrian yoke. The religious deficiencies of Ahaz were as marked as his lack of political sagacity. The policy of internal improvement pursued by his father and grandfather was not adopted by Ahaz, and his abominable idolatry stands out in marked contrast with the piety of his immediate predecessors. He closed the Temple; instituted new idolatries; turned to the service of his 'enemies' gods, and introduced the Syrian forms of worship. When the Temple was opened, behold! it had been transformed into a temple of idolatry. So far did the king in his religious perversion go, that he offered his own son a burnt sacrifice according to the inhuman rites of the most degraded heathenism.

CHAPTER XI.

SENNACHERIB AND THE ASSYRIANS.

THE night seems to be rapidly closing in upon Judah, and the dread power which is to overwhelm both the northern and southern kingdoms has already secured a foothold, has struck Israel the first blow, and placed upon Judah the galling yoke of that complete conquest and subjugation which idolatry has unfitted them to resist. A gleam of light breaks fitfully through the gathering storm-clouds in the virtue of Hezekiah and the righteousness of his reign. He had inherited a demoralized kingdom, but not a demoralized nature, from his father. Now and then the good blood will come to the surface in spite of or in harmony with the so-called law of moral heredity. It is a remarkable fact, however, that one can never predicate a king's character

on his father's record, whether it be bad or good. The good Jotham's son is the wicked Ahaz, and the wicked Ahaz's son is the righteous Hezekiah. Now and then the flickering, dying light of this Hebrew genius would leap up as with renewed life. The gathering clouds would at times brighten as by the flashes of lightning before the breaking of the storm in greater fury and the sinking of the nation into denser night and more hopeless chaos. Hezekiah did what he could to stay the tottering empire and turn the people to higher paths of national life. He not only reopened the Temple and revived Jehovah-worship with the rites and ceremonies of the house of the Lord, but he began and prosecuted a relentless crusade against the idolatry which had been favored by

his father, Ahaz. He adopted a different political or international policy from that by which Ahaz had humiliated Judah at the feet of Assyria. He resisted the Assyrian yoke and tried to establish that independence of his country which had been bartered to Assyria for the co-operation of Tiglath-Pileser against Syria and Israel. Hezekiah proved himself a true political and religious reformer. But, like all reformers of the genuine sort, he was opposed, and had to stand up against a world. His measures were resisted by many of his own idolatrous people and by Judah's Assyrian masters. There were not wanting those who scoffed at the revival of the temple services and the historic old feasts of the Levitical system. Then the cessation of tribute to Assyria meant the beginning of war. Nearly all the Palestinian powers had thrown off the yoke of Assyria, but the conqueror was not tardy in hastening into the land with sufficient force to subdue scores of rebellious vassals. Sennacherib invaded Palestine with a formidable host, swept down the western shore and captured city after city; bringing Sidon, Tyre, Ekron, Joppa, Askelon, Timnath, and Ashdod to terms, capturing forty-six fortified cities of Judah and marching upon Jerusalem. The price of peace was 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. So depleted was Judah's treasury that Hezekiah could not meet the demand of the Assyrian without robbing the Temple of its golden ornaments. Sennacherib saw to what extremities the kingdom was reduced, and in his ambition dreamed that the time was ripe for a bold stroke of complete conquest and spoliation. He, therefore, immediately demanded the unconditional surrender of Jerusalem. The Assyrian had established himself before Lachish, as the monuments represent him, to prosecute the siege of that city, and from that place sent the messengers Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh to demand the surrender of Jerusalem. These messengers were met by Hezekiah's representatives, Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah. In the parley Rabshakeh was spokesman for the Assyrians, and Eliakim for the Jews. The Assyrians insulted the Jews and tried to incite them to treason to their God, their king, and their country. Rabshakeh, transcending the limits of diplomatic courtesy, harangued the people as they gathered on the walls of the city, advising them to yield to the king of Assyria. Eliakim hastened to King Hezekiah with the results of the unsatisfactory parley. With the all-conquering Assyrian thundering at the gates of the city, Hezekiah turned to the prophet of God and requested Isaiah to call upon the Lord for deliverance. Isaiah's words were like a trumpet peal of victory to the ears of the disheartened king. A defiant answer

was sent to Sennacherib. The doom of the Assyrian army was predicted. The Lord would send a "blast" against them. In the meantime Sennacherib had raised the siege of Lachish and pitched against Libnah. When the messengers returned and the intelligence came that the king of Ethiopia was marching against the Assyrians to the assistance of the Jews, Sennacherib dispatched messengers again to Jerusalem with a letter containing his ultimatum. Hezekiah went into the Temple and spread this letter before the Lord in earnest prayer. Isaiah then broke forth in sublime strains of poetic prophecy which reached a climax in the assuring language:

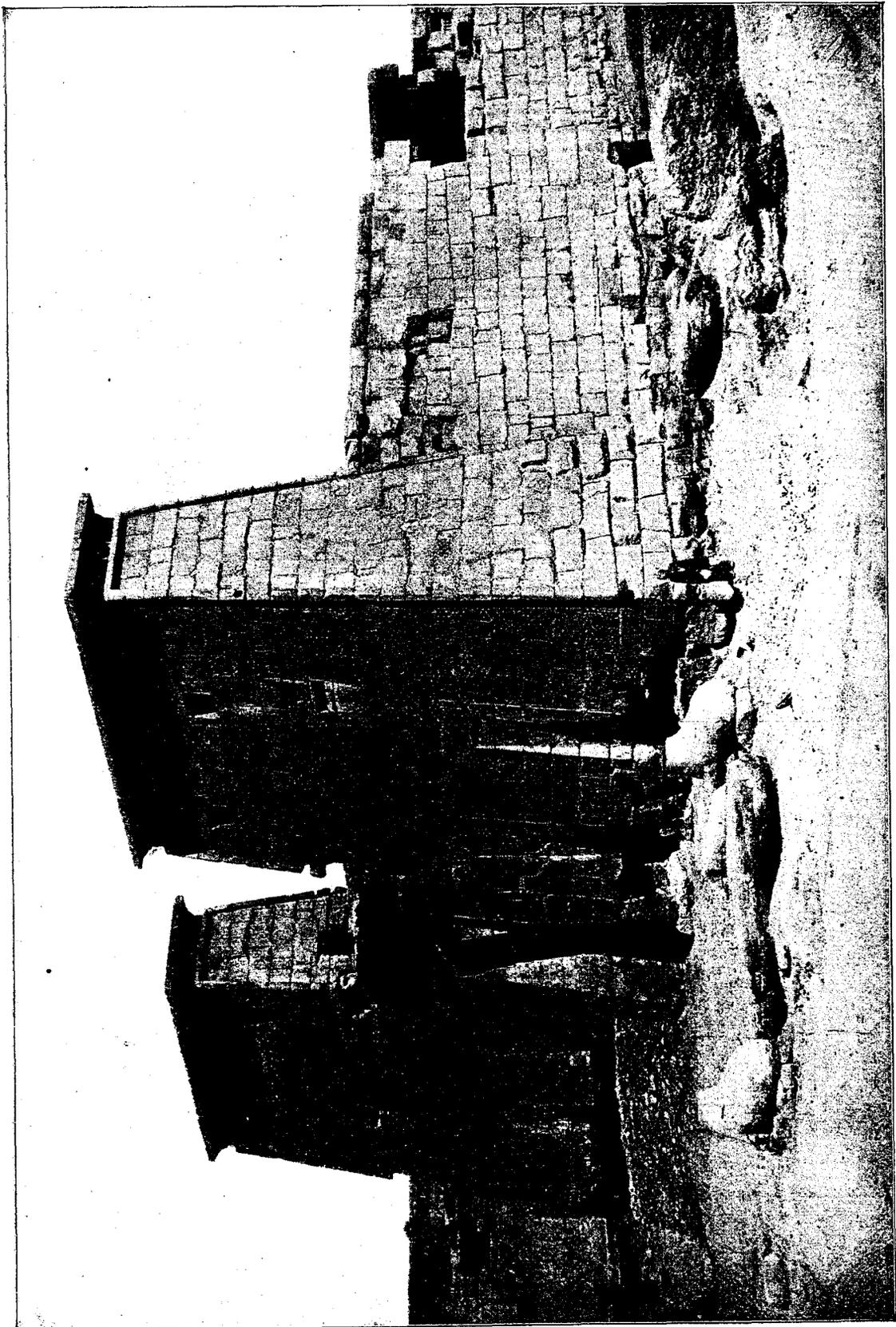
"Therefore thus saith the Eternal in regard to the king of Assyria:
 He shall not come against this city,
 Nor shoot an arrow there,
 Nor assault it with shield,
 Nor throw up a siege wall against it.
 By the way by which he came he shall return;
 And he shall not come against this city, is the decree of the Eternal;
 But I will protect this city to save it,
 For mine own sake and for the sake of David, my servant."

That night saw the destruction of the proud army of Assyria. Isaiah had strengthened Hezekiah's heart with the assurance that the Lord would send a "blast" against the enemy so that not an arrow should smite the city. Byron has put into verse the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy:

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
 Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
 That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.
 For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed!
 And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
 And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

"And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!"

The angel or messenger of death came in the form of a pestilential blast, the destructive simoom, in which 185,000 Assyrians perished. If there were any disposition to eliminate the supernatural from this event, certainly the natural destruction of the Assyrian army need present to the student no serious difficulty. Victor Hugo attributes the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo to a few drops of rain, more or



From a Photograph.

KARNAK TEMPLE.

less, which in the early morning made the roads unfit for the movement of artillery. In other words, he claimed that providence defeated the "man of destiny." It was certainly the severity of the Russian blasts that made Napoleon's retreat from Moscow disastrous and so decimated his army that he never recovered his pristine strength. When Cambyses III., the son and successor of Cyrus the Great, invaded and conquered Egypt, he sent an army to destroy the temple of Anmon at Siwah, but it was overtaken by the deadly simoom and perished in the desert. Sennacherib's army was in the region which was often swept by this destructive storm, and it was doubtless overwhelmed by the "blast" which was figuratively an angel of death, a messenger of the Lord, and in reality, a visitation of divine providence. The record of this disaster was not inscribed on Assyrian monuments. Sennacherib gives a very full and detailed account of his invasion on the monuments, which may still be deciphered. He mentions the cities captured on this expedition and gives the names of the kings and kingdoms resubjugated which had broken away from Assyrian control since Sargon and Tiglath-Pileser's conquests. He represents Hezekiah as imprisoned in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage, and gives an account of the siege of Jerusalem with the enormous treasure which he carried away to Nineveh, but nothing is recorded of the "blast" which smote his army with death. The only historical reference to the calamity which befell the Assyrian army that has been found in profane records is the doubtful tradition preserved in Herodotus. The Greek historian relates a story told him by the Egyptian priest to the effect that Sennacherib, king of the Arabians and Assyrians, marched a large army against Egypt, when the priest in power, forsaken by his own people, entered the temple and supplicated the favor of the God he worshiped. While there, he fell asleep and his God appeared to him in a vision, encouraging him and assuring him that he need not fear the invaders, as help would come to him at the proper time. Trusting this vision, the priest-ruler gathered as many followers from among the tradesmen and mechanics as would rally to his standard and took up his position at Pelusium, the entrance to Egypt. When they encamped there, a multitude of field mice, pouring in upon the Assyrians, gnawed their bows and quivers and the handles of their shields so that they were without arms and armor, and when the next day dawned they fled and many of them were destroyed. It is very difficult to make this tradition harmonize with the Jewish record of the destruction of Sennacherib's army, although the modifications in the Egyptian story may

be due to the mixing up of two records, each colored by national religious sentiments.

Hezekiah evidently treated with Sennacherib by paying him his demand in treasure. This doubtless satisfied the Assyrian and justified him in his monumental boast, while the record of the disaster which subsequently befell his army was suppressed and never inscribed on the monuments for the information of future ages. The Assyrian project failed in so far as it was an attempt to capture Jerusalem and subjugate the Jews. Sennacherib had demanded an unconditional surrender, but for some very sufficient reason—the simoom, if no other—he did not succeed in his ambitious enterprise.

The failure of Sennacherib to capture Jerusalem redounded to the glory of Hezekiah and of Isaiah the prophet, who were held in the highest esteem by the people whom they had saved from national humiliation and delivered from Assyrian bondage. Prosperity immediately followed the withdrawal of the invaders. That fact with the other, that Hezekiah's renown increased, would seem to prove that while Sennacherib may have told the truth on his monument, and nothing but the truth, he did not tell the whole truth. Evidently he had not spoiled Jerusalem so completely as his inscriptions would lead us to believe, nor did he succeed in catching his bird after he had shut him up in the cage. The general enterprise of this great Assyrian, however, was successful and came to a climax in the capture of Libnah and, possibly, of Lachish. One of the most impressive monuments of those events represents Sennacherib seated on his throne with attendants, a bow in one hand and arrows in the other, while the rulers of cities and nations subjugated are appearing before him to sue for peace and to submit to his authority. By an inscription we are informed this monument represents Sennacherib seated before Lachish prosecuting its siege. The Assyrian returned to Nineveh, well satisfied with his enterprise of conquest and with the riches he was able to pour into the national treasury. He made no further attempt to subjugate the Jews, although his record of conquest does not end with this successful expedition to Palestine. After a splendid, if not incomparable, career of twenty years more in conquest and rule, Sennacherib was ignominiously assassinated. His own

" Sons
Smote him between the altar stones."

This was a sad and humiliating close of a most illustrious life. For the student of national developments in their political, military, and intellectual phases, the name of Sennacherib must ever have a charm. Not only as one of the conquerors of antiquity, a general

of true military genius and of proud exploits, but also as the man who established the supremacy of Assyria, made Nineveh magnificent with palaces and the center of the political, if not the intellectual, world, must Sennacherib ever hold his exalted position in history. There was, perhaps, without their knowing it themselves, great similarity of mind and taste between Hezekiah and Sennacherib; they were both men of culture and learning. Jehoshaphat may have been more nearly the intellectual like of the Assyrian than was Hezekiah. One of the most noteworthy discoveries made by archæology has been the royal library of Sennacherib at Kuyunjik. Layard here brought to light the ruins of splendid palaces which had been built by Sennacherib and his grandson Assur-bani-pal. Here were found the books of the Assyrians—imperishable books, 10,000 volumes or more, inscribed clay tablets—still in a remarkable state of preservation. Many of these books from the royal library of Sennacherib may now be seen and read in the British Museum. More than all monumental records of battles and conquests, more than all the evidences of wealth, material magnificence, and imperial power that remain to speak of Sennacherib, these books and this library of the royal palace of Kuyunjik reveal the character and true greatness of the Assyrian king. Here is the literature of Assyrian science, religion, and history. Here are their poetry, their mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and theology; the evidences of the enlightenment of a ruler who knew the value of literature and education, art and science, ethics and song, ages before Augustus and his golden age, and centuries before the brilliant Athens of Pericles. No monarch of antiquity, however magnificent his reign, has left a monument which speaks to this age with nobler significance of true greatness than the royal library which Sennacherib left on the banks of the Tigris.

While this powerful king did not again harass the Jews, the Assyrian power which he did so much to augment was only awaiting the day of its great opportunity when it should strike the tottering kingdom of David a crushing blow and sweep this enervated, degenerate people into bondage more humiliating and galling, if not more servile, than the Egyptian bondage from which Moses, by God's providence, had led their ancestors.

The prosperity of Hezekiah, his flourishing vineyards, bursting granaries, multiplying flocks, increasing wealth, honor, and power were not unaccompanied by affliction. But when disease came upon him he sought the prophet's aid, as in the day of Sennacherib's invasion. Isaiah true to his king, his country, and his God prays for and is promised

Hezekiah's recovery. So surely as the shadow went backward on the sundial of Ahaz, he will be raised to health. God spared the good king's life in answer to prayer. That the turning back of the shadow on the sundial was a miracle need not be insisted upon. That was a natural, meteorological possibility, calling for no divine interference with the laws of light or the principles of astronomy. As the rainbow became the emblem of God's pledge that the world should never again be destroyed by flood, so was this meteorological incident made an emblem of God's promise to restore the king. It were natural to suppose that now the king and Isaiah would be on most intimate and friendly terms with each other. Surely the good prophet had been the very prop and stay of the throne, and in the darkest hour of national peril Hezekiah had leaned upon him as the embodiment of the divine truth—the very messenger of God. But at no time did Isaiah's light shine out in the darkness more clearly and steadfastly than when it was necessary for him to rebuke the king who had so often solicited his counsel. When Hezekiah was carried away by his prosperity and began to boast of his riches and to parade his great treasures before the wondering eyes of the Babylonian ambassadors, the faithful prophet steadied the king, and kept him from stepping over the brink in his dizzy pride by some very timely and wholesome warning which contained the sad prediction that the very power which these ambassadors represented would some day despoil the kingdom of these and all its riches. The Babylonian power whose alliance he sought, and whose confidence he would gain by a display of his treasures, would some day break the alliance and become an ambitious and all-powerful enemy. That awful day of reckoning was not far distant. The gleam of light which broke through the impending gloom, and made the reign of Hezekiah almost illustrious, was soon to be followed by the deepest darkness that had ever settled on this rapidly declining nation.

Manasseh in no particular resembles his illustrious father, Hezekiah. He does not seem to have inherited a single virtue of his father. Coming to the throne a mere boy, he was both the pupil and the tool of that element in the government which had persistently antagonized all reformation, laughed at the revival of the theocratic ritual, and kept alive in the hearts of the people the mad fire of sensual idolatry, which was burning and devouring the nation's chastity, virtue, and strength. Long as was this reign of fifty-five years, the Jewish historians have been loath to record the events which made it one of the most corrupt

and vicious that blots and stains any national history. So despicable was the character of Manasseh that his name is seldom mentioned in Jewish literature. He was the Nero of Judah's kings. Not only did a reaction from Hezekiah's theocratic policy set in, but a persecution began which all the cruelties of Smithfield fires, all the horrors of St. Bartholomew's day, all the pagan savagery of Nero's and Diocletian's dungeons and wild beasts' dens cannot by comparison diminish or eclipse in enormity. Doubtless Isaiah fell with the martyrs in this dark and depraved reign when the streets of Jerusalem ran with innocent blood. The idolatries which Hezekiah had overthrown Manasseh reestablished. He also added to the other abominations, witchcraft, sorcery, fire-worship, and the adoration of the heavenly bodies. The extreme to which this monster carried the vilest and most sensual idolatries far exceeded any ever before attempted by his idolatrous predecessors. He went so far as to turn the house of the Lord into a temple of idols, polluting the sacred place with the indecent images of Astarte and placing Baal and Astarte in possession of Jehovah's sanctuary. To give more emphatic approval of the Ammonitish worship of Moloch, this depraved king caused the fires to be rekindled in the vale of Hinnom and made his own sons pass through the flames. There was not a form of idolatry practiced by the surrounding nations that was not only tolerated but established and propagated in Jerusalem to the exclusion of Jehovah-worship. This alone seemed to be prohibited. The insane bigotry of idolatry broke forth in most cruel persecution, which swept away not only the

faithful few of the common people but destroyed the most intellectual classes, the priests and prophets, poets and authors who were true to the old theocratic system.

Loath as Jewish prophets and historians have been to pollute their pages with any mention of Manasseh, that name appears on the Assyrian monuments, in the record of Esar-haddon's conquests. According to that stone record, Manasseh was overthrown, and according to the Jewish Scriptures, Manasseh was captured and led a prisoner to Babylon by the generals of Esar-haddon. Found hiding like a shrinking coward in the hedge, rather than facing the enemy like a brave man of royal dignity and patriotic spirit, he was led away to Babylon like a beast, with rings through his lips and chains upon his feet. While suffering the pains and humiliations of captivity, Manasseh repents of his idolatries, which he now sees have brought disgrace and disaster upon him and his kingdom. He returns by the providence of a forgiving God, whose mercy he supplicates, and as the vassal of the Assyrian monarch continues on the throne of Judah. The few remaining years of his reign witness a reformation in which the repentant king tries to undo the idolatrous mischief of his earlier years. With all his well-meant endeavors to uproot idolatry and restore the ancient Jehovah-worship, it was difficult, if not impossible, to stem the tide to which he had early given such mad, impetuous fury. This may be seen in the fact that his son, Amon, followed in his footsteps of sin, idolatry, and wickedness, only to be assassinated by his own servants. Amon's reign lasted but two years.

CHAPTER XII.

JOSIAH AND REFORM.

IN Josiah we have again a remarkable study in heredity. His father and grandfather were base idolaters, but he occupies a place beside Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat as one of the few virtuous and godly kings of Judah, whose reign reflected honor alike upon himself and his kingdom. Amon, his father, was assassinated when Josiah was a lad but eight years old. In boyhood, however, Josiah displayed those virtuous traits of character which gave promise of a noble manhood and of a righteous reign. No king had come to Judah's throne in more stirring times. The nations were being shaken to their foundations with the earthquake of universal revolution. Crowns were falling, thrones tottering, kingdoms rocking on their bases. All the powers of the earth were up in arms, each seeking the subjugation

of the other, ambitious for universal empire. Egypt was assuming an insolent, haughty, and domineering attitude toward the north. Nineveh was declining and Babylon rising. Assyrian supremacy was giving way before the new, swift, ambitious power of Chaldea. The north was swarming with strange, wild, hardy Scythians, who came like the whirlwind to destroy the effete civilizations of the south. Poor Judah seemed a withered branch tossing on the wild billows of this political maelstrom destined to be sucked into the vortex of destruction. Prophecies poured forth from the lips of the anointed seers against all these self-vaunting kingdoms. Not poor, dwindling, almost defunct Judah alone, but Egypt, Assyria and Chaldea were burdens of prophecy. Babylon and Nineveh, no less than Jerusalem, were

warned of impending evil, punishments, providential chastisings, destructions, annihilations.

The corruption of Manasseh's fifty-five years' reign and of Amon's equally vicious reign, left Judah in the most depraved and hopeless condition to which it had ever sunken. Josiah, the boy-king, must have been looked upon as a helpless victim of most unfortunate circumstances, doomed to greater humiliation and ignominy than his father or his detestable grandfather. Once more, however, and only once more, does light shine in the darkness. How patient has God been! How many opportunities has he given this people to repent and turn to him! How often has he tried to teach them the lesson that righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people! Every righteous ruler has been blessed with prosperity. Every reformation has been followed by manifestations of divine favor. In the abundance of their harvests, the success of their arms, the growth of their power, and the honor of their name among the nations, that people ever found that God blessed them in every new resolve and effort of theirs to turn from idolatry and renew their devotion to the theocratic system of which they had been made the peculiar custodians. Once more before the awful catastrophe of final ruin, God blesses with his favor the reign of a righteous king.

Josiah was a reformer at the age of twelve. He soon entered upon a determined warfare against idolatry; tore down the images, destroyed the abominable groves; extinguished the Moloch fires; demolished the altars and temples by which the people had been corrupted with every form of unchaste and demoniacal idolatry, from the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth to fiery Moloch. Not content with issuing royal edicts for the suppression and absolute extirpation of idolatry, he gave personal supervision to the destruction of the idols, groves, and temples of false religions. This virtuous iconoclasm, this work of righteous destruction, was followed by a reformatory construction, a restoration of Jehovah-worship with all the ancient symbols and ceremonies. At a great expense, and by the employment of large numbers of workmen, Josiah restored the Temple which had been so long polluted with idolatry. Moreover, the wear and tear of over two hundred years' service since it was repaired must have left the Temple in a sad state of dilapidation. For the honor of God and of the nation, Josiah would have this treasure house of Jehovistic symbolisms become, by its renovation and beautified restoration, a figure of a regenerate nationalism, the emblem of the moral and religious transformation of the people. While the repairs of the Temple were progressing, a most important discovery was

made by Hilkiah, the high priest. Rummaging in some obscure, neglected part of the historic old house, clearing out rooms and corners which had been receptacles for relics during the changes which had gone on, or ransacking what may have been the archives of the Temple, Hilkiah came upon a document which created a sensation — nay, a revolution. It proved to be an old copy of the Law, doubtless the long-neglected Pentateuch. It had been relegated to the rubbish heap or laid aside like a worn-out garment for which the original owner had no further need. What a comment on the national character! There was revealed the philosophy of their decline. They had thrown their Magna Charta into the waste basket. They had relegated the very chart and compass of the ship of state to the ash bin. They had pronounced their theocratic constitution null and void, and had pitched it into the corner of neglect, obscurity, and forgetfulness. Their subsequent history was the logical result of ignoring the Book of Law. When the good priest brought out the dusty, moldy book, from its age-long obscurity, he hastened to send it to Josiah by Shaphan the scribe. The king's agitation knew no bounds, for when portions of the book were read in his hearing he rent his clothes, and ordered that an inquiry be made of the Lord — that is, he commanded that a prophet be consulted. The book contained such threatenings against evil doers and violators of the law, and the nation had been so manifestly trampling the law under foot, and the punishments threatened in the book seemed so certainly impending, that the nation was in danger. It looked as though God were about to destroy them for their infidelity. The book must be interpreted.

Evidently neither Jeremiah nor Zephaniah was residing in Jerusalem at that time. The committee, therefore, consisting of Hilkiah the priest, Shaphan the scribe, Ahikam, Achbor, and Asahiah, sought Huldah the prophetess. Out of obscurity God called a devoted woman into history. The only mission she had, so far as history reveals, was to shed light on this long-neglected constitution. It was a critical epoch. The hour of demand found her faithful; walking in the ways of God, living in the true spirit of prophecy; ready to teach the scribes, the priest, the king, the nation. A Jeremiah or an Isaiah could not have done better. She rises before us in the beauty of her virtue, the steadfastness of her faith, the luster of her intelligence, and the dignity of her prophetic character to prove, as Miriam, Deborah, and Hannah proved, that the poetic gift and the prophetic office could be as safely entrusted to women as to men. Since Miriam sounded the loud timbrels over Egypt's dark sea, and

Sappho's singing charmed the isles of Greece, and our bright day listens to the sweet and lofty strains of Jean Ingelow and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the world must recognize the divine gifts of woman. As teachers, too, women have distinguished themselves. Deborah was a judge of Israel; Aspasia was the teacher of Socrates and Pericles; Hortensia instructed Roman orators in eloquence; Hypatia adorned the presidency of the Platonic Academy, in Alexandria; Vittoria Colonna and Alessandra Scala were bright scholars of the Renaissance; Mary Somerville was astonishingly proficient in science; Amelia B. Edwards was an accomplished Egyptologist; Elizabeth Carter, like Lady Jane Grey, was a linguistic genius; George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, and Jane Porter were queens in the realm of literary romance; and Rosa Bonheur, Harriet Hosmer, and Angelica Kauffman have made the world more beautiful with their art. Thus the intelligence, genius and virtue of woman, against the prejudices of all history, have proved God to be no respecter of sex in the bestowment of his gifts of mind and graces of heart. How brightly does this star of Jewish womanhood shine in the gathering darkness of that far-off and unhappy time! Fearless, intelligent, and true to her high prophetic calling, Huldah interpreted the spirit of the new-found Book of Moses. It was a startling revelation to the messengers and to the king. The fulfillment of that divine word was assured. The prophetess courageously foretold the consequences of the nation's infidelities and idolatries. The law must be fulfilled. In the divine logic of events punishment will follow disobedience. The only ray of light that came to the comfort of Josiah was in the assurance that he should not live to witness the final catastrophe. His upright life and reign should, therefore, be rewarded; the nation's doom should be averted until after his death. Little consolation came to so noble and patriotic a soul in the assurance that he should be spared the personal sorrow of witnessing his country's fall. The inevitability of the nation's ruin must have banished from his unselfish mind whatever comfort that single ray of light was sent to bestow.

As if inspired with a purpose to prevent the inevitable, Josiah entered with fresh spirit upon the reformation of the kingdom. He summoned the nation to Jerusalem—all the elders, priests, prophets, and people of every rank and class. He read to them the new-found book, which had been a lamp to the feet and a light to the path of their virtuous and godly ancestors from the days of Moses down to the time of David, their typical king. The people were as profoundly moved as the king had been by the reading of this long-lost book, and with

Josiah they stood up *en masse* and joined in a renewed covenant to obey the law of God and walk in the paths of their righteous fathers. The last relic of idolatry was uprooted. As-tarte of the Zidonians, Chemosh of the Moabites, and Milcom of the Ammonites were destroyed, with all the paraphernalia of altars, images, groves, and temples by which the abominations were ceremonialized.

In the restoration of the theocratic symbolism, the renovation of the Temple, and the renewal of the old covenant, Josiah prepared for the celebration of the passover on a scale of grandeur not known since the kingdom was founded. He furnished the people with 30,000 lambs and kids and 3,000 bullocks for the sacrifices. A most elaborate temple service was prepared. The grand old music of David and Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun was rehearsed, to fill again the house of the Lord with the praises due to his name. The smoke of the sacrifices ascended from the newly consecrated altars; the old Temple echoed once more with the music of voice and instrument burdened with the holy pathos and triumph of the psalms. All Jerusalem was ablaze with the splendors of the most important and solemn festival of the Jewish ceremonialism. Not since the days of Samuel had there been so grand and awe-inspiring an observance of the passover.

With this religious reformation there came an era of peace and industrial revival—a short but welcome respite, in those troublous times, from civil strife and external conflict. There were tokens of a long reign of righteousness, as though God had repented of his wrath and would save the nation. Josiah, in his patriotic loyalty to his country and his religious devotion to the theocratic constitution, became the most blameless ruler and the most fearless and uncompromising reformer in the history of the Jewish kingdom. Not only since the partition of the empire, but from the reign of David, 400 years before, no king of all the many who had sat on David's throne made so determined and successful a warfare upon idolatry or so completely uprooted and destroyed the manifold abominations. But, alas! He could not save his country. Here, however, we come to one of the mysteries of that strange, eventful history. What might have been in store for the Jewish nation, had Josiah been content to pursue a policy of amity with the surrounding nations, or of non-interference with the international conflicts which were raging about him, it is impossible to say. What the motive was which prompted him to lead his insignificant forces against the regenerated power of ambitious Egypt, we know not. But when Pharaoh-Necho led his Egyptian hosts against Nineveh, or Babylon, for

some inexplicable reason Josiah marched out the little army of Judah against him. The magnanimity of the great Egyptian was admirable. Not in haughtiness, nor in exasperating contempt did he greet the Jew, but with the generous spirit of a great soldier and a kingly king he assured him, in the gentlest, most courteous, and conciliatory terms that he was not bent on the conquest of Judah, but had a larger enterprise on hand than the overthrow of her little army. Deaf to the Pharaoh's mild remonstrance, Josiah led his army against the Egyptian forces only to be dashed to pieces like the waves against Gibraltar. Josiah chose Megiddo, in the historic, battle-scarred plain of Jezreel, for his attack. Megiddo was a strategic military point between the seacoast and Jerusalem and North Palestine. Was Josiah dreaming of some such victory over the mighty hosts of Egypt as Barak there won over the hosts of Sisera, when the stars in their courses fought against Sisera? Or had he in mind the glorious day when the Midianites were destroyed by the illustrious band which saw the triumph of the sword of the Lord and of Gideon? Had he, moreover, given too literal an interpretation to the old book which had been found in the Temple, wherein the righteous were promised power to overcome the nations of the earth? Or was Josiah farsighted enough to see that Egypt was bent on universal conquest and was ambitious for universal empire, and that the overthrow of his own kingdom had been reckoned upon? Did he see that Egyptian domination in the north meant, sooner or later, the subjugation of his own country? Or was Josiah at this time the vassal of the sovereign against whom the Pharaoh was leading his conquering arms, and was he in duty bound to aid that sovereign by harassing, crippling, and impeding the progress of the Egyptians, if he could not hope to defeat them? These are questions which cannot be satisfactorily answered. Just as difficult would it be to answer the question: Was it destiny? was it in the purpose and by the providence of God that Josiah should do this seemingly rash, insane thing? Say what we will, this just and virtuous king died the death of a hero and a patriot on Megiddo's fatal field.

With Josiah fell Judah; with him sank in

blood the sun of Davidic pride and power. In his death perished—but perished heroically and royally—the last royal patriot and righteous reformer who had sought to save his country, adorn the Jewish throne, and emancipate his race from the religious and political thralldom of alien and corrupting idolatries. As they bore Josiah from Megiddo, and the chariot hearse entered Jerusalem, the lamentations of the people knew no restraint. The last hope of the faithful had perished. The noble reformer had fallen, and fallen in the midst of his prosperity, with the favor of God resting on him. The long-threatened thunderbolt had leaped out of a cloudless sky, and from the zenith splendors of a new and better national day the country was suddenly plunged into night and chaos. "God will not always chide, neither will he restrain his wrath forever." The only redeeming feature of this sudden and irretrievable disaster is in the fulfillment of God's promise, made to Josiah by Huldah, the prophetess, that he should not look upon Judah's final overthrow and have his patriotic heart rent by the humiliation, conquest, subjugation, and captivity of his people. God took him in the midst of battle; took him with all his valor on him; took him from the chariot of heroism and the field of honor; took him as he took Leonidas from Thermopylæ and Gustavus Adolphus from Lützen—not like the Swede, victorious, but like the Greek, overthrown—yet as the one in triumph and the other in defeat: true, heroic, righteous, and patriotic to the last. Never before had the people so universally bewailed the death of a king. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Jeremiah broke forth into lamentations. The singing men and singing women continued an annual dirge in sorrowful commemoration of his death, while through all the subsequent history of the Jews his name was held in highest reverence as one of the brightest that adorned their national history. In after ages Jesus, the Son of Sirach, wrote: "His memory is like costly incense, and sweet as honey to every mouth." In his fall, may not the people say in mournful truth what Antony said over the stricken Cæsar:

"O what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down."

CHAPTER XIII.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CONQUEST OF THE JEWS.

THE battle of Megiddo resulted in still other serious changes in affairs. By it a new enemy was added to the many that had attempted the subjugation of Judah. The Egyptians dictated terms to the Jews—nay, dictated their politics. After the people had chosen Jehoahaz to reign over them as the successor of Josiah, he was able to hold the throne but three months—long enough, however, to demonstrate his unfitness for the position which his illustrious father had adorned. The Pharaoh whose power had overwhelmed the arms of Judah at Megiddo came up against the Jews again, captured the royal weakling, pretending to reign in the seat of Josiah, and carried him away, loaded with chains, to Egypt. Ezekiel in his lamentation for the princes of Israel seems to voice the national disappointment in the character and career of Jehoahaz, "the young lion" who was brought with chains unto the land of Egypt, and Judah was compelled to take another of her whelps and make him a young lion. Ah, how long they had waited for the true "Lion of the tribe of Judah!" But no, Judah was not prepared to bear that Lion. She must be purged of her idolatry; she must be chastened, purified and saved forever from her false gods, and become, as never before, in all her history, Jehovah's people, the worshipers of the one true God and worshipers of him only; and then from her loins should spring the promised power, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah."

Jehoiakim, elevated to the throne by the Egyptian power, was but a vassal of the proud Pharaoh whose conquering arms seemed destined to achieve a universal dominion. Jehoiakim was forced to pay for his power. The tribute of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold was more than the tottering throne was worth. This tribute was secured by burdensome tax and cruel oppression. The treasury of Egypt was replenished from the lost fortunes and wages of the Jews. The contact of Judah with Egypt and Assyria had inspired the Jewish kings ambitiously to emulate the Pharaohs and such kings as Sargon, Sennacherib and Esar-haddon in the material aggrandizement of their capital. Perhaps no king of Judah was more completely under foreign influence than Jehoiakim, the vassal of Necho. While the burdens of taxation to meet the tribute demanded by Egypt were crushing the people, Jehoiakim extravagantly set to work building a palace in which he sank the residue of the national treasure. In this enterprise he reduced

the wages of the laborers and robbed the people of the reward of their toil. Against this oppression of the hireling in his wages, Jeremiah lifted up his voice in protest, condemnation, and warning: "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work!" The true prophet of God has always been the friend of the people and the champion of their rights. This the prophet and minister of God must ever be. The toiling millions of the earth, sons of the high and holy aristocracy of honest industry, coworkers with God in replenishing and subduing the earth, creating the wealth of the nations, and laying the material foundations of civilization, should never lack the sympathy and fellowship of the ministers of God. When the burden crushes, when power oppresses, when the mean and unjust wage humiliates and impoverishes, and when the unholy sentiment which sneers at toil and breeds contempt for labor gains ascendancy, then must God's prophets lift up their voices and spare not. Woe to the city, the kingdom, or the republic whose aggrandizement has cost the people their manhood, their liberty, and their blood! Woe to a nation whose extreme wealth is the measure of its extreme poverty; whose toiling poor are sunken as low as its favored and idle rich are lifted up; whose submerging ocean depths are equal to its exalting mountain heights!

In that gloomy period, never more discouraging and helpless to the toiling masses of Judah, the faithful prophet wrote a book. Perhaps the king was not in the humor to say with Job: "Oh, that mine adversary had written a book." The prophet called his scribe, Baruch, to his aid—a fearless man with the spirit of his master. Jeremiah dictated to Baruch the substance of the book that contained a catalogue of the punishments which God was to visit upon the nation for their sins. The book was then read in the hearing of the people as they gathered to the Temple. It created a sensation, and became the talk of the city. The princes heard this latest book discussed, and, curious—nervously curious—to know its import, they ordered Baruch to read it in the palace as he had read it in the Temple. The fearless scribe complied with the request of the princes, and when they asked for the name of the book's author they learned that it was Jeremiah. Whether from good or evil motives, the princes advised Baruch and his

master, Jeremiah, to go into hiding, if they expected to escape the wrath of the king, who should immediately be informed of the book. The king was no less curious than his princes had been to have this sensational little book read. But when the character of its contents became apparent, he cut the book into shreds with his knife and flung them into the fire with anger and contempt. How unwilling is a guilty conscience to hear the sentence pronounced on wrong doing! "What is truth?" asked Pilate, and, as Bacon said, would not wait for an answer. What is in the book? asked Jehoiakim, and would not wait to have it read. He flung the truth into the fire that wintry day, and with it went the last hope of Judah. God had commanded this book to be written that it might bring the nation to repentance and avert the impending doom. Jehoiakim tore it to shreds as the nation will be torn to shreds. This king, in his reign of eleven years, proved to be not only an oppressor of the wage-earners, of the industrial people, but also of those among the intellectual classes who were in sympathy with the working people and protested against the wrongs which were heaped upon them. He was, above all, angry with Jeremiah, the laborer's friend and champion, and God's fearless, faithful prophet. It was during this reign that Jeremiah symbolized by a bit of very dramatic acting the condition of subjugation to which the nation was dooming itself. He made wooden yokes and wore them on his neck about the streets of Jerusalem. The prophet's impressive, symbolic prophecy was not long in reaching fulfillment. The conqueror was at the door—not Egypt, but Chaldea. The ambitious Pharaoh-Necho, who had destroyed Josiah's army at Megiddo and seated Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah in the place of Jehohaz, whom he took captive into Egypt, was checked in his triumphal progress and overwhelmingly defeated at Carchemish and spoiled of his Syrian tributaries. From that time, the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, Egypt had no authority over Judah, which became subject to Chaldea. This new allegiance Jehoiakim tried to throw off, influenced by the Egyptian element and by his indebtedness to the Egyptian power which had seated him on his throne. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, brought the Jew to terms by threatening to carry him to Babylon in chains, as the Pharaoh had taken his brother captive into Egypt. But no, even a worse fate is in store for this miserable excuse for a king. Jeremiah declares that he shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gate of Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar lays successful siege to Jerusalem, loads Jehoiakim with

chains, plunders the house of God of its sacred and costly vessels, and, with a goodly number of hostages, evidently the flower of Jewish aristocracy, prepares to depart. Changing his mind as to what disposition he should make of Jehoiakim, and yielding to the humiliated king's importunities or to the influence of the Chaldean party manipulating Jewish politics, he releases him and restores him to the throne as a vassal king.

Among the few captives evidently taken to Babylon at this time must have been the youthful Daniel, who, as though by the ordering of providence, was to act a noble part in the history of the captivity, stand for Jehovah-worship in the midst of a splendid and powerful heathenism, exemplify the righteous teachings of the true Jewish religion, ameliorate the unhappy condition of his subjugated race, and at last work out the political problem of their emancipation and return to Jerusalem.

The forces of the Chaldean were withdrawn, but no more than three years had passed by before Jehoiakim, influenced by his Egyptian sympathizers and his Egyptian advisers, and deaf to Jeremiah's good advice—good politics, too, as well as good advice—rebelled against the authority to which he had sworn vassalage. Without further trifling, Nebuchadnezzar sent his mercenaries against Judah in the form of marauding, harassing tribes of Syrians, Moabites, and Chaldeans, who kept the little and despised kingdom in a state of continual unrest and alarm.

At last, the king of Babylon, combining his forces, comes up with imposing strength to crush the petty vassal who has broken his royal vows and defied the Chaldean authority. Jehoiakim is slain, and his death causes scarcely a pang of regret. It is as Jeremiah had predicted: "They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, my brother! or, Ah, sister! They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, Lord! or, Ah, his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass." So, without the sorrow of his own people, he is hurled by his enemies into the common sewer, cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem. How different from the burial of Asa and the lamentation made for the righteous and patriotic Josiah! How different from the mourning of the American people when, with universal sorrow, they drape the country from sea to sea, and with solemn pomp and magnificence lay to their honored rest such great and noble men as Washington, Lincoln, Garfield, and Grant! Nations render honor to whom honor is due. The people know their true benefactors and will preserve the memory of their character and deeds. High and low, rich and poor, vied with each other in paying honor to the mem-

ory of these American patriots. But, yonder, in Jerusalem, where Jehoiakim is buried with the burial of an ass, there can be found "none so poor to do him reverence." It may be very certain that among those oppressed, wronged laborers and mechanics there was little mourning for the king who had robbed them of their wages.

When Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, comes to the throne, it takes no prophet—no, nor even a shrewd politician—to see that the throne is not worth the taking; it is about to fall from its own rottenness. Yet, with the despicable spirit of his father, this young Jehoiachin begins his reign, which is to terminate in less than four months. Pursuing the policy of his father, and yielding to the advice of the Egyptian party, still strong in Jerusalem, he tries to throw off the Chaldean yoke. He is led to Babylon, a captive in chains, and thrown into prison by Nebuchadnezzar, who, with little resistance to overcome, takes Jerusalem once more, and with rich spoil and 10,000 prisoners, including members of the royal family and the prophet Ezekiel, makes his proud capital exult.

This Chaldean power now takes a controlling hand in Jewish politics, and Nebuchadnezzar places Josiah's youngest son, Mattaniah—whom he named Zedekiah—on the throne, as the Pharaoh-Necho did with Jehoiakim. The Chaldean treated Jehoiachin as the Egyptians treated Jehoahaz—led him into life-long captivity. Zedekiah, owing his elevation to Nebuchadnezzar, is soon entangled in politics which favor the Egyptian as against the Chaldean supremacy. At first he resists the rebellious influences and adheres to his oath of allegiance, solemnly given to Nebuchadnezzar, in which he is encouraged by the ever-faithful Jeremiah, who is not only the most enlightened prophet, but also the wisest politician of the kingdom. Although Zedekiah finds it necessary to visit Babylon to quiet the rumors which have reached the court relative to his Egyptian sympathies and his hesitating policy of allegiance to Chaldea, he soon after yields to the powerful Egyptian influence dominant in Jerusalem, and, in violation of Jeremiah's advice and warning, attempts to break the Chaldean yoke. Nebuchadnezzar now hastens with all his forces to settle forever the question of his authority and supremacy. Nothing short of the absolute submission of this rebellious vassal will meet the demand. The powerful monarch has a vast undertaking on hand in this expedition, for not Jerusalem only, but Tyre, Sidon, Lachish, and Azekah must also be reduced. All of them have asserted, and are trying to achieve, their independence. The Chaldeans lay siege to Jerusalem, and for

about eighteen months harass the city, reducing it to famine and the consequent starvation and untold suffering. For a short time the besiegers are drawn off to meet the Egyptian forces coming to the relief of Jerusalem; then the attack is renewed with increasing vigor until the very enginery which the Jews have invented and taught their conquerors how to use makes a breach in the north walls of the city, and the final stroke is impending. Consternation seizes upon the king and his guard when the news of this disaster reaches their ears. They prepare for flight. No Leonidas and his Spartan band, this; no Ney and the Old Guard, which dies but never surrenders; no Josiah and his valiant band to meet defeat as gloriously as on Megiddo's field! A coward, surrounded by cowards, skulking through the darkened streets by night, and creeping out of the city by a breach in the wall, deserting his post, his city, his people, and his kingdom to save his own miserable self—what a figure to represent the last of the kings of Judah! Unable to escape the vigilance of his foes, the miserable Zedekiah is overtaken and captured, and led a prisoner, with his family and attendants, into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, who, in his rage and in the barbarism of his military and political power, orders Zedekiah's sons to be slain before their father's eyes. Next, with exquisite cruelty, he caused the eyes of the king of Judah to be put out. Jerusalem is then given up to pillage. This was the work, and, doubtless, the reward, of the Chaldean's leading captains. History does not furnish a more horrible picture of crime and cruelty, of suffering, shame, and misery, than the scene which followed the capture of Jerusalem. The conquerors gave vent to every bestial passion, showing no pity for innocent childhood, no reverence for old age, no decent regard for woman's virtue, no commiseration for human suffering. The streets ran blood; the house of God was the scene of robbery and murder; the homes of the people were like butchers' shambles. The walls of the city were torn down; the Temple was despoiled of the last sacred relic, of all that remained of any value that could appeal to the cupidity of the conqueror. Then that beautiful house, which had passed into sacred song and history, was set on fire and reduced to a heap, after having stood there more than 400 years as the symbol of a nation's faith and the figure of God's promise to a race.

To Nebuzar-adan was entrusted the final undertaking of transporting the conquered people to Babylon. Of these, he deported only the better classes, the educated and well-to-do, the artisans and skilled laborers, men of trades and learned professions. The very poor, shiftless,

decrepit, and criminal classes he was politic enough to leave behind him in the land with the humbler and less enlightened herdsmen and farmers. One person of all that city and nation the conqueror treated with respect and even reverence. Jeremiah, as we have seen, was promised immunity. Although the pusillanimous Zedekiah left the illustrious prophet in prison, the night he skulked with his body-guard along the back alleys of Jerusalem and escaped from the city he had not the courage to defend, the mighty Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to his general-in-chief to spare the prophet and treat him with every consideration of respect and honor. While Zedekiah was treated with contempt and cruelty—blinded, loaded with chains, led a captive to Babylon and there thrust into prison to perish in dishonor—Jeremiah was released from the prison in which he had long been confined by the cruelty of Zedekiah, and was so reverently and honorably used by the conquerors that the choice was given him of going with the captives to Babylon or staying behind with the poor, rejected riffraff whom the Chaldeans did not think worth transportation. The prophet remained with this little remnant, gathered the humble and squalid people about him and still taught them in the law of God.

Gedaliah, who had been appointed governor over the land by Nebuchadnezzar, succeeded in rallying the Jews, who had been scattered abroad among the surrounding nations of Moab, Ammon and Edom. Then the deserted vineyards were opened to the people that they might gather the fruits. Just when the good governor was proving himself a wise administrator of affairs and giving the people reason to confide in him and loyally gather about him at Mizpeh, he was foully assassinated by Ishmael, an emissary of Baalis, the king of the Ammonites. Many of the Jews and Chaldeans at Mizpeh were slain that day when the treachery of Ishmael, a scion of Jewish royalty, transgressed the sacred laws of hospitality and slew the unsuspecting governor at his own board. Gathering as many captives as possible, including the governor's daughters, the assassin, with his Ammonitish soldiers, began his return march to the court of Baalis. Johanan, one of Gedaliah's officers, hastily recruited a company of like brave men with himself, and started in pursuit. He overhauled Ishmael near the pool of Gibeon and rescued the captives, but the assassin made good his escape with a small body-guard of eight men. Johanan now gathered the homeless, hunted refugees about him and led them to Chimham, the place near Bethlehem whence travelers were wont to depart on their journey into Egypt. Here the people looked to Jeremiah for spiritual guid-

ance, soliciting his prayers and intercession with God on their behalf. When the proposition was submitted to the prophet that this little remnant of Judah go into Egypt, ostensibly to escape further molestations of the Chaldeans, Jeremiah advised the people to remain in the land of their fathers, and warned them against plague, famine, and war awaiting them if they disobeyed God. In an oration of great power and feeling Jeremiah cried: "The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have admonished you this day." Great as their reverence for the prophet must have been, the people seemed inclined to listen to young men of war, rather than to the old man of counsel. In their haste and enthusiasm the younger men, Azariah and Johanan in particular, charged the old prophet with falsehood in claiming God would not have them go into Egypt. The young men prevailed; "So they came into the land of Egypt, . . . even to Tahpanhes." Here the faithful prophet Jeremiah is said to have suffered martyrdom. The people whose cause he had espoused, to whose welfare he had devoted his life and consecrated his prophetic gifts, at last cruelly stoned him to death.

To-day, after a lapse of nearly 2,500 years, the name of Jeremiah and a prophecy which he made are exciting most interesting discussions among advanced archæologists. This last refuge of the remnant of Judah—Tahpanhes—has become a field of archæological exploration and study, and the discoveries there made harmonize with the remarkable, and for ages the obscure, language of Jeremiah. "Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brick-kiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them." This Pharaoh's home is now known to archæology; the very "brickwork,"¹ or "pavement," mentioned by Jeremiah has been brought to light by the aid of pick and shovel. Great stones have been found buried under this brick pavement, those, possibly, which Jeremiah had buried there in obedience to the word of the Lord. It was not many years after Jeremiah's prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar swept through this very region to the overthrow of Amasis, the usurper of the Egyptian throne. Not far

¹ See Jeremiah xliii, 9, 10 (Revised Version).

from this spot have been found terra-cotta cylinders, on which are inscribed fragments of the annals of Nebuchadnezzar, in proof of his presence in this locality, where, on his expedition of conquest and subjugation, he must have "set his throne," and "spread his royal pavilion," and made the remnant of Judah which had fled hither for safety feel the cruelty of his power, the final crushing blow of Babylonian conquest.

Thus did that people vanish from the land to which God had led them, years before; like chaff before the whirlwind they disappeared, scattered by the strong, swift power of the conquerors whom their faithful prophets recognized as the servants of God. The land of corn and wine that flowed with milk and honey is now without a vine-dresser, a husbandman, or a herdsman to sow the fields, gather the fruits, and tend the neglected flocks. Even the poor, despised remnant, spurned by Nebuchadnezzar, rallied about the standard of Johanan and followed him into Egypt there, in the land where their ancient ancestors were slaves, to perish of famine, pestilence, and war. As the flower of Judah's people, her princes, scholars, artists, merchants, skilled mechanics, and warriors journeyed eastward and at last entered Babylon a conquered and a captive race, the very splendor and magnificence of the Chaldean capital must have brought to memory by striking contrast the desolation

and ruin of Jerusalem, once beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth. By like powerful contrast the patriotism, intelligence and religious devotion of the all-powerful Nebuchadnezzar must have reminded them of the disloyalty and crimes of those kings who had brought David's throne into contempt, led the people into idolatry, and sowed to the wind, inevitably to reap the whirlwind of national disgrace and ruin. In that far land and wondrous city the lamentation of Jeremiah may have reached the captive people, and there, among the marble temples and sculptured palaces of the city which Nebuchadnezzar's wealth and genius had made the most magnificent in the world, the people whose ancestors had known a Solomon's glory and boasted of a David's power, now, humiliated and broken-hearted, may have taken up the sad refrain:

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!

How is she become as a widow!

She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces,

How is she become tributary!

She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks:

Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: All her friends have dealt treacherously with her, They are become her enemies.

Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude:

She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: All her persecutors overtook her within the straits."

F. M. Bristol.



BOOK IX.

FROM THE CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON TO THE RETURN OF THE EXILES.

BY REV. W. T. MOORE, LL.D.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY HISTORICAL SURVEY.

HUMAN history is the record of a progressive development. It marks the successive steps in a yet unsolved problem. The factors of this problem are God and Man. These cannot be separated in any intelligent study of the whole development. Nor can either be regarded as solely responsible for what we call the course of things. Nevertheless, this separation is precisely what has been attempted by some who aim to set in order past events. Such thinkers consider history as the result of a great plan which has been distinctly impressing itself upon the ages, and which will ultimately bring everything to an orderly conclusion. They, furthermore, imagine that within the scope of this plan man is left entirely alone to work out his own salvation. Hence, they either eliminate God from all the affairs of this life, or else they allow no coöperation with him in carrying out the great scheme of human history. Most of these thinkers take the Rationalistic view, and consequently they seek to account for everything by the operation of the plan to which reference has been made, and this leaves man solely responsible for all the facts connected with the history of our race.

But if all this were certainly true, the real problem would still remain unsolved. We should still be entirely ignorant of how the plan came into existence and how it is preserved unbroken through the ages. In such a case the difficulty is only removed a single step by the one-sided view which refers everything in the matter of historic development to the human alone. But when the divine factor is taken into account the solution of the problem of history becomes much less difficult; and it only requires a little more than a superficial view in order plainly to discern that at least three great facts must constantly be accepted as verities while we are studying history, if we wish to reach anything like satisfactory conclusions. These facts are Creation, Providence, and Redemption; and these at

once bring us into the presence of a Creator, Governor, and Redeemer.

At the same time, we must not depend wholly upon the divine. God has associated with himself man in all the affairs of this world, and therefore the actions of men must be carefully considered in any philosophical and comprehensive study of human history. In short, God and man must be regarded as coöperating in all the affairs of this life; and consequently they cannot be legitimately separated when we come to examine the records of the past in order to understand the progress of either nations or individuals.

It is readily admitted that there is a plan of history. What we call Providence plainly implies this; and he who studies Providence with a clear insight will not fail to discern as distinctly the reign of law as when studying Creation or Redemption. How could it be otherwise, if either God or man is responsible for the course of things? But we have just seen that both are responsible, and therefore we are doubly assured that there must be a clearly defined plan or method in the development of all human history, whether we are always able to perceive it or not, and this is especially true of Jewish history, and particularly that part of it relating to the Exile and the Return.

It may, however, help us to understand how the plan or method works, if a simple illustration is carefully studied. The Jordan is a somewhat circuitous river, at times moving smoothly over short stretches of almost level river bed; but soon it dashes with impetuous velocity over a heavy down grade, which causes the water to leap and plunge as if it were carried along by some mad fiend who is seeking to demonstrate what wild confusion may be produced by the combination of power and disorder. This river has its main fountain source, and to some extent constantly preserves its original character, notwithstanding a number of tributaries empty into it before it finally reaches the Dead Sea. The whole

course, characteristics, and movement of the Jordan strikingly suggest the stream of human history, and especially as that history relates to the Israelitish nation. Undoubtedly the main stream of history must all the time be identified with God's chosen people. And this main stream can be distinctly discerned through all the ages right along from Abraham until it empties into the Dead Sea of the Dispersion. There are, however, tributaries which flow into this as there are those which flow into the Jordan. Chief among the former may be mentioned the Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Canaanitish branches. The first two must be specially studied in connection with the Jewish Exile, for it cannot be doubted that these branches had a great deal of influence in determining the course and character of Jewish history, especially between the years 625 B. C. and 425 B. C. The fortunes of the Jewish people for this period of 200 years must be studied in association with the history of Babylon, for during this time the Babylonian tributary constantly mingles with the Jewish waters, and consequently very materially modifies the main stream of human history. But in order to understand the influence of the Babylonian tributary, a brief notice of the Assyrian empire is necessary. And such a notice is logically associated with the stirring events which immediately preceded the Exile; for the period of thirty-eight years immediately prior to the destruction of Jerusalem was crowded with facts bearing on the destiny of the Jewish people, and any careful study of these facts must include a brief examination of the rise and fall of the Assyrian empire.¹

¹ The authorities used by the writer of Book IX cover a wide field, but it has not been thought necessary to refer specifically to these in the body of the work except in a few instances where somewhat lengthy quotations are made. The author, however, desires to express his indebtedness to very many writers who have preceded him in treating the period he has had under review. He desires specially to mention the following works, most of which have been freely consulted, and some of their material occasionally used without acknowledgment in the body of the book: "The Speaker's Commentary"; Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible"; Canon George Rawlinson's "Egypt and Babylon" (London: Hodder & Stoughton); "The Origin of Nations"; "Records of the Past"; Professor Sayce's "Hibbert Lectures"; "Fresh Lights from Ancient Monuments"; "Social Life among the Assyrians and Babylonians" (London: Religious Tract Society, 1893); Professor Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," fifth edition (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark); Caspari's "Introduction to the Book of Daniel" (Leipzig); Maspero's "*Histoire Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient*" (1886); Schrader, "*Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*" (1883); George Smith's "Assyria," "Babylonia," "Assurbanipal"; Dean Stanley's "Jewish Church"; Steiner's "*Die Kleinen Propheten*" (1881); *The Expository Times*, Vols. III, IV and V (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark); Dr. Geikie's "Bible

In 625 B. C., Babylon threw off the Assyrian yoke. Assur-ebil-ili, the last of the Assyrian kings who held dominion over Babylon, had for his viceroy in that city Nabopolassar, a shrewd, ambitious, and determined man, who, taking advantage of the bitter enmity existing between the Babylonians and the Assyrians, headed a revolt and joined the Egyptians and the Medes in an attack upon Nineveh. This attack probably began in earnest about 609 B. C., and the city was finally taken in 607 or 606 B. C., the exact date being a little uncertain. At this time Assyria was completely absorbed by Babylon, and consequently the great Assyrian empire, which had so long controlled the destinies of the nations, had now ceased to exist.

But all this happened quite in harmony with what the prophets of God had predicted. Warnings were given to Nineveh by the preaching of Jonah, but these warnings produced little more than a temporary repentance, and consequently the final catastrophe was only delayed, not averted. Babylon, which had for a long time been restive under Assyrian rule, was only too willing to follow Nabopolassar in his revolt and join with the Median king, Cyaxares, in an effort to overthrow the Assyrian domination.

It is both interesting and instructive to notice how events conspired to bring about the result aimed at in the revolt. Indeed, it is impossible to study the great facts of this period without tracing the hand of that providence which must always be recognized in any exhaustive treatment of history. It must be remembered that at the time under consideration the two great powers of the world were Assyria and Egypt, and these were frequently opposed to each other in hostile conflict. It was just when the Egyptians were gradually working their way in the west under Pharaoh-

by Modern Light" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co., 1894); Archdeacon Farrar's "II. Kings" (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894); Bennett's "Books of Chronicles" (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894); Canon Rawlinson's "Ezra and Nehemiah" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co.); Professor Ryle's "Ezra and Nehemiah" (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Series 1893); Archdeacon Farrar's "Minor Prophets" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co.); Canon Cheyne's "Jeremiah" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co.); Blake's "How to Read the Prophets" (Jeremiah and Ezekiel) (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark); "Smith's Old Testament History"; Dr. Pope's "Introduction to Ezra and Nehemiah" (London: Cassell & Co.); Dr. Murphy's "Book of Daniel" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co., 1884); Professor Robertson Smith's "Prophets of Israel"; Deane's "Daniel, His Life and Times" (London: Jas. Nisbet & Co.); Delitzsch's "Messianic Prophecies" (Edinburgh, 1886); Reuss' "*Les Prophetes*" (Paris); Orelli's "*Das Buch Ezechiel u. de Zwölf Kleinen Propheten*"; "Ewald's "*Die Propheten, 2te Aufl.*"; Pusey, "The Minor Prophets" (1860); Archdeacon Farrar's "Daniel" (Hodder & Stoughton).

Necho that the Babylonians and Medes were advancing on the east and on the north. And apparently at the very moment when the Egyptians took Ashdod, the strongest Assyrian fortress in the west, Babylon declared her independence and joined the Median and Armenian kings in their attack upon Assyria. Cyaxares made the attack from the north, Nabopolassar from the center of the empire, while the Egyptians appeared suddenly in the west. And it must not be forgotten that it was during this campaign, and while attempting to stop the Egyptian advance, that King Josiah lost his life. At the battle of Carchemish the Egyptians were victorious, and by this one blow gained possession of Syria and Palestine, and thus the great Assyrian empire had begun to crumble even before the fall of Nineveh took place.

It is not known whether the Egyptian army penetrated beyond the Euphrates, and consequently it is not known whether the Egyptians coöperated any further in the attack upon Nineveh. Indeed, the story of the fall of that city is very imperfectly given in any available trustworthy records. We do not even know by what means the city was finally taken. Mr. Budge¹ is of the opinion that the river Tigris, on the north side of which the city was situated, rose and carried away the greater part of the wall, and that then the Assyrian king, Esar-haddon II., the last of the Assyrian monarchs, gathered together his wives and property into his palace and set it on fire; after which an entrance was made into the city and everything destroyed that could be found. Other writers think that a protracted siege occurred, which finally resulted in the king's burning the palace over his head. One thing only is certain, and that is that Nineveh fell, and never afterward recovered her former splendor.

However, in the absence of historic details, it may not be amiss to consult the prophets, those "forward-looking" historians, whose many predictions have been so strikingly verified in subsequent history.

The Prophet Nahum, the Elkoshite, about 660 B. C., when Assur-bani-pal was still at the height of his glory, predicted the destruction of Nineveh. And the Assyrian inscriptions enable us to fix the date of Nahum in a manner which leaves no room for dispute. They prove that the capture of Thebes, referred to by the prophet, took place about 663 B. C. Now, as the event was still fresh in Nahum's recollection, he could hardly have written later than 660 B. C. It was the cruel punishment of Thebes for its defection to the Ethiopians

which suggested to Nahum the necessity of Nineveh's destruction. It is certainly a very noteworthy fact that the prophet not only foretold the fall of the city but the reason why the fall was a logical necessity. The Assyrian empire had become an intolerable despotism, and treated its conquered provinces in a way which demanded retribution. The following passage indicates how clearly the prophet saw the character of the Assyrians as well as the coming doom: "And all they that see thee shall flee from thee and say, Destroyed is Nineveh! who will condole with her? Whence shall I seek comforters for her? Art thou (O Nineveh!) better than No-of-Ammon, which was enthroned by the Nile-streams, surrounded by water; which was a fortress of the sea, whose wall was water? Ethiopia was her strength, and Egypt, and there was no end; Put and the Lubim were thy helpers. She, however, went as captive into exile; her children also were dashed in pieces at every street corner, and for her honored ones men cast lots, and all her great ones were bound in fetters. Thou also shalt be drunken, thou shalt faint away; thou also must seek a refuge because of an enemy."¹ Another prophet (Zephaniah), a contemporary of Jeremiah, clearly foretells the coming doom of Nineveh in the following line: "Every one that passeth by her shall hiss and wag his hand."²

Undoubtedly these prophecies were fulfilled to the letter, for Xenophon and his 10,000 Greeks passed by the ruins of Nineveh in 401 B. C., a little over 200 years after the fall of the city, and mistook them for the remains of Median cities laid waste by the Persians. At this time the very name of the city had been forgotten. Even thirty years after the fall, the Prophet Ezekiel, in a passage remarkable for its Eastern imagery, gives a picture of its desolation which leaves no doubt about the fact that the destruction had been complete. He contrasts the fallen city with its former splendor: "The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches; all the trees of Eden that were in the garden of God envied him; but strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off; upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow and have left him."³

The former splendor to which the prophet refers may be imagined from the accounts of the classic writers, who declare the city was of vast extent, 480 stadia, or more than 60 miles, in circumference. Its walls were 100 feet high, broad enough for three chariots and furnished

¹ "Babylonian Life and History."

² Zephaniah ii, 15.

³ Ezekiel xxxi, 3, 9, 12.

with 1,500 towers, each 200 feet in height. In the Book of Jonah it is described as an "exceeding great city of three days' journey,"¹ and one "wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand,"² referring probably to children or infants, and, if so, indicating very clearly a vast population. In any case, there can be no doubt about the importance and grandeur of Nineveh at the time of its destruction; and since the excavations begun by M. Botta in 1843, and subsequently continued by Mr. Layard, have been completed, quite enough has been recovered to make it evident that Nineveh was one of the most magnificent cities of ancient times.

And yet this great city came suddenly to an ignominious end, and the whole history of the case fitly illustrates the certainty of retributive justice, however long that justice may be delayed. With the fall of Nineveh went down the great Assyrian empire, an empire which had existed at least 1,200 years, and which had numbered among its rulers some of the greatest monarchs of antiquity.

The fall of such a city as Nineveh could not fail to change the face of Asia, and such a result actually followed. Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, was now advanced in years, but he was none the less ambitious to extend his empire, and consequently sent his son, Nebuchadnezzar, to recover the southern provinces from Pharaoh-Necho. A furious battle was fought near Carchemish, on the Euphrates (identified by George Smith with Jerablus), in which the Egyptians were utterly routed. A vivid prophetic description of this battle is given in Jeremiah xlvii, 3-12:

3 Order thee the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with *your* helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines.

5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: *for* fear was round about, saith the Lord.

6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates.

7 Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers?

8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, and *his* waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof.

9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow.

10 For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries; and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord

Go of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

11 Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; *for* thou shalt not be cured.

12 The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together.

So overwhelming was Necho's defeat that the power of Egypt in Asia was practically destroyed, and was subsequently never reestablished. The issue of the battle at once gave great prestige to the name of Nebuchadnezzar, who, soon after the battle, returned to Babylon to succeed his father, whose death had just taken place. Nebuchadnezzar was crowned in 605 B. C., according to Jewish reckoning, or 604 B. C., according to Babylonian reckoning.¹

From this time we date the actual commencement of the new Chaldean empire, with which the fate of the Jews was so intimately connected as long as that empire existed.

Of course, it would be impossible to write a complete Bible history without including some account of the old Chaldean empire, for numerous references are made to this in many parts of the Bible. However, it will suffice our present purpose to indicate briefly some of the main points connected with its rise and progress.

As far back as Genesis x, 8-10, we find a passage which almost certainly refers to Babylon. The words "Babel" and "Shinar" are sufficient to prove that "Babylon" and "Mesopo-

1 CHRONOLOGY:

- B. C.
- 605. Ascension of Nebuchadnezzar. Captivity of Daniel.
 - 598. Submission of Jehoiakim.
 - 597. Captivity of Jehoiakim. Reign of Zedekiah commences.
 - 593. Rebellion of Zedekiah.
 - 589. Nebuchadnezzar comes to Riblah.
 - 586. Destruction of Jerusalem. Capture of Zedekiah. Third Deportation of Jews.
 - 562. Death of Nebuchadnezzar. Accession of Evil-Merodach.
 - 560. Murder of Evil-Merodach. Nergal-Sharezer.
 - 559. Accession of Cyrus to the Median empire.
 - 556. Laborosoarchod. Nabonidus.
 - 541. Belshazzar's first year.
 - 538. Fall of Babylon. Darius the Mede.
 - 536. First year of Cyrus' reign over Babylon, and return of the Jews under Zerubbabel.
 - 534. The foundation of the Temple laid.
 - 529. Cambyses.
 - 522. Pseudo-Smerdis.
 - 521. Darius Hystaspes.
 - 516. Completion of the Temple.
 - 490. Battle of Marathon.
 - 485. Accession of Xerxes.
 - 480. Battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis.
 - 465. Artaxerxes Longamanus.
 - 458. Ezra's Mission to Jerusalem.
 - 445. Nehemiah appointed governor.
 - 432. Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem.
 - 425. Xerxes II. and Sogdianus.
 - 424. Darius II. Nothus.
 - 405. Artaxerxes Mnemon and close of the Old Testament Canon.

¹ Jonah iii, 3.

² Jonah iv, 11.

tamia" are referred to, for "Babel" is frequently translated "Babylon," and "Mesopotamia" is probably an equivalent of "Shinar." This interpretation answers to the facts of the Bible as well as to the cuneiform inscriptions. Babylonia was the name given in ancient times to the flat country about the lower course of the Euphrates. In the Old Testament it is sometimes called the "land of the Chaldees." During the wider extension of the Babylonian dominion the name comprehended Assyria and Mesopotamia. The Mosaic accounts give as the founder of the kingdom Nimrod the Cushite, and Sir Henry Rawlinson has demonstrated from his discoveries among the cuneiform inscriptions that the Babylonians belonged to the Aramaic branch of the Semitic stock. It is believed that the Tower of Babel was built at Babylon during the reign of Nimrod, and this tower has been identified by Della Valle and Rennel as the tower of the Temple of Belus, which is still standing among the ruins of the ancient city.

Notwithstanding the prominent position occupied by Babylon in the ancient world, very little is accurately known with regard to its early history. The first line of kings mentioned by Berosus is supposed to have reigned from 2234 to 1976 B. C. A new dynasty succeeded and continued until 1518 B. C. This change is believed to represent the conquest of Chedorlaomer, and the ascendancy of the Elamitic race. It is supposed that in the early period of Babylonian history Elam was a country of about equal power with Babylon, and occasionally exercised dominion over the latter, and that the Chedorlaomer referred to in Genesis xiv was at that time holding Babylon in subjection.

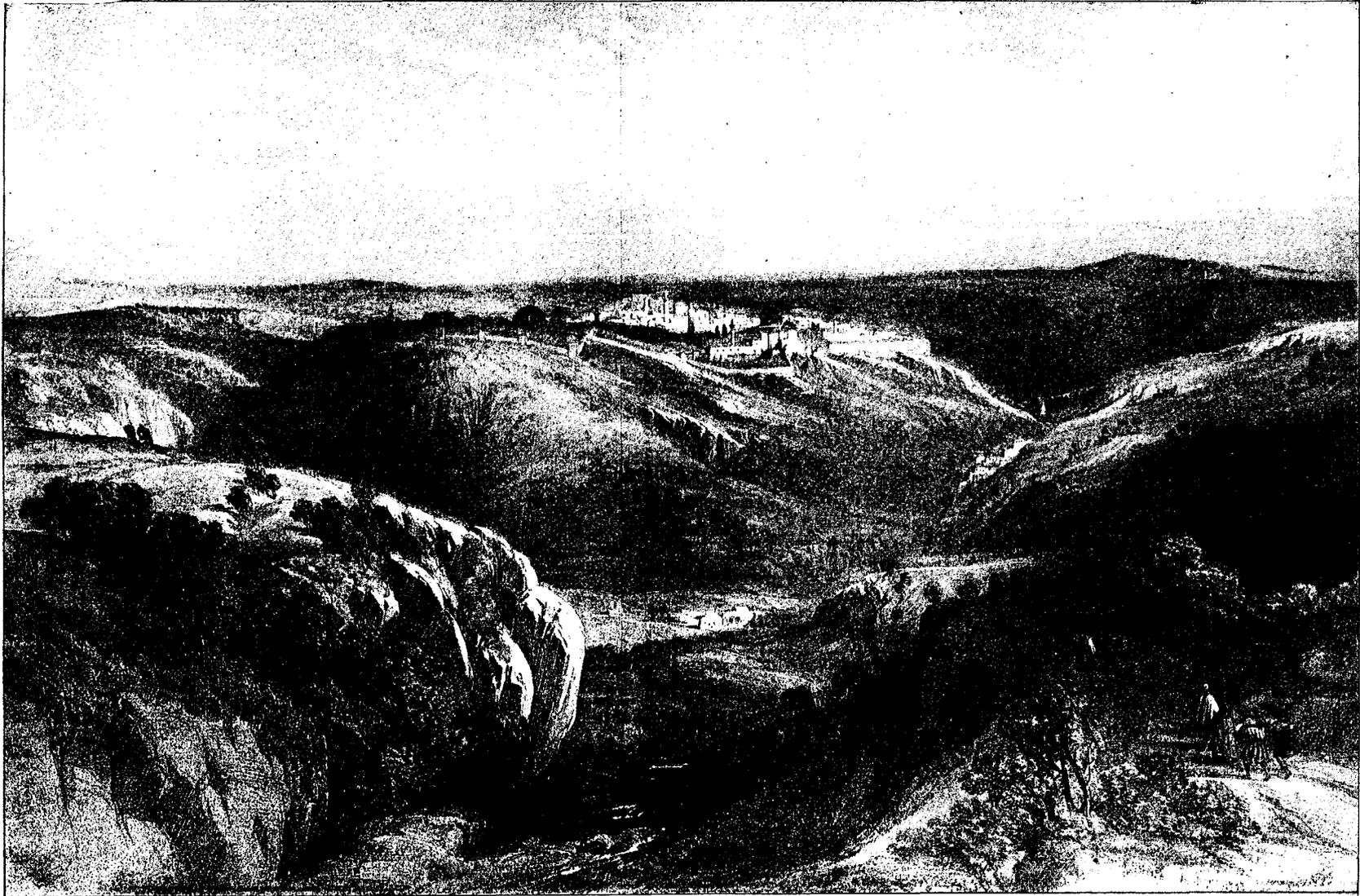
For almost twelve centuries after this period the history of Babylon is very obscure; but as far as is known it appears to have fallen under foreign dominion, particularly that of Assyria. However, a new line of Babylonian kings begins with Nabonassar, 747 B. C., who is stated by Berosus to have destroyed the annals of his predecessors in order that the Babylonians might be compelled to date from himself. The fourteenth name in this line is that of Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar.

This brief summary brings us again to the beginning of the new empire, which arose on the ruins of the Assyrian dynasty which ended with the destruction of Nineveh. And now that we are to study the history of the Jews during the Exile, in association with the new Chaldean empire, it becomes important that we should have before us a clearly defined idea of the character of the civilization which at that time existed in Babylon. It is fortunate that we are no longer left in doubt about this

important matter. The Bible accounts were quite sufficient to show that the Babylonians had made considerable progress in reaching a high state of development in several directions, but now we have corroborative evidence of the most convincing character. The cuneiform inscriptions recently discovered demonstrate beyond the possibility of a doubt that no mean advance had been made in science, literature, general education, and the administration of justice. It is true that education and religion were mainly in the hands of priests, who formed a caste called "Chaldeans," which, however, was not hereditary, but was drawn from the body of the people. Even Daniel was taken into this caste, though he was a foreigner; which fact shows conclusively that the priests were not confined to an exclusive, bigoted sect. They seem to have occupied themselves with astronomy and astrology as well as religion, and kept records from the earliest times of their astronomical observations, associating with these records the collegiate capacity, and their work evidently contributed largely to the solidarity and the general development of the Babylonian civilization.

As frequent reference will have to be made to the Chaldean empire during the period of the Exile, it is not necessary to follow Nebuchadnezzar and his successors any farther at present. If we date the empire from the accession of Nebuchadnezzar, the whole period of its existence is embraced within about sixty-six years, as Babylon was taken by Cyrus in 538 B. C., from which time what is known as the Persian empire took the place of the Chaldean.

But in closing this brief historical survey, it may be well to call special attention to the hand of providence, which is everywhere apparent in the facts connected with the great branches which empty into the general stream of Jewish history. And while we shall undoubtedly find the waters of this stream considerably affected by the character of its tributaries, we shall also find that even this emphasizes the supervising providence to which attention has been called. And if in the end we shall discover that all the rich treasures of wealth, of civilization, and of power, which we have found deposited in Babylon, have most unmistakably contributed to the great purposes of God through the Jewish nation, it will then be no longer doubtful that a divine governorship has most potentially controlled all the affairs of the nations to the consummation of a great design, the complete unfolding of which will clearly indicate the glory of God and the best interests of the human race.



DAVID ROBERTS.

JERUSALEM FROM THE SOUTH.

deportation in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar. Some have supposed that this last deportation was carried away from Egypt.

As there is a little confusion about dates here, it may be well to clear the matter up at once. By reference to II. Kings and Jeremiah, we find that there were captives in the eighth and nineteenth years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. But it must be remembered that these statements are in accordance with the Jewish reckoning of time; according to the Babylonian reckoning, there were captives carried away in the seventh and eighteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Hence, there is no conflict at all when the difference of reckoning is taken into the account. There is, however, a further difficulty with respect to II. Kings and Jeremiah. We do not know who wrote the Books of Kings, as they bear no author's name. They appear, however, to have been written in Judah before the Exile. Even Canon Driver admits this much. The Book of Jeremiah belongs to the same place and time. But in the last chapter of II. Kings, and the last of Jeremiah, the closing verses in both cases are evidently of a later date than either of the books, and were probably written by the same hand, as the records are substantially the same. These verses relate what took place in Babylon many years after Jerusalem was destroyed; and it is probable, therefore, that they have a Babylonian origin. This is especially true of the last four verses of Kings, and the last seven of Jeremiah. Now, with this fact before us, there is no difficulty whatever about the dates. At once it can be seen that the passages which place the captivities in the eighth and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar have a Jewish origin before the Exile, and, therefore, use the Jewish reckoning; while those which speak of the seventh and eighteenth years have a Babylonian origin, and consequently use the computation employed in that country. In short, the eighth and nineteenth years, according to Jewish style, are exactly the same as the seventh and eighteenth according to the Babylonian method of computation.

It is interesting to note just how these respective reckonings were made. The Jews computed a king's reign from the day of his accession to the day of his death, and they included every year in which any part of the reign could be properly located: To illustrate this method, let us suppose that one month of the year had yet to run when a king began his reign, and suppose he continued through the whole of another year, but remained on the throne only one month of the third year; in such a case he would be regarded as reigning three years, although he would be king for only fourteen months. But the cuneiform in-

scriptions tell us that the Babylonians reckoned in an entirely different manner. They would not, in the supposed case, have counted that month of the first year to the king at all; it would have been given to his predecessor, while the first year of the new king would have begun at the New Year's Day after he came to the throne, and the following year would have been counted as a whole year to him, although in that year he had only been in office a single month. Whoever was on the throne when the year came in, to him it was reckoned, whether he continued to reign to the close of the year or not. There is, therefore, no occasion whatever for assuming a conflict between the Bible and the tablets as respects the times when the different deportations of captives were made. Nor is there the slightest difficulty in reconciling the apparent conflict of dates between Daniel, Jeremiah, and II. Kings. Jeremiah and II. Kings use the Jewish reckoning, except in the verses already explained, while Daniel uses the Babylonian reckoning; and the fact that the latter follows the Babylonian style is very strong proof that the Book of Daniel was written in Babylon during the Captivity. Had it been written, as some allege, many years after the Return, it is highly probable that the Jewish reckoning, as regards the reign of kings, would have been adopted. But no matter how this may have been, there can be no reasonable doubt about the facts that what has been supposed to be an irreconcilable conflict is shown by the tablets to be no conflict at all, as all the dates with respect to Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah are easily reconciled by taking into the account the different reckonings to which attention has been called.

As other chronological difficulties must necessarily soon be encountered, it may be well to settle these at once while the matter is under consideration. The date of the Book of Daniel has been contested, and its historical authority questioned on the ground that there is an apparent confusion in the statements contained in chapter i, 5, 18, and chapter ii, 1. Some critics have contended that it is impossible to reconcile the "three years" and the "second year" in these passages, and have, therefore, reached the conclusion that the Book of Daniel is untrustworthy, if not unhistorical. Others, who have been unwilling to admit either of these conclusions, have sought by ingenious devices to show how Daniel could be brought to Babylon, be nourished three years, and still be only in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; and yet it is conceded that Daniel was carried away to Babylon during the first year of that reign. These clever methods have served only to darken counsel. However,

since we have been able to read clearly the cuneiform inscriptions all difficulty has disappeared. "These show not only how, at the end of three years, Daniel might be in the second year of the reign, but they show also how he could not be in any other." As Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne in 605 B. C., his "first year," according to the Babylonian method of counting—which is the method of the Book of Daniel—was 604, and his second year was 603, the very year in which Daniel's training ended, according to the statement of the book. Consequently, we have another striking illustration of how a proper understanding of the difference in Jewish and Babylonian reckoning at once dissipates apparently irreconcilable difficulties.

Another misunderstanding arises from the statement of Berosus, a Chaldean historian, who is quoted by Josephus, to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar heard of his father's death when he was in the first western campaign, and hastened home to secure his crown; and then Berosus goes on to say that Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-three years and was succeeded by his son, Evil-Merodach. But in II. Kings xxv, 27, it is said that Evil-Merodach began to reign in the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity. From this statement the conclusion is easily drawn that Nebuchadnezzar's forty-third year, or the year in which he died, was the thirty-seventh of Jehoiachin's captivity. Now, all this is cleared up when we remember that Berosus and the author of the last verses of II. Kings, writing from a Babylonian point of view, called the year in which a king begins to reign, not his "first" but his "accession year," and counted his "first" year from the next New Year's Day; while Jeremiah and the author of the earlier passages of II. Kings reckon after the Jewish method, calling the year in which a king begins to reign his "first." In the light of these facts it becomes immediately evident that all the writers are in perfect agreement, the apparent contradiction arising wholly out of the different methods of computing time. The conclusion reached is that Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-four years, according to the Jewish reckoning, and forty-three according to the Babylonian reckoning, so that in either case the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity coincides with the last of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.¹

The key which is now in the hand of the reader will enable him to solve other problems of the same kind as they may come before him

in studying the sacred history, and it will enable him also to understand the value of the tablets, which have recently been discovered, in helping to solve biblical problems. In a most marvelous way have the records of the past been preserved, and now, just when they are needed most, they are coming to light, and at the same time proclaiming in unmistakable terms the historical trustworthiness of the Bible.

With respect to the number carried away in at least three deportations the historical part of Jeremiah is very specific. According to this authority the whole number deported amounted to 4,600, but it is probable that only important persons and heads of families are included in this enumeration, and consequently the whole number carried away may be placed somewhere between 50,000 and 60,000. The account in II. Kings xxiv, 14-17, is very suggestive as to the class of people who were deported. It is well known that in those days conquerors, such as Nebuchadnezzar, carried into captivity only those who would be dangerous elements at home or useful in the country to which they were deported. In the case of the captives who were carried away after the destruction of Jerusalem, it is probable that not very many were left at the end of the siege who would be of much service to the conqueror. Undoubtedly famine, pestilence, and war had reduced the effective population to a low minimum, and it is not surprising, therefore, that so few were carried away at that time. However, among these few the unfortunate King Zedekiah was included. It appears that Nebuchadnezzar was not present at the taking of the city, but was at Riblah, whither Zedekiah was carried, along with the other captives, and before he was taken to Babylon his eyes were blinded so that he could not see the city when he arrived there; and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Ezekiel xii, 13: "My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there."

While the captives were at Riblah, a massacre took place by order of Nebuchadnezzar. Included in this were Seriah, the chief priest; Zephaniah, the second priest; the three Levite doorkeepers, the secretary of war, five of the greatest nobles who "saw the king's face," and sixty of the common people. The sight of this massacre must have added greatly to the grief of the other captives.

It would be interesting to have some of the details of the weary march to Babylon. The great city to which they were going was about five hundred miles east of Jerusalem, but it was considerably farther by the ordinary route used

¹ See George Smith's "Assyrian Discoveries," Driver's "Introduction," etc., and *Expository Times*, Vol. IV, No. 12. In the last will be found an able discussion of this whole question by the Rev. George Douglas.

at that time. Probably some months elapsed before this deportation reached their destination. We know it was about five months after Jerusalem was taken before the news reached the Jewish settlement on the Chabour, where Ezekiel was located, he having been carried in the second deportation. The first deportation, in which Daniel was included, was made in 605 B. C., and as Jerusalem was taken in 586 B. C. it will be seen that there were captives in Babylonia eighteen or nineteen years before the fall of Jerusalem. And if we add to these those taken with Ezekiel in 598 B. C. it is evident that a considerable Jewish colony was already located in Babylonia when Zedekiah and those who were carried away with him reached Babylon; and another deportation seems to have taken place in the twenty-third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, when 745 were added to the Babylonian colonies.

It must be remembered that more than a hundred years before the first deportation of Jews, Sargon carried away 27,280 of the inhabitants of Samaria. A part of the great inscription in the Palace of Khorsabad reads as follows: "I besieged and occupied the town of Samaria; I took twenty-seven thousand two hundred and eighty of its inhabitants captive. I took from them fifty chariots, but left them the rest of their belongings. I placed my lieutenants over them; I renewed the obligations imposed upon them *by one of the kings who preceded me.*"¹

It must be remembered also that Sargon's successor, Sennacherib, claims to have carried off over two millions of the Samaritans into captivity. On a cylinder in the British Museum, Sennacherib says: "And Hezekiah, king of Judah, who had not bowed down at my feet, forty-six of his strong cities, castles and smaller towns, with warlike engines I captured; two hundred thousand five hundred people, small and great, male and female; horses, sheep, etc., without number, I carried off. Himself I shut up like a bird in a cage inside Jerusalem."

After making due allowance for this boastful monarch's exaggerated statements, there is still sufficient evidence to make it certain that large numbers of Samaritans had been carried into Assyria and settled somewhere in that country, and as the division between the real Samaritans and Jews must always be regarded as only temporary, the former ought not to be entirely excluded from any comprehensive survey of the Israelitish settlements in Babylonia. These were all of one blood, and though separated for a time by the schism between Jeroboam and Rehoboam, all the prophecies seem to look to a period when this division should be healed and Israel again united as one people. It would, therefore, be a narrow view of all the facts of the case if we were to confine the Israelitish influence in Babylonia exclusively to the Jewish deportations which had settled there. And yet, in order to be somewhat exact in our statement, it is necessary to deal mainly with the Jewish colonies, for we are practically without trustworthy information with respect to the Samaritans.

No sketch of the period under consideration would be complete without some reference to the remnant which remained in the land after the destruction of the Holy City. And yet there is little to say which is historically of much value, and there is still less to say of what is of special interest. Practically, the whole land was in ruins; even the meager population which remained possessed no elements of hope for the future; and all this was no doubt quite in harmony with the divine purpose. The prophets of God had foretold exactly what would happen. The predictions had been fulfilled to the very letter. And the remnant that was now left by contrast made the condition of the once favored land all the more deplorable. Jerusalem was no more, the Temple was in ashes, the flower of the people had been carried away into captivity, and there was nothing now left but poverty, and shame, and ruin.

CHAPTER III.

IN A STRANGE LAND.

THE Captivity was more than an episode in Jewish history; it was a strongly marked turning point, where the stream was arrested for a while, but afterward it flowed on again in a somewhat different direction. It was not intended as a mere punishment for sins, but for correction, for reproof, for growth, for the development of new forces under the

¹ Tiglath-Pileser, whom Sargon does not choose to name.

influence of discipline. This is the view constantly set forth by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and, indeed, all the teachers of the time. It was no doubt a night of weeping, but it was that which preceded the joy of the morning. Punishment for sins was unquestionably the immediate object of the Captivity, but the ulterior object was the reformation of the people and their restoration to the divine favor, as well as their return to their native land.

It must never be forgotten that they were God's chosen people—his covenanted people; and consequently his chastisement of them was as a father's chastisement of his children. Every stroke laid upon them was for their good and was intended to "work the peaceable fruit of righteousness" to them who were "exercised thereby." God is not concerned only with the physical comfort and growth of a people; his chief concern is their moral and religious development. From his point of view there can be no really substantial growth where sin dominates the life. And this fact alone is quite sufficient to explain his dealings with the Jewish people. Their sin interposed between them and him like a mountain, and it was, therefore, absolutely essential that this mountain should be rolled away before a reconciliation could take place. And even reconciliation would have been of little account without the prior discipline through which the people had to pass. Chastisement is never helpful if it simply irritates; it leaves the chastised worse than before. Consequently, chastisement must be wise enough, severe enough, and long enough to yield the fruit intended to be produced by it. This fruit may not always follow as a result, and in such a case the chastisement has failed, and then the subject of it is irretrievably lost. But in all cases the divine chastisements are intended for our good, and if we do not profit by them the fault is ours and not that of our Heavenly Father.

It may be well to say that there is nothing in this method contrary to the laws of nature. Friction is a law of physical development, and chastisements are frequently the only way to purity, strength, and growth. The atmosphere is kept pure by the force of the wind; strength is imparted to the arm by constant exercise; while growth of all physical things can be secured only by the struggle produced by opposing forces. Mental superiority is secured in the same way. Where there is no friction there is really no growth. The greatest men and women are usually found within that comparatively narrow belt of the earth where the seasons are in constant conflict and where all the currents of nature are more or less running contrary to one another.

The law of moral and religious development is only the physical and mental law lifted to a higher plane and wider significance. We have already seen that the divine element cannot be eliminated from human history; for without the divine the human is an insoluble problem. It is equally true that the moral or religious cannot be separated from the physical; for man without a conscience, sensitive to good, right, and truth, would be a human monster and could have no legitimate place in any govern-

mental or social scheme which promises ultimate success.

Nor was there anything in the chastisement which the Jews received contrary to the covenant which God had made with them. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." But it should be remembered that every covenant implies at least two parties to it, and that a violation of the covenant by one party at once releases the other party. God's covenant with his chosen people contains certain conditions which the people were bound to observe, if they continued to claim the promises vouchsafed in the covenant. A failure to observe faithfully these conditions would at once release Jehovah from the promises which he had made. This fact is forcibly illustrated in the case of the covenant which God made with Israel in respect to the land of Canaan. In that covenant it was definitely stipulated that all the Canaanites should be driven from the land. But there were certain conditions in the covenant which the people were bound to observe. It was stipulated that the Israelites should be "very courageous to keep and do all that is written in the law of Moses," and should "turn not aside therefrom to the right hand nor to the left." And it was further enjoined that they should not mingle among the Canaanites nor intermarry with them, nor even mention the name of their gods. And in case these conditions should not be observed it was distinctly declared that the Lord would not drive out the nations, as he had before promised when he made the covenant concerning the land which he would give the children of Israel; but that these Canaanites should remain as "snares" and "traps" and "scourges" and "thorns" until the Israelites should perish from off the good land which the Lord God had given them.¹ In the second and third chapters of Judges we have the sequel to the solemn statements in Joshua. That sequel shows conclusively that the people did violate the conditions of the covenant which Jehovah made with them, and consequently he was no longer under obligation to fulfill his promises; and as a matter of fact he did not drive out all the Canaanites, but left a remnant for the very purpose he had indicated when he repeated his covenant just before the death of Joshua.

There is nothing, therefore, in God's dealings with the Jewish people, as regards the Captivity, which violated his covenant with his people. In the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy there is a summary of the blessings and curses with respect to Israel. Certain blessings are promised to follow the hearken-

¹ Joshua xxiii, 4-14.

ing to the voice of the Lord and the doing of his commandments, while a failure to hearken and to do is to be followed by certain curses, among which may be mentioned the very chastisement which is now under consideration, for the chapter in Deuteronomy distinctly forecasts the exact state of things which took place during the Captivity.

In view of the foregoing facts, it must be at once evident that Jehovah was no longer bound by the covenant which he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and which was repeated to Moses and Joshua, with respect to the land of Canaan. Humanly speaking, he had not only the right to deliver the people over to the Babylonian Captivity, but he was under no obligation whatever to allow them to return to their native land. Whatever privileges, therefore, the Hebrews enjoyed after their rebellion, were purely of God's favor, and not because he was bound by the covenant he had made with them. And this fact is very precious as showing how superabounding is divine grace. It shows also how our Heavenly Father becomes attached to those whom he has once recognized as his own. He did not forsake his people entirely, though they did forsake him. He did chastise them, but he did not cast them off forever.

The Captivity, therefore, had a threefold purpose. (1) It was intended as a punishment for the oft-repeated sins of the people. (2) As a means by which to prepare the people for a renewal of their allegiance to the God of their fathers. (3) As a lesson to us upon whom the "end of the ages has come."

As already remarked, the Jews had forsaken God, had given themselves over to wickedness, and had disregarded all the warnings of the prophets. And not only so, but they had persecuted the very men whom God had appointed to urge them to escape from the impending ruin. Nothing could have exceeded the persistent obstinacy of their rebellion against God. And yet they ought to have known that without his constant protection they were sure to come to final disaster. God is long-suffering, but the time of his reckoning cannot be indefinitely delayed. In the case of the Jews it came none too soon to make it possible to perpetuate the national existence, even for the short period which followed the Return. Nor could anything be done at all without the period of the Exile. It was a necessary break in the stream of Jewish history, a sort of sinking of the river, until the seventy years relating to the Captivity were consummated, when it would again flow on with its waters somewhat modified by the inflowing currents which it would receive by coming in contact with Babylonian habits and customs.

This very fact may account for the absence of details with respect to the history of the people during the Captivity. In studying the period of the Exile one is disappointed in finding so little trustworthy material concerning the life of the Jews in Babylonia. And yet it was probably the design of Providence that this whole period should be practically buried in oblivion. We have only a few glimpses of what actually took place. We know that Daniel and the three Hebrew worthies, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (afterward called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego), were carried away with the first deportation, and, after reaching Babylon, were educated there for special service under the king; and we know, furthermore, that Ezekiel was carried away with the second deportation and became the chief prophet during the Exile. But we know very little of what really took place among the people themselves, or just how their time was employed during the days of their captivity.

Five years after the first detachment had been settled in Babylonia, Jeremiah wrote from Jerusalem a remarkable letter to the elders, priests, and prophets who had been carried away with this detachment by Nebuchadnezzar. The first portion of this epistle is as follows: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all the captivity, whom I have caused to be carried away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon: Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not your prophets that be in the midst of you, and your diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the Lord. For thus saith the Lord, After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn again your captivity, and I will gather

you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."¹

These words clearly indicate at least three things: (1) A clear insight into something of the actual life of the captives; (2) the length of time the Captivity was to last; (3) the certainty of the Return at the end of the period mentioned. They also make it perfectly plain that the exiles had fixed residences allotted to them, that they were engaged in the cultivation of the soil, and that they had among them some prescribed form of worship. Indeed, it is very probable that the exile communities were governed by their own officers, though these in turn were subject to the Babylonian government. At any rate, it cannot be doubted that the exiles finally took up the position of colonists rather than of captives. Those among them who were well educated, or who were trained artisans, were placed in important positions, while only the unskilled workmen were specially oppressed. In view of this fact some have thought that the condition of the people was improved rather than otherwise by their captivity, and hence it is difficult to understand wherein the chastisement consisted. But there are at least three things to be said about this. First of all, the heavy part of the chastisement came at the destruction of Jerusalem. In the second place, another part was inflicted when they were carried away from their native land, and in the third place they were, during the Exile, in an actual state of servitude, notwithstanding they may have been allowed considerable privileges in managing their own private affairs. The fact that they were not driven under the lash as slaves all the time does not prove that their position was a desirable one. Liberty with a thousand disadvantages is worth more than bondage with a thousand privileges. These privileges, however great, are all bound in chains, and chains must always gall the hands and feet of those who have had a taste of freedom. The Jews were patriotic, however much they may have failed in other things; and they had been taught to regard themselves as the most favored people of all the earth. It must have been, therefore, a very trying thing for them when they found themselves in a strange land and subject to the caprices of a foreign despotic government.

It is probably true, as already intimated, that the treatment of some was not as severe as captives usually received. Nebuchadnezzar was, in many respects, a wise ruler, and he evi-

dently sought to make his captives contribute to the glory of his reign. He soon found that they were remarkably capable in many things wherein his own people needed instruction, and he was not slow to use their services whenever and wherever this could be done to the advantage of himself or his own subjects. At the same time it was very certain that the unskilled artisans were subjected to the hardest kind of menial labor, while those who were well educated, or skilled artisans, though perhaps more favored in some respects, were, nevertheless, all the time conscious of their peculiar environment and the constant disadvantages under which they labored.

There were different settlements, as there had been different deportations. We know that Ezekiel was with "them of the captivity at Tel-Abib that dwell by the river Chebar" and that it was here that God first showed this prophet what is called the "rule of prophecy." It is clear from the Book of Ezekiel that, at least on the river Chebar, there were "elders" over the people, and that these elders formed a distinct class, one of whom was probably reckoned as chief. However, all were not allowed to remain in these organized communities. Some of the most promising young men were taken to the city of Babylon itself and there employed as painters, carvers, musicians, etc. Some of these contributed by their skill in beautifying the king's palaces and public buildings. Others were instructed in all the culture of the Chaldees, and then used in positions of responsibility, and even authority. So that, whether maintaining well-organized communities or operating as individuals, the remarkable tenacity, ability, energy, and influence which have always characterized the Jewish race were prominently present during the whole period of the Captivity.

The religious life of the Jews, while they were in Babylonia, was certainly not very pronounced; but this was not the fault of their teachers. However, religious enthusiasm could not have been reasonably expected, for environment has much to do with religion as well as other things. Their worship had been exclusively associated with the Temple at Jerusalem, and now that the Temple was destroyed, it is easy to see that they would, for a time at least, be at sea almost, without chart or compass, with respect to the means of spiritual development. But they were not left helpless nor hopeless on account of the loss of their temple and their exile in a strange land. God gave them prophets to teach them so that the religious flame would not be entirely exhausted. The dawn of the Exile was the beginning of the prophetic period. The pre-exilic prophets were Amos, Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and

¹ Jeremiah xxix, 4-14 (Revised Version).

Isaiah; the prophets of the Exile were Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Obadiah. Daniel was not placed by the Jews among the prophets at all, but among the Hagiographa. The position of Jonah is somewhat uncertain. The post-exilic prophets were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Nothing, perhaps, distinguishes the period of Jewish history, from King Hezekiah to Malachi, more than the influence of the prophets of God. Before the Exile, Israel was a nation; after the Exile it became almost a church. In short, religion, which had been somewhat discounted during the reign of the kings, reappeared with increased intensity during the reign of the prophets. While the kingdom was gradually falling to pieces, the pre-exilic prophets were warning, instructing, exhorting, and trying to inspire their fellow-countrymen with the notion that even the worship of the true God was simply mockery if it was not associated with righteous living. Even the character of Jehovah himself received a new interpretation in the teaching of the prophets. During the Exile a deeper and keener sense of sin was undoubtedly experienced, while Jehovah became more and more the God of righteousness rather than the God of his people.

Reference has already been made to the part which Jeremiah took in matters at Jerusalem, both before and after the fall of the city. The influence of his teaching was no doubt very great on the exiles. His writings were taken with them, and he wrote letters to some of them after they had been carried away into captivity. Indeed, it is probable the Book of Jeremiah was finally put into its present form by some one of the captives, for there is very strong evidence that at least a portion of the last chapter was composed in Babylonia. One evidence of this has already been referred to, namely, the use of the Babylonian reckoning of time in reference to the reign of kings.

Of the prophets of the Exile, Ezekiel occupies a most conspicuous place; and a careful study of his writings helps us to understand the condition of the people while they were in Babylonia. Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem he had given the keynote of what was to be the new music of the Jewish people. The children were no longer to have their teeth put on edge because their fathers ate sour grapes. In the new society, to which the prophet constantly looked, individual responsibility would occupy a prominent place. All would know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Flesh would no longer count, but personal character would be respected everywhere.

For some time the mouth of the prophet was closed, but when his enforced silence was broken, he continued to prophesy and labor

among the people from 586 to 570 B. C., and during this period his eyes were turned mainly to the future. He no longer seems to regard the past with any special interest. No doubt, realizing that what was ended could not be mended, he seeks to inspire hope in the hearts of his countrymen and to encourage them to prepare for the return to their native land, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the organization of the new society which he dimly foreshadows as coming up out of the desolation which then everywhere prevailed in Judea.

The prophecy concerning the new future, with all that appertained to the settlement of the land and the rebuilding of the Temple, extends from chapter thirty-three to chapter forty-eight, and forms a complete treatise on the important matters referred to. As a priest, Ezekiel would be specially interested in everything pertaining to the Temple. It is not surprising, therefore, that he makes it the chief figure in his great scheme for restoration. It is the description of an architect. Every feature is distinctly drawn and everything is carefully "measured." And this fact emphasizes the probability that the prophet's vision relates to the new Temple which was to be built on Mount Moriah after the Captivity terminated. Some writers have supposed that this vision of Ezekiel relates to the Messianic period, and probably to a time yet to come. But there is certainly no good reason for such a conclusion. The one great fact which was constantly present with the prophet at the time of this vision was the return of the exiles to Jerusalem, and nothing could have been more inspiring to those who still retained religious convictions than the thought that the Temple would be rebuilt and its venerated worship restored. And in view of this fact it seems reasonable that Ezekiel would use the powerful incentive supplied in this prospect to encourage his countrymen to get ready for the Return. In any case it seems improbable that he would attempt to create hopes which he knew could never be realized within the near future.

However, it is not improbable that Ezekiel's Temple may have a still further significance than that which limits it to the building erected by Zerubbabel and his associates. Very many of the prophecies have a much more extended meaning than what seems to be their immediate aim. Specific time is very seldom an important factor with the writers of the Bible. Even Christ and his apostles spoke of events near at hand with an ulterior reach which actually extended to the end of the Christian dispensation. This peculiarity characterizes nearly all the prophets. They saw things in doubles. What was perhaps the main event in their vision lay very near to them, but

in its reflection they saw similar events very far in the distance. There is no doubt that there is a Messianic coloring in the whole of Ezekiel's forecast with respect to the prospective fortunes of the Jewish people. His words were specially intended to encourage, strengthen, and give hope as regarded the immediate future, though this did not preclude the possibility of his predictions having a much farther reach in their ulterior design than the mere restoration of the Jews to their native land, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the organization of a somewhat new order of things.

It is one of the proofs of Ezekiel's inspiration that he continued to take an optimistic view of the future, notwithstanding the cold indifference with which his earnest teaching was received by the exiles. Doubtless some of them were favorably impressed by what he taught them, with respect to both the present and the future; but it is very evident, from the prophet's own words, as well as from corroborative testimony, that his prophecies were treated in somewhat the same manner as Jeremiah's had been by some of the same exiles before the destruction of Jerusalem, and also by the remnant which remained after the exiles had been deported to Babylon.

It must be remembered that even before the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel had fully corroborated the truth of what Jeremiah had predicted concerning that city and many other things. But it was not until afterward that he gave vent to his feelings in a series of prophecies with respect to the punishment of the nations which had oppressed Israel.

It was about fourteen years after Jerusalem was destroyed, it being the twentieth year of his prophetic ministry, that Ezekiel began to prophesy in detail concerning the return of the captives. Fully thirty years had yet to expire before the time fixed for the Return would be fulfilled. And now it was that the prophet's faith seemed to reach its highest point; and yet he had everything to discourage him, when he considered the condition of the people around him. Most of his countrymen received his words of hope with little more than indifference; and as to any real preparation for the new society to which he was constantly calling attention, there was practically no sign at all. Indeed, some of the exiles had listened willingly to false prophets, and not a few, even at this time, were ready to give heed to almost anything except the truth.

It is a curious fact, with respect to human nature, that when a season of depression comes, false suggestions are generally welcomed rather than those that are true. At least this is the case until a certain point in experience has

been reached. And it is precisely this fact which makes the earlier hours of a trial very dangerous. During that period the fleshy nature is still not only not dormant but has all of its susceptibilities quickened by the very fires through which it is passing. The hour of spiritual domination does not come until the flesh is conquered; and when this point is reached, we may be sure the time of deliverance has arrived, if now the truth is presented in all its regenerative power. When Ezekiel delivered his last prophecies the exiles were still in the first stage of the trial through which they were passing, and they were, therefore, ready to listen to any suggestions of evil rather than the wise words of counsel and comfort which the prophet of God so earnestly proclaimed to them. When once he had fairly set his face to the future, he seems scarcely to have ever looked back.

After Ezekiel finishes his picture of the coming Temple he introduces what is, after all, the essential thing in the whole matter. Without the presence of Jehovah in the new house it would be of no practical use. During the Captivity the only temple in which he could dwell was the consecrated heart, and it is quite probable that very few hearts were prepared to receive him or were ready to welcome his presence. And then, it must be remembered that the Jews had been taught to regard Jehovah objectively rather than subjectively. They had learned to look for him in their Temple, and it was therefore a strong point in the prophet's vision that the holy Shekinah should enter the new Temple and occupy the place above the Mercy Seat, and between the Cherubim. Whatever else the people were indisposed to regard with favor they were certainly not indifferent to such an assurance as this; and it can be easily imagined that this promise of the divine presence in the rebuilt Temple did much to inspire the exiles with the hope that a new era would certainly soon dawn upon their history.

It is probable that during the Exile special places of worship were provided; and it is almost certain that these places were the beginnings of the synagogues which in subsequent years occupied such prominence among the Jews. The chief men of the Exile undoubtedly gave much attention to the study of the law, and whether the "Priestly Code" was originated at this time or not, it is probable that it received a very distinct emphasis, as without the temple service there was room for the special application of such a code in the government and religious development of the people. It is true that the legislation contained in Ezekiel is very different in some respects from the Levitical, but this only shows that the

Exile was intended to be a distinct break in the regular flow of Jewish history; and this fact has not received the attention it deserves from writers who have sought to treat comprehensively that history from beginning to end. It would have been contrary to the purpose of God, if the Exile had failed to produce the very changes which have been thought to be somewhat remarkable. Indeed, the remarkable thing is that the changes were not far greater than they were. No other nation was ever subjected to anything like the same severe trial, and afterward maintained its national existence or even retained many of its national characteristics. The very fact that the land was left desolate for so long a time was enough, of itself, to make it impossible to restore the old order of things in every particular. Indeed, the old order would not have satisfied the new conditions, for not only had the people themselves changed, but everything had more or less changed during the Captivity. Contact with the Chaldeans had not failed to do its work. And although the Jews were kept in somewhat separate communities and maintained, to a certain extent, their ancient manners and customs, there is no doubt, from numerous references in the Prophets of the period, that not a few had "learned the way of the heathen" and even worshiped the gods of Babylonia.

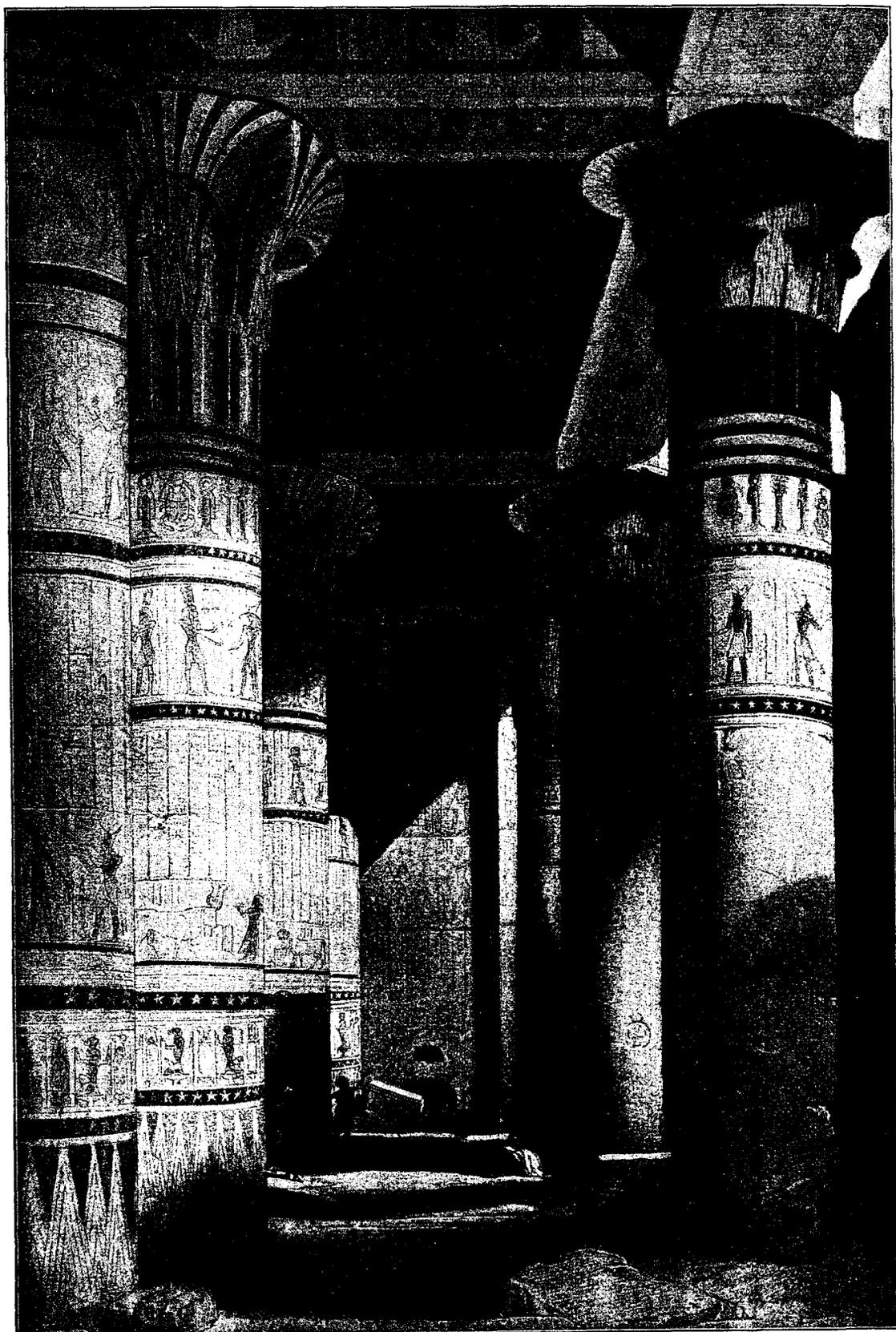
The other important prophets of the Exile were Zephaniah, and Habakkuk, and Obadiah. The prophecy of the first of these embraces a denunciation of the idolatry of Judah, and a forecast of judgment; a call on the nations around to repent if they were to escape; and finally promises that Zion shall have a day of restoration after the judgment of the wicked nations is past. The prophecy of the second of these is an appeal to Jehovah, in which the prophet asks how long the Most High will suffer his own people to be subjected to the Chaldean tyranny. The prophet then stands upon the watch and waits for the answer. This finally comes with an assurance that while "the just shall live by his faith," the Chaldean scourge shall be removed and the oppressors ultimately destroyed. Finally, the miraculous deliverances of the past, in the history of Israel, are pointed to as assurances that God will take care of his people in the future by pros-

trating their enemies and bringing salvation to his chosen ones.

Obadiah refers to the punishment of Moab, Ammon, and Edom by Nebuchadnezzar, Judas Maccabæus, John Hyrcanus, and Simeon of Gerasa. Some parts of Obadiah's prophecy remain yet unfulfilled, and hence his words are very carefully studied by the Jews of the present time, as it is supposed the prophet refers to an important period in Jewish history which still belongs to the future.

In closing this brief sketch of the prophets who belonged specially to the Exile, it may be well to notice the remarkable providence which is clearly indicated in the character and work of these noble and consecrated leaders of the people, during a time when their presence and help were most needed. The Jews were in a strange land, and though enjoying some privileges, they were, upon the whole, placed at serious disadvantage with respect to many things. And perhaps the greatest difficulty with which they had to contend was that which arose from the complete breaking up of their traditional worship. The law was of little use to them while they were in captivity, for the law was mainly intended to regulate their conduct toward one another when in their own land and when preserving their national solidarity. Just at the time when the law could no longer help them the prophets stepped in and supplied what the law could not give. They not only taught the people, but inspired them by their personal presence and self-abnegation to become heroes in suffering; and by patient waiting to learn "how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong."

In view of this wonderful provision of providence in the case of the Jews, surely no one can doubt that there is a "divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will"; and it must be evident, furthermore, that Jewish history, at least, cannot be read aright without recognizing in it the divine factor which has already been emphasized as really necessary to any intelligible understanding of human affairs. Indeed, it is impossible to study the period of the Exile and Return without being forced to the conclusion that a greater than any of the prophets was all the time guiding, controlling, and determining the course of things.



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GRAND PORTICO, PHILÆ.

CHAPTER IV.

BABYLONIAN RULERS, LAWS, AND CUSTOMS.

REFERENCE has already been made to the rise of the Chaldean empire; and though that empire was of comparatively short duration, it was the empire with which the exiles must always be most intimately associated. Hence, no satisfactory treatment of the Captivity is possible without a prior understanding of the civilization which prevailed in Babylonia at that time. We must know something of the men, laws, habits, and customs of the country where the captives were located in order to have any just conception of the probable influence of the Captivity on the Jewish people; and it is a matter for congratulation that recent discoveries have brought the ancient Chaldean civilization within the realm of legitimate history; consequently, in reaching trustworthy conclusions, we are no longer in doubt as to the main facts involved. In a most wonderful way the cuneiform inscriptions have corroborated the testimony of the Bible with respect to many things, while with respect to others these inscriptions have helped us where the Bible is silent. Indeed, it is impossible to estimate the historical value of the discoveries of the past half-century in throwing new light upon the period of the Exile. We can now understand many of the minutest details of social life among the Assyrians and Babylonians, and these details furnish us an excellent background in which to study the picture of Jewish life during the Captivity.

The controlling forces of the period under consideration were not unlike those of other periods in the world's history. Personality was the great potential factor. Laws were effective only as they became the embodiment of personal conception of duty and progress. In fact, the personal element entered into government at that time much more prominently than it does at present, though there can be little doubt that law was revered for itself, and had certain sanctions which could not be safely ignored even by the autocratic rulers of the people. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that personality was the dominant influence with respect to all that entered into the Babylonian civilization. And it will scarcely be questioned by anyone that Nebuchadnezzar was by far the greatest personality among the Chaldeans at the time of the Exile. It will, therefore, be instructive, as well as interesting, to study some of his chief characteristics, as such a study will enable us to have a clearer understanding of the environment of the cap-

tives than could be obtained in any other way. He it was who assigned to them their places in Babylonia, and to him they were most indebted for whatever privileges they enjoyed or for whatever suffering they endured. In short, he was the leading spirit of Babylonia during the greater part of the Exile period, especially if we count all the deportations—which we certainly have a right to do, as we are now dealing with all the captives.

Another important point will be gained in studying the character of Nebuchadnezzar. He was no doubt a representative person of his period. Perhaps he was far above his people in character as he was in position. But it is probable we shall not go far astray if we take him as a type of that which was best in the Babylonian civilization. In any case, if we can know something of what he was, this will help us to reproduce the age in which he lived, and a vision of this age will at once reveal the peculiar environment of the Jewish people during the period of their exile. Some of his prominent characteristics may be enumerated as follows:

(1) His religiousness. In this he was not specially peculiar. It is probable that no great character can be found in all history that has not underlying it a strong religious element. A belief in the supernatural is really essential to any great success in life. Rationalists may deride this notion, but, after all, their own success, if they have any, will depend upon the very thing they pretend to reject. As a matter of fact, it often happens that those who affect to ridicule the supernatural do so at the expense of the most potent influence in the formation of their own characters. Indeed, many Rationalists apply their rationalism to others while they have little or no use for it in their own case, except so far as it helps to make their contention plausible with respect to others. But, however this may be, it is certain that the supernatural is fundamental in the development of any great character; and this fact again emphasizes the importance of studying history with God and man both included in it.

Of course, it is not necessary to include our conception of God in order to recognize the influence of the supernatural. The supernatural has received very many different embodiments. Nebuchadnezzar's was very different from our own, but, nevertheless, he was a strong believer in some occult power or powers over the affairs of human life and destiny. While it is

probable he had some knowledge of the true God and was at times a monotheist, it cannot be doubted that he was a worshiper of idols, and was, for the most part, a polytheist, and consequently the patron of many gods. In short, as has been remarked of him, he was "faithful to the orthodoxy of his day."

(2) And this fact at once introduces us to another side of his nature. He was intensely conservative. Some might attribute his faithfulness to the orthodoxy of his day to a discreet policy; but there is no reason to believe that he was not thoroughly conscientious in his religious convictions. He was no doubt too wise a statesman rudely to shock his people by making an attack upon their gods, as Nabonidus subsequently did; but it is highly probable he had no wish to do this even if such a course could have been justified from a political point of view. He seems to have been really religious at heart, and consequently his devotion to the gods must be regarded as a prominent characteristic rather than a political expedient.

It would be easy to furnish abundant proof in support of the foregoing estimate of his character. It is, however, necessary to mention only one or two facts. The name which he adopted for himself was the "Heaven-adoring King," and he usually gave prominence to some god in all his inscriptions. At the same time, he constantly recognized that his life and success were the results of divine favor. He expressed his gratitude to the gods in various ways; among which may be mentioned praises and invocations, presentation of offerings, the building and repairing of temples, adornment of shrines, processions, and the proclamation of each god by his proper titles. Merodach seems to have been his favorite god, and he speaks of him as "accepting the devotion of his heart." Surely these references, as well as many others that might be given, make it impossible for us to doubt the sincerity of Nebuchadnezzar's devotion to the gods.

(3) But his religion was deeply tinged with superstition. An illustration of this may be found in Ezekiel xxi, 21, 22. Having come on his march to a certain point where the road parted, he resorted to divination in order to determine whether he should take the right-hand road, leading toward Jerusalem, or the left-hand, leading toward Rabbath of Ammon. The result of his incantations led him to take the former road; consequently, the decision which determined his attack upon Jerusalem at that time depended upon the shaking of arrows, the consulting of images and the appearance of the entrails of victims. This fact is very suggestive when considered from another point of view. Are we not justified in concluding that the God of all the earth used this

superstitious tendency of the Chaldean king to carry out the divine purposes in reference to Jerusalem, and bring about the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning that city? It is undoubtedly in accordance with the methods of our Heavenly Father to make the wrath of men to praise him, and we know also that he uses the foolishness of men in order to show forth his own matchless wisdom. In any case, it is certainly remarkable that one of the most important events of the world's history was practically decided by such a curious incident as that which has been related. Nothing could demonstrate more effectively the importance of little things in the affairs of this world. We know that the destiny of empires has often hung on apparently insignificant trifles. And the case under consideration very strikingly shows that at least the destiny of Jerusalem hung on the direction toward which the omens pointed when the Chaldean king consulted them at the "parting of the ways."

There are other evidences of Nebuchadnezzar's superstition. It is shown on the Borsippa cylinder that he would not allow himself to commence the work of restoring the Temple of the Seven Spheres until he had first waited for "a fortunate month" and an "auspicious day" of that month. Some writers have contended that superstition was a characteristic of all the Babylonian kings; but there is really very little evidence to be found of this anywhere. Nevertheless, whether this was true of others or not, it is certain that Nebuchadnezzar's character was greatly affected by a superstitious religiousness, and that this was fundamental in many of the great successes which he achieved. Napoleon Bonaparte was a man of destiny. Much of his strength was in his belief that he was supernaturally directed. And so it has been with nearly all the great leaders of human action. It is not strange, therefore, considering the age in which he lived, that the great Chaldean king found his reverence for the gods a source of strength and influence.

(4) He was also distinguished for courage, sagacity, and energy. These qualities entered largely into his successful generalship. He was a born commander of forces. He also possessed the quality of prompt decision. He always led his armies in person, and never failed to press his campaigns with the utmost vigor. Nor was he easily discouraged. The long siege of Tyre no doubt tried his patience very severely, but he refused to be baffled by even a thirteen-years' resistance. The city at last fell in 577 B. C., and its desolation ever since has answered exactly the predictions of the prophets of God.

(5) There is certainly no reason for placing Nebuchadnezzar among the world's greatest

commanders of armies, as some writers have done; but there is good reason for placing him among the ablest commanders of the day in which he lived. He was nearly always successful in his military campaigns, and success is the only standard which is worth anything in testing military ability. However, it would be untruthful to attribute all Nebuchadnezzar's success to his own great ability. He was no doubt the chosen instrument for the execution of the divine purposes with respect to the surrounding nations. There can be no question about the fact that he possessed just the qualities of mind and heart which admirably fitted him to do the work for which he was divinely raised up and guided. He was the great destroyer of his day. Destruction and desolation continually marked his pathway. In short, he was the scourge of God on the wicked nations of Western Asia and Egypt during the time he reigned in Babylon.

(6) He was proud, boastful, and even arrogant. In this respect he was not different from many other military chieftains who have made their mark upon the world's history. When we take into consideration the times in which he lived, and the intense religiousness of his nature, there is little room for wonder that he displayed a very pronounced self-consciousness. Among the titles which he assumed were those of "Glorious Prince," "The Exalted," "The Exalted Chief," "The Possessor of Intelligence," "He who is firm and not to be overthrown," "The Valiant Son of Nabopolassar," "The Devout and Pious," "The Lord of Peace," "The Noble King," and "The Wise Mage." Indeed, he claimed kinship with the gods and that "Nebo gave into his hands the scepter of righteousness," that Sin was "the strengthener of his hands," that Shamas "perfected good in his body" and that Gula "beautified his person."

(7) He declared himself to be the eldest son of Merodach, whose power he had extended on account of that god's special favor to him.

In view of these facts it is not surprising that pride, boastfulness, and arrogancy should have characterized Nebuchadnezzar. Merodach was his chief deity and he constantly gave him the most prominent place among the gods of his pantheon. He did not worship him exclusively, but he evidently regarded him as pre-eminently the chief of all the gods; and it is probable that he regarded all the other gods as insignificant, partly because he was unwilling to allow many competitors for honors, since he was anxious to absorb all honors to himself. He allowed only one god to occupy a prominent place, and even this would not have been permitted had not the position he ascribed to Merodach contributed to Nebuchadnezzar's

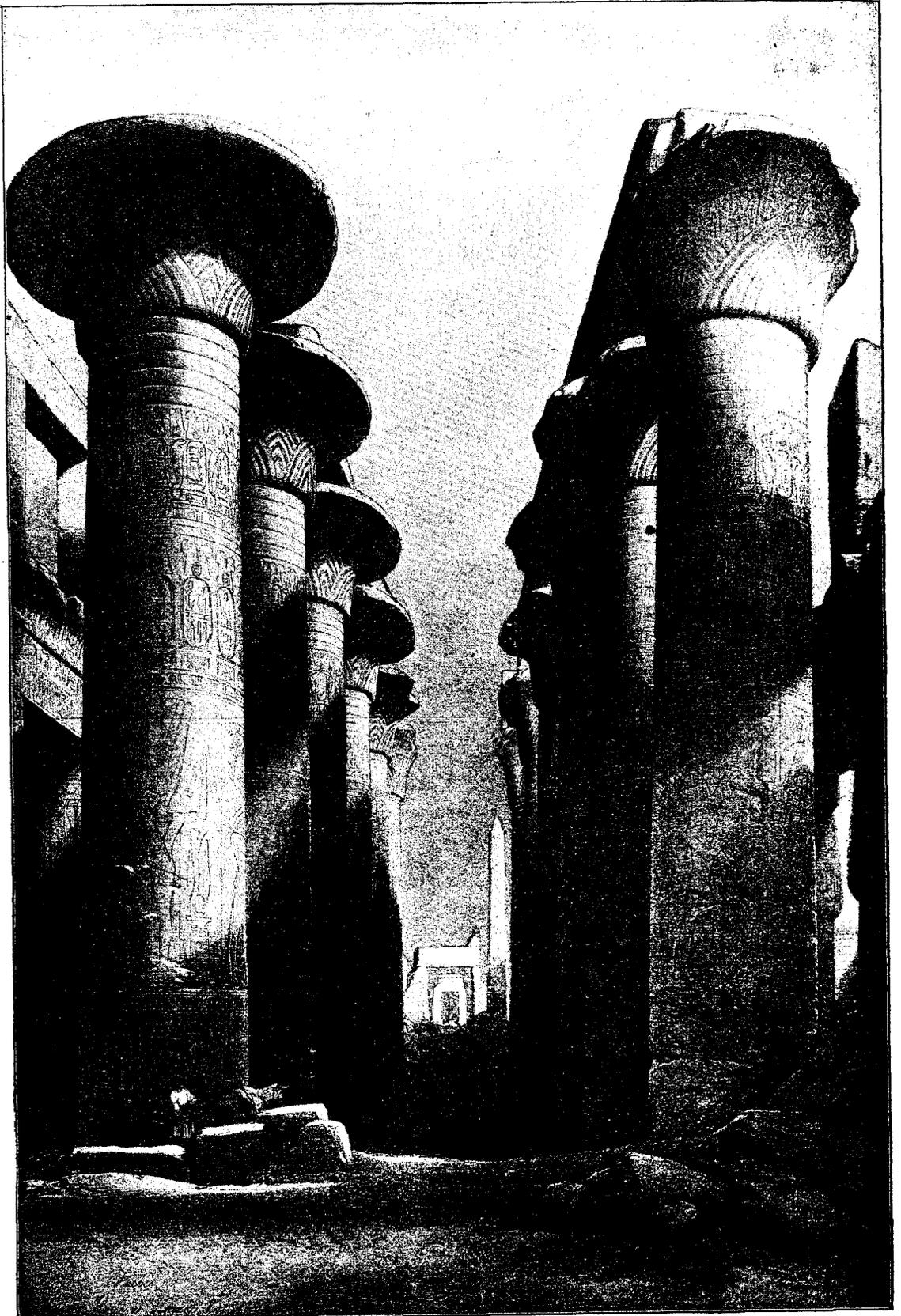
pride. While he was no doubt honestly religious, no god would have been honored by him that did not in turn bring some honor to the king. At any rate, he claimed to be the son of Merodach, and it is evident that if this claim was once admitted, the elevation of Merodach would contribute something to the glory of the king himself. And it is not at all improbable that this is the main reason why he willingly granted to Merodach a superior position.

Such are some of the prominent traits of the great Chaldean king who was made the instrument of divine providence in chastening the covenanted people for their persistent sins. And a careful study of Nebuchadnezzar will help us to understand much that will follow in the history of the Exile. He died in 562 B. C., and with his death the glory of Babylon began to depart. He was the one great figure of the Chaldean empire, and for forty-three years he ruled over its destinies in a manner which made its power felt wherever the name of Nebuchadnezzar was known. It was during his long reign that the chastisement of Judah was so distinctly felt. Very many of the captives died even before the great king died, and others passed away soon after his death; so that comparatively a few only remained of those who were carried away in the earlier deportations when his son succeeded him, and probably very few, indeed, of the original captives were still living when Cyrus captured Babylon. There is positive evidence that Daniel lived until the reign of Cyrus, but it is not probable very many others lived to such an old age.

None of Nebuchadnezzar's successors were of much note. The first of these was his son Evil-Merodach, of whom very little is certainly known. Nearly all we know about him is found in the following passage of Scripture: "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life. And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king, every day a portion, all the days of his life."¹

From this passage it will be seen that among the first acts of the new king was his setting

¹ II. Kings xxv, 27-30 (Revised Version).



DAVID ROBERTS.

THE GREAT HALL AT KARNAK, THEBES.

at liberty Jehoiachin and assigning to him a position in harmony with his new station. And if Josephus is to be trusted, Jehoiachin was actually brought into most intimate relations with Evil-Merodach and received large presents as a recompense for the sufferings he had undergone. But Josephus is not a very trustworthy guide in this matter. He tells us that Evil-Merodach reigned eighteen years, but it is now known that this statement is not correct. It is probable that Berosus gives us the true chronology of this period. He says that, after a wicked reign of two years, Evil-Merodach was murdered in a conspiracy. The chief conspirator is known to us from the Scriptures as Nergal-Sharezer. This man married the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and was, therefore, the brother-in-law of Evil-Merodach. When the Babylonian army took Jerusalem, Nergal-Sharezer acted as Rab-mag, a title which implies "chief of the priests," or "Mighty Prince."

He reigned in all about four years, namely, from 560 to 556 B. C. His reign was almost colorless. He appears to have occupied his time chiefly in restoring two of the temples of Merodach in Babylon, building a palace for himself, and making some alterations in certain canals for the purposes of irrigation. It is not known when nor how he died.

His successor was Laborsoarchod, who was very young when he came to the throne, and whose reign lasted but a few months. Indeed, the only authority for his existence is Berosus, who, according to Josephus, speaks of him as follows: "By reason of the very ill temper and ill practices he exhibited to the world, a plot was laid against him by his friends, and he was tormented to death. After his death the conspirators got together, and by common consent put the crown upon the head of Nabonidus, a man of Babylon, and one who belonged to the insurrection."

Only about six years had elapsed since the death of Nebuchadnezzar when Nabonidus (the name by which he is best known) ascended the throne. During the interval nothing very special had marked the history of Babylon. It is probable that the commerce of the city continued to flourish, and it is equally probable that considerable was done during this time to carry out the improvements in buildings, gardens, and general decorations, etc., which had been begun on such a magnificent scale by Nebuchadnezzar. No doubt Babylon at this time had reached the height of architectural beauty, and Nabonidus, pursuing the peaceful arts, seems to have cared for nothing so much as to contribute to the beauty and splendor of the great city. There is no evidence that he engaged in any foreign wars. He seems to have

contented himself with building temples, restoring and decorating the works of those who had reigned before him.

Nabonidus reigned from 555 to 538 B. C. Abydenus (as quoted by Eusebius) says that "Cyrus, after he had taken possession of Babylon, appointed him [that is, Nabonidus] governor of the country of Carmania. Darius, the king, removed him out of the land." Whether this statement is correct or not, it is certain that Nabonidus was the last king of Babylon before the Medo-Persian dynasty. In any case, we are justified in concluding that Nabonidus was, upon the whole, a weak ruler. Toward the close of his reign it is very probable that he practically retired from any active participation in public affairs, and virtually left the administration of the government in the hands of another.

And this brings us to consider a name which has been the puzzle of historians. That name is Belshazzar. Who was he? What was his position? and what was his relation to Nabonidus? Was he really a king or only a prince? Perhaps no character mentioned in the Bible has been the subject of more uncertainty. For a long time we were dependent exclusively on the Book of Daniel for all we knew of Belshazzar, and that book speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as Belshazzar's father, and also the former as "the king." It further represents him as reigning at the time Babylon was captured, while it nowhere makes mention of Nabonidus.

It has been difficult to reconcile these statements with all the known facts of the case; and the difficulty has led to some very inconclusive reasoning on the subject. Some writers, among whom may be mentioned Josephus, think that Belshazzar and Nabonidus are the same person, and this conclusion is reached because there is strong evidence that Nabonidus married Nebuchadnezzar's daughter. But it is not necessary to maintain this view in order to account for Belshazzar. Indeed there are several important objections to it, though none of these need be regarded as insuperable, if there was not a better way out of the difficulty. In this, as in other things, recent discoveries come to our aid. What is called the chronicle of Nabonidus throws considerable light on Belshazzar. In 1854 Sir Henry Rawlinson first deciphered inscriptions on some cylinders found in the ruins of Mugheir (the ancient Ur of the Chaldees). Unfortunately a portion of the text is mutilated and cannot be deciphered at all. Other portions are fragmentary. However, enough is plain to show that the chronicle recounts in chronological order the events contained in the seventeen-years' reign of Nabonidus. The beginning of the inscription is entirely lost, and the end is completely

mutilated, while there are certain breaks in the column which leave a blank interval between the third and sixth years of his reign, and make other years almost unintelligible. However, the only thing with which we are concerned at present is the help the cylinder gives us in determining who Belshazzar was. No doubt the inscription was written, or caused to be written, by Cyrus, and was intended to glorify himself rather than his predecessor. All we need to notice at present is what the tablet recounts as having happened in the *ninth* year of the reign of Nabonidus. We are told that Nabonidus himself remained in the town of Temâ while his son (Bel-shar-usur) and the officers of state, as well as the troops, staid in the province of Akkad."

With respect to this record, three facts must be carefully noted. First, Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus; second, Belshazzar was at that time in Akkad; third, this was the *ninth* year of the reign of Nabonidus. Some have thought that, if Belshazzar had been associated with his father on the throne, he would not have been called simply the king's son. But we must remember that this chronicle records what took place in the *ninth year of the reign of Nabonidus*, while Belshazzar was not associated with his father until the *fourteenth year of the reign of Nabonidus*. No doubt if we had the complete inscriptions of the cylinder we should have a record of Belshazzar's death, or some word that would throw more light on his history. However, the tablet makes it absolutely certain that such a man lived, and that he commanded the Chaldean forces at Akkad, and that he was the king's son.

The conclusion is, therefore, quite probable that Belshazzar was associated with his father on the throne during the last three years of the reign of Nabonidus; and this is in accordance with the view expressed by Sir Henry Rawlinson in the following paragraph: "We can now understand how Belshazzar, as joint king with his father, may have been governor of Babylon when the city was attacked by the combined forces of the Medes and the Persians, and may have perished in the assault which followed; while Nabonidus, leading a force to the relief of the place, was defeated and obliged to take refuge in Borsippa, capitulating after a short resistance, and being subsequently assigned an honorable retirement in Carmania." This view of the matter is strengthened by the following considerations:

(1) It was a common practice with oriental monarchs, especially toward the latter part of their reign, to associate with themselves the sons who were to be their successors.

(2) The apparent indifference of Nabonidus to public affairs at the time Belshazzar is sup-

posed to have reigned, strongly supports the conclusion that the latter was associated with his father, and was actually the chief director of public affairs, though he may not have been recognized as first in authority. We know that Nabonidus was at Temâ, and that place has been identified with Tuma, a quarter of Babylon, but as this identification has been disputed, it is sufficient to regard it as a city of Babylonia. From this place Nabonidus removed to E-tur-Kalama, the last place where he is spoken of as having resided. It was from this place he fled at the approach of the Persians, and, being pursued, was captured and carried in chains to Babylon. Meantime, Belshazzar was no doubt engaged in directing military affairs from Akkad in the first place, as this was the part of the kingdom which at that time was threatened by the Persian invasion, though, at the last, it is probable he was at Babylon, as the Book of Daniel says he reigned three years. This three-years' reign was no doubt in association with his father; but his father being absent from Babylon, Belshazzar would be the king to whom Daniel would most naturally refer, and especially as he was not writing history in general, but was only dealing with events immediately under his observation.

(3) But perhaps the most conclusive proof of all that Belshazzar was certainly associated with his father is the declaration of Belshazzar himself, as recorded in the Book of Daniel. He made proclamation that if anyone could read and interpret the marvelous writing which had appeared on the wall "he should be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and should be the *third ruler* in the kingdom." And we are further told that when Daniel had read and interpreted the words "they clothed Daniel in scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the *third ruler* in the kingdom." Now, what can this language mean, unless it clearly points to the fact that there were two other rulers of the kingdom already in existence, and that Daniel would occupy the third place. On the hypothesis that Nabonidus was the first ruler and Belshazzar the second, this language at once becomes intelligible. But on any other hypothesis the language is not capable of a rational explanation.

However, it has been suggested that the position of the third ruler corresponded to the first of the three presidents who were subsequently placed over the one hundred and twenty princes. But neither the language nor facts appear to substantiate this conclusion. The three presidents were appointed by Darius, the successor of Belshazzar, whereas Daniel

received his appointment from Belshazzar, and his appointment was actually proclaimed before Darius came to the throne.

It has been further urged that the Belshazzar of the Book of Daniel could not have been the son of Nabonidus because, in Daniel v, 11, the queen speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as Belshazzar's father. But this is not a very serious difficulty. It has already been suggested that Nabonidus married the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and consequently Belshazzar was the grandson of the great Chaldean king; and as there was no Hebrew or Chaldee word for either "grandfather" or "grandson," it was a common habit to speak of the former as "father" and the latter as "son." This use is illustrated in many parts of the Bible.

Now, when all these facts are taken into consideration the proof is practically conclusive that Belshazzar was not Nabonidus, but his son, and associated with Nabonidus on the throne for the three years preceding the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. And this conclusion is not only reasonable in itself, but it furnishes another striking illustration as to how the Babylonian tablets support the testimony of Scripture. Rationalistic writers have been disposed to seriously question the historical trustworthiness of the Book of Daniel, and partly on account of what that book says of Belshazzar; they have persistently insisted that all contemporaneous history is silent as to any such person having lived, and they have referred to the statement that Herodotus does not even refer to Belshazzar, but mentions Labynetus as the reigning king at that time. But Herodotus does not mention Nabonidus at all; and, consequently, the testimony of Herodotus proves nothing on either side of the question, though there are some reasons in Herodotus for identifying his Labynetus with the Belshazzar of Daniel and the tablets.

However, recent discoveries have made it at least possible to finally settle this much-contested question. The tablets make it certain that Belshazzar not only lived but was the son of Nabonidus, and was associated with his father, as has already been indicated. Nevertheless, even if the view now presented could not be reasonably sustained, there is still no insuperable difficulty in the case. Other explanations might be given which are much more plausible than any supposition which throws doubt upon the historical accuracy of the Book of Daniel. That book has been severely criticised by some very able modern scholars, but, like the three Hebrew worthies of whom the book speaks, it has stood the fiery trial without the slightest injury whatever. It is readily conceded that all the difficulties have not yet been entirely cleared

away, but there can be no doubt about the fact that even those which remain are not half so great as the difficulties precipitated by the critics who have attacked the historical accuracy of the book. We may expect to find difficulties in nearly everything. The book of nature is full of them, but we do not reject the divine authorship of nature because these difficulties exist. We are rather disposed to believe that everything would be easily explained if we could master all the facts of the case. So we may believe as regards the Book of Daniel. Already many perplexing points have been cleared up, and it is not unreasonable to hope that new light will yet break upon all the dark places, and then the book will be all the stronger in its testimony because it has been weighed in the balances and not found wanting.

With the death of Belshazzar and the capture of Babylon the great Chaldean empire came to an end, and we must henceforth study the history of the captives under the empire which succeeded, namely, the Medo-Persian and Persian. But before finally dismissing the Chaldean empire it is important to consider the educational and social influences to which the exiles were exposed, and also the character and fortunes of some of their most distinguished leaders. The latter will be reserved for a separate treatment. But it is proper at once to take a brief survey of the education, laws and customs of the people with whom the exiles were in contact during the period of the Captivity.

However, it is well at this point to guard against attaching too much importance to the influence of environment upon the captives. No doubt this influence was very considerable, but there is no evidence at all that it amounted to anything like what has been claimed for it by many recent writers. It has already been noted that the Jews occupied separate communities, and were largely under leaders of their own blood. And it must never be forgotten that the exclusive tendencies of the Jews would naturally lead them to avoid as much as possible the adoption of heathen habits and customs. That some of them did become idolaters is unquestionable, but this frequently happened when they were in their native land. They were always much more ready to run after strange gods than they were to adopt strange customs.

It must also be remembered that they were far from being an ignorant people when they entered Babylonia. This fact has not been sufficiently emphasized in recent discussions. They evidently took with them an inherited literary culture of no mean character. The discoveries at Tel el-Amarna make it evident

that a high state of civilization prevailed in Palestine in the time of Joshua, and as the Israelites had been in contact with all the culture of Egypt during their sojourn in that country, it is probable that they brought with them into Canaan a literature far from contemptible. Indeed, it is quite as probable that they received in Egypt as much help from the Egyptians as they did in Babylonia from the Chaldeans. In both cases they were in bondage, and it is by no means certain that the opportunities of many of them for culture in Babylonia were much better than they were in Egypt. The poorer classes were oppressed in both countries, and there is no trustworthy evidence that the treatment these received in Egypt was much worse than the same class received in Babylonia. But, even allowing for a supposed difference in this respect in favor of the Babylonian Captivity, it is still reasonable to conclude that the educational facilities, to the poorer classes at least, were not very great in either country.

One thing, however, is well known. From the sojourn in Egypt, if not even earlier, the literary activity of Israel had been very considerable. They certainly possessed sacred writings, which they regarded with great reverence. It is also certain that schools had been formed in which, under the direction of a master, students were taught reading, writing, composition, music, and especially the law, which was everywhere regarded as the chief guide in morals and religion. In the same schools were taught sacred poetry, exegesis, criticism, etc.; and when the prophetic period was reached, religious instruction was carried to a still higher degree. It is, therefore, highly probable that the Babylonians received more educational help from the Jews than the latter received from the former. Indeed, there is strong circumstantial evidence that the Babylonian civilization was considerably affected by the Jewish Captivity.

At the same time we must not suppose that the Jews were not influenced at all by their environment during the Exile. Babylon was at that time the center of considerable literary activity, though the inhabitants were not originally a literary people. We must remember that they were not the original inhabitants of the country. Prior to the rise of the great Semitic empire the kingdoms of Sumer and Akkad had flourished and passed away. It is not certainly known who the Sumerians were,

but it is known that before the Semites occupied the Euphrates valley the former had built up a culture, and had made some progress in the arts and sciences, arithmetic and astronomy, sculpture and architecture. They had also a code of laws and a system of writing. The Semitic Babylonians were illiterate and borrowed nearly all the learning they afterward possessed from the Sumerians and the surrounding nations. This fact has considerable bearing on the suggestion already made that the Babylonians used their opportunities to learn as much as possible from the Jewish captives. And this notion is still further strengthened by the fact that the first captives carried away (among whom was Daniel) were trained by Nebuchadnezzar in Babylonian culture with a view to making them useful in carrying out his own plans. We cannot doubt that the influence of these educated young men must have been very great in disseminating Jewish ideas among the Babylonians with whom they came in contact. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that these young men, educated in Babylonian schools, would also impress their Babylonian culture upon their fellow-captives. Consequently, it is reasonable to suppose that their influence would operate in both directions; and this much ought to be freely admitted in order to reach any just conception of all the facts.

Possibly the chief influence exerted upon the Jews was from a religious point of view. The Mosaic law contained no well-defined doctrines of the future life. Its rewards and punishments did not extend beyond the present life; and while other sacred Jewish books did undoubtedly teach the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, the Jews were so exclusively governed by the law during the reign of the kings that all subsidiary teaching was with them of secondary importance. Hence, the national character, as well as all theological conceptions, depended mainly upon the direction of the Mosaic law. However, as this law was not practically enforced during the Captivity, there was opportunity for the Jewish people to study the Psalms and the Prophets; and as they were constantly in contact with Babylonian ideas of a future life, it is easy to see how they would interpret the Psalms and Prophets from a new point of view. In any case it is evident that the period of the Captivity had considerable influence upon Jewish notions with respect to the future life.

CHAPTER V.

DREAMS AND VISIONS.

IT is a curious fact that in every dispensation dreams and visions have a prominent place. The opening sentences of the Epistle to the Hebrews are very suggestive. The first word is God, and this is exactly the word which would command attention and need no discussion with those to whom the epistle was written. It is then declared that in former dispensations communications had been made to the fathers in the Prophets by "divers portions and in divers manners"; and whoever reads carefully Old Testament history will not fail to appreciate this statement of the apostle. Among these "divers manners" which God used in making his will known, dreams and visions undoubtedly take the first rank. And this was so common as well as so important a method, that in Proverbs it is declared that "where there is no vision, the people perish," or cast off restraint.

Evidently the people depended largely upon dreams and visions for direction in the way they should go. And this was so much the case that finally Jeremiah had to warn the Jews against a danger of being misled by a method of communication which was easily perverted from a legitimate use. The prophet's language is so expressive and suggestive that it may be well to quote the following verses: "I have heard what the prophets have said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies; even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart? which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers forgot my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy lying dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither shall they profit this people at all, saith the Lord."¹

¹Jeremiah xxiii. 25-32 (Revised Version).

But this protest against false prophets and false dreams must not be understood as indicating that dreams are in themselves wrong, or that they may not be useful mediums through which to convey important truth. Even under the Christian dispensation the value of dreams and visions is recognized by divine authority. The Apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, quoted from the Prophet Joel to the effect that God would, in the last days, pour out of his spirit upon all flesh, and that our sons and daughters should prophesy, our young men see visions, and our old men dream dreams.¹ And as a matter of fact this is just what is happening every day. It is probably true that there are no prophets now like those in the days of the Jewish dispensation; nor can it be said that dreams and visions take on the same form they did in olden times; but it is no doubt still true that our young men see visions and our old men dream dreams; and it is equally true that where no vision is, the people cast off restraint. All original thinkers are dreamers or seers. True poets are specially gifted in this way. They nearly always live in advance of their time. They are the voices crying in the wilderness, saying, Prepare ye the way of truth, make its paths straight. In short, they are forerunners in the lead of human progress, whose words are necessary to keep the people from casting off restraint, or from perishing for want of fresh enterprises and new inspirations to activity.

But there is the same danger to be guarded against now as there was in the days of Jeremiah. We must be careful to discriminate between the straw and the wheat. A dream is nothing if it is not in harmony with the Word of God. The latter is the only infallible rule of faith and duty, and consequently the value of all dreams and visions must be determined by an appeal to the Holy Spirit's testimony. We must ever remember that there is no promise that in these days we shall have any such revelations as either the prophets of old or the apostles received. Paul tells the Ephesians of a mystery which he had received by revelation, and which he wrote "afore in a few words," so that when the Ephesians read what he had written they could understand his knowledge of the mystery of Christ. His language is very suggestive. He received the knowledge of the mystery by direct revelation, but the Ephesians had the mystery made known to them by Paul, who communicated his knowledge to them in

¹Acts ii. 17.

an epistle. They did not receive a direct revelation, but had to depend upon the apostle's testimony for all they knew about the matter. We now have a written report of the communications of God to the world through the prophets, Christ and his apostles, and as these have spoken for every respective dispensation we cannot hope for any new revelations in regard to the facts and principles by which we should be guided until another dispensation dawns upon the world, should any such be necessary to the fulfilling of the divine purpose. At the same time, dreams and visions, in the sense already indicated, are valuable even during the dispensation in which we live.

We have already seen that prophecy occupied a most important place in the history of the Jews from King Hezekiah to the close of the Old Testament Canon, and that during the Exile the captives were mainly confined to the help which the prophets gave them in all that related to their spiritual culture. Among the prophets of that period no one filled a more important sphere than Daniel the Beloved. He was, perhaps, not so closely related to the Jewish people as was Ezekiel; but, owing to the favor which he received in court circles, his influence in guiding the government with respect to the Jews must have been very potential. It should never be forgotten that we must constantly study the Exile in association with the Chaldean and Persian governments, and it cannot be doubted that Daniel rose to very high favor with Nebuchadnezzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus; so that he was influential under at least three kings, whatever his position may have been between the death of Nebuchadnezzar and the death of Belshazzar. It is freely admitted that we are mainly indebted to the Book of Daniel for nearly all we certainly know about Daniel himself, and the historical authority of this book has been seriously questioned by some modern critics. While it is readily conceded that this is not the place to discuss either the historical truthfulness or genuineness of this book, it is nevertheless believed, as so much use must be made of the book in subsequent discussions regarding the Exile, that any neglect to relieve the reader's mind from reasonable doubts concerning the points in controversy would be a culpable oversight. Consequently, it is deemed well to look very briefly at some of the objections which have been made to the authority and genuineness of the book. But, instead of examining these objections *seriatim*, it will be sufficient to state a few characteristics of the book, and some facts regarding it, as this course will enable the reader to judge of the place it should occupy in the Old Testament Canon.

(1) In opening the book, the first thing that strikes the reader is the difference of style between the first and last six chapters. The former are written in the third person, the latter in the first person. The first six chapters may have been written by anyone, the last six claim to have been written by Daniel himself. And as the Scriptures nowhere say that the book as a whole was written by Daniel, nor that it was issued in Daniel's lifetime, it is not at all necessary to our present purpose to contend for anything more than that its historical statements are trustworthy and that its prophecies are genuine. It really does not matter much whether the writer of the first part lived in Daniel's time, or, as some suppose, more than three hundred years later. Some of our best histories of events belonging to a period of many hundred years ago are written by authors of the present day. There is nothing, therefore, in the historical part of the Book of Daniel that makes it necessary that this part should have been written by Daniel himself.

(2) The same cannot be said of the latter part of the book. This is devoted mainly to dreams and visions, and we are compelled to believe that Daniel is the author of the last six chapters, though we need not contend that even this part was published at the time he wrote it. And that he did write this part himself is either true or else all that has been said is wholly untrustworthy. He speaks in the first person and professes to tell what he saw and heard; and it is inconceivable that he could have spoken as he has done if the whole story is a cunningly devised fable. However, there is no sufficient evidence that he did not write the whole book or that it was not published about the time of the Return or soon afterward.

(3) The language and idioms of the book are such as make it almost necessary that it should have been written during the Exile or at an early subsequent period. The book is composed partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic. The first part, extending from chapter ii, 4, to chapter vii, is in the latter language, while the remaining portion of the book is written in the former language. Daniel was undoubtedly well acquainted with both of these languages, and it is strongly suggested by the very fact of the language in which the historical part is found that it was written in Babylonia; and if it was written there, the most reasonable hypothesis seems to be that it was really written by Daniel himself.

(4) The book is frequently referred to in other parts of the Bible, and these references make it evident that the prophets, Christ and his apostles regarded the book as historically trustworthy and genuine, and Daniel himself just such a person as the book represents him

to have been. The Prophet Ezekiel, who was with the exiles, refers to Daniel thrice,¹ and these references cannot mean any other person than the one who is mentioned in the Book of Daniel. The New Testament references are equally conclusive.

(5) The Septuagint version includes the Book of Daniel, and this proves that it was regarded as canonical when that version was made; and it is probable that the Septuagint version dates as far back as Ptolemy Philadelphus (285 B. C.²). It is evident, therefore, that the notion that the Book of Daniel was written somewhere between 170 and 164 B. C. cannot be maintained. Perhaps the book was tampered with during the Maccabean age, and we know that Apocryphal additions were made in Greek, but no one now supposes that these have any connection with the original book.

(6) Josephus gives the substance of some parts of the Book of Daniel, and he states that Daniel was the author of it, and that it was written many years before the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Romans concerning whom he prophesied. Undoubtedly the "many years" referred to by Josephus include the period from 534 to 167 B. C.

(7) The Persian words contained in the Book of Daniel seem to suit the period of the Exile and not the Maccabean period. But it has been said that the Greek words in their turn suit the Maccabean period better. However, these Greek terms are few in number and relate to musical instruments. The introduction of these terms is easily explained. It has already been shown that the Babylonians were not originally a musical people. They received their ideas of music mainly from other nations. At the time of the Exile, Greek culture had already begun to make itself felt in Babylonia, and it is probable that these musical terms were introduced about that time. There is nothing more common than to introduce foreign terms as the names of the instruments which are adopted by any people. The English-speaking nations have introduced the foreign names of musical instruments, such as piano, guitar, violin, violoncello, trombone, banjo, etc. Traces of Greek influence have been found as existing in Egypt at a period much earlier than the Exile. Mr. Flinders Petrie says that "the Greek names of musical instruments may have been heard in the courts of Solomon's Temple."

The foregoing considerations are sufficient to settle the question of the trustworthiness and genuineness of the Book of Daniel. Many other evidences might be added, but the points presented make it impossible to suppose that the book was written in the time of the Macca-

bees. Indeed, there is no hypothesis which fits all the facts so well as the one which ascribes the authorship of the Book of Daniel to Daniel himself, and that it was completed about the third year of the reign of Cyrus, though some parts of it may have been written even before that time.

It has been a matter of some interest as to why Nebuchadnezzar should have been made the medium through which to reveal future events. It has seemed to some inconsistent with the character of God that a man like Nebuchadnezzar should have been used for such a purpose. But a careful consideration of the facts of the case will make it evident that the selection of the Chaldean king for the purpose indicated, clearly demonstrates a wisdom which is not human; and at the same time there is nothing in this selection contrary to the "divers manners" of divine revelation. However, it may be well to mention a few facts in connection with this matter in order to show that Nebuchadnezzar was exactly the proper medium for the purpose which was in view.

(1) The revelation was to be concerning kingdoms. It was fitting, therefore, that the dreams should have an origin which would command attention and reverence.

(2) The Chaldean kingdom was immediately concerned, and Nebuchadnezzar was seriously affected in the fulfillment of the dreams. It was very important, therefore, that he himself should be well assured of the reality of the visions. This result could not have been secured so well in any other way as by the plan adopted.

(3) It offered an opportunity to secure special favor for Daniel and other Hebrew worthies, and, in a less important sense, special favors for all the captives. It must never be forgotten that though the Jews were in exile they were still regarded with tender concern by the God of their fathers.

(4) The immediate purpose of the dreams was the influence they should have upon Nebuchadnezzar, by teaching him that there was one greater than he, and therefore greater than all the kings of the earth. The Chaldean king was, by the visions, strongly exhorted to cultivate righteousness, to love mercy, and to avoid injustice, tyranny, and cruelty, which were some of his special characteristics.

(5) There is a certain dignity about these visions which specially belongs to their association with the great Chaldean king. They were intended to furnish a striking object lesson for succeeding generations, and it was, therefore, highly appropriate that they should emanate from the most distinguished autocrat of his times.

(6) Undoubtedly the ultimate and even main purpose of the dreams was to glorify the God of

¹ Ezekiel xiv, 14, 20, xxviii, 3.

² See Book X.

heaven over the gods which Nebuchadnezzar worshiped. It was intended to be a practical demonstration that the God of all the earth, the God which Daniel worshiped, was superior to all the gods of Babylonia. The aim was to secure a royal recognition of this fact; and in this respect there was no disappointment.

(7) All the facts show that the right man was selected. The dream of the image is the first one which comes under our notice. All the facts about this are interesting, and are related in the second chapter of the Book of Daniel in a style which is as vivid in color as it is remarkable for minuteness of detail. We may reasonably suppose that Nebuchadnezzar had been meditating upon his kingdom. His reign had begun with many evidences of great prosperity. No doubt he was very much elated at what, in modern style, was the outlook. Perhaps his pride, which was already great, was largely increased by his reflections. During his meditations he seems to have fallen into a sleep, and we are told that he "dreamed dreams, and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him." Then he called the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans, in order that they might tell his dreams and give their interpretation. But the test which the king made was at once too severe for the wise men of Babylon. He not only wanted the interpretation of his dream, but he demanded that the wise men should tell what the dream was. This, of course, they could not do, and consequently the king ordered that they should all be destroyed.

It is evident that Nebuchadnezzar intended to make his dream of the image a test case with respect to the claims of the wise men. It is probable that he had very little faith in their pretensions, and as he could not endure any competition with his own wisdom which could not be thoroughly sustained by indubitable proof, it was quite in harmony with the character of the man that any failure on the part of the wise men to meet his requirements should be severely punished. Besides this, it is not at all improbable that the king had strong suspicions that these wise men were frauds and that he had now a good opportunity to get rid of them. It is possible, also, that by this time he was somewhat in doubt as to the wisdom of the gods which the people worshiped. He had already heard of the true God. His contact with the Jewish people, and probably with some of their literature, especially the writings of the preëxilian prophets, may have shaken his faith, to some extent at least, in the polytheism of the Babylonians. It has already been mentioned that Merodach was his chief deity, and it is not improbable that he ascribed to Merodach some of the characteristics which

the Jews ascribed to the God of their fathers, and it is not at all impossible that the king borrowed his notions from the Jews. But no matter how this may have been, it is certainly a very striking fact that Nebuchadnezzar required the wise men to tell what his dream was that he might be assured of their ability to interpret it.

Now had come Daniel's opportunity. He had already attracted some attention on account of his refusal to accept the "daily portion of the king's meat, and the wine which he drank," but he seems to have been kept closely at his studies, which were intended to prepare him for the king's service; and consequently he had received no particular public recognition up to the time of the king's dream. But when Daniel heard of all that had happened, and what was about to befall the wise men, from Arioch, the king's executioner, he "went in, and desired of the king that he would appoint him a time and he would show the king the interpretation."

Daniel's conduct at this time is worthy of special notice. He immediately made known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, what had transpired, and they then sought the "mercies of the God of heaven concerning the secret," so that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon; and when the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision at night he blessed the God of heaven and magnified his name for his wisdom, power, and goodness. And, when he comes into the presence of the king, Daniel's dependence upon God is still prominently exhibited in all that he says and does. He does not claim any power to reveal the secret himself. He says "the secret which the king hath demanded can neither wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor soothsayers show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and he hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

The king's dream had respect to an image which he saw, mighty in size, a kind of colossus, bright in appearance and terrible in aspect. It consisted of four well-defined parts. (1) The head was golden. (2) The breast and arms were silver—of a twofold character. (3) The belly and thighs were brass, also of a twofold character. (4) The legs and feet were iron and clay; not only of a twofold character, but also much divided. The king also saw a stone cut out without hands; this smote the image and destroyed it, and finally this little stone, which was cut out of the mountain, filled the whole earth with its dimensions.

This dream should be interpreted in connection with a subsequent dream which Daniel had.

Indeed, Daniel's visions are all more or less amplifications of the first dream of the Chaldean king; consequently, if we can interpret the dream of the image correctly, there needs be little trouble about the visions which follow in the Book of Daniel. Really this vision of the image may be regarded as the key to all subsequent prophecy, whether in the Book of Daniel or the Book of Revelation. It is most important, therefore, that we should have a clear understanding of this vision of the image.

Of course, it is well known that there have been several interpretations given of it. But there is only one which seems to answer the main facts of the case, and this one is now very generally adopted by all expositors whose views are not fanciful. Without going into a detailed account of other interpretations it will be sufficient to say that, while in some particulars they seem to answer the condition of the vision, they all lack unity when the facts are taken together. Consequently, it is believed that the only interpretation which will stand a rational test is the one which makes the image represent the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires.

The following facts should be noted with respect to the image: (1) There is a decrease in the value of the metal from the head to the feet. (2) There are certain doubles which have significance in the subsequent facts of history. (3) The iron of the last kingdom finally degenerated into clay.

With these facts before us it is easy to see what the import of the dream was. There is no question about what the head represented, as Daniel tells us this much in plain language. Taking the dreams and visions together, the golden head of the colossus, or the lion with the eagle's wings, undoubtedly represents the Babylonian empire. It is also evident that the silver breast and arms of the image, or the bear with the three ribs, must be identified with the Medo-Persian kingdom. The brazen belly and thighs, or the panther, may be identified with the Macedonian empire under Alexander the Great and his successors, the thighs representing the kingdoms of the Ptolemies and Seleucidæ. The two legs of the image, partly iron and partly clay, corresponding to the fourth beast in Daniel's vision, seem fitly to represent the Roman empire, which, after a certain period, should be destroyed and then succeeded by the kingdom of the Messiah, symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar's dream by the rolling stone, but described more fully in Daniel's vision as "the kingdom of the Saints of the Most High."

The part of these visions with which we are most concerned is that which refers to the Messiah. No doubt the Jews were greatly

comforted by Daniel's interpretation. This interpretation made it evident that they would soon be under a new kingdom, and that, under this new kingdom, they would be permitted to return to their native land. But perhaps the most cheering hope which the interpretation inspired was the fact that ultimately all the kingdoms or empires with which their subsequent history would be associated, must end in utter ruin, while a kingdom would succeed them over which a king of the tribe of Judah would reign, and whose kingdom would be everlasting.

Looked at from the point of view of the Exile, it is easy to see how all the visions in the Book of Daniel must have had an encouraging effect upon the captives. No doubt they were familiar with these things, for they certainly did not take place in a corner. We must remember that Nebuchadnezzar honored Daniel for the interpretation of his dream. Indeed, he worshiped him, thinking that the flesh-dwelling Gods were in him; he also "made Daniel a great man, and gave him many gifts and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon," while, at Daniel's request, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon. Of course, all this could not have been done without the import of the dream becoming widely known. In the Jewish meeting places, or synagogues, where they came together for worship and the study of the Scriptures, it is highly probable that Daniel frequently met with them and expounded to them the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, with respect to their future destiny, while at the same time he emphasized the practical bearing of his own visions on the subsequent history of the exiles.

However, as already intimated, the most encouraging part of the visions relates not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles. The Messianic kingdom is the only one which meets all the conditions of the whole human race. The Gospel is intended for every creature, and, consequently, Christ's kingdom is ecumenical — it embraces all the nations of the earth. It may not be possible to make all the facts of history exactly fit in every particular the dreams and visions of the Book of Daniel. It would be unreasonable to expect any such correspondence in matters of detail. Analogy is an equality of ratios. There may be a wide dissimilarity as regards material, environment, and many other things; but if there is a correspondence with respect to the particular point to be illustrated, then the analogy may be easily traced at that point, though it may not be pressed any further. By not observing

this important rule in Biblical interpretation much confusion has been produced. With this rule before us it is impossible not to see the coming glories of the Messianic kingdom and the final triumph of Judah in the reign of him who is the lion of that tribe.

At the same time it is well to notice the remarkable fulfillment of Daniel's predictions in the history of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman empires. It is impossible to trace the rise, progress, and final destruction of these empires without realizing that Daniel must have had foreknowledge of what was to take place. In the image which

Nebuchadnezzar saw, as well as in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, there is not only an unmistakable reference to the four empires mentioned, but there are clear intimations as to the relations these sustained to one another as well as the divisions which took place in some of them. In fact, there are so many essential features clearly portrayed that we are compelled to believe that Daniel was under the influence of the divine factor in history (which is the necessary complement to the human), when he traced the outlines of the coming ages as he saw them from the heights of prophetic vision during his exile in Babylon.

CHAPTER VI.

FAITH VERSUS IDOLATRY.

PERHAPS the most potent factor in human history has been the courage to say "No." The constant exercise of this courage would have saved the race from untold troubles. When the serpent, with beguiling enchantments, pleaded with Eve to break the law of God, if she had answered him with an emphatic *no*, how different would have been the condition of mankind to-day! But we have learned something since that sad experience in the Garden of Eden; and now we can trace, through the history of the past, the whole line of human progress by almost innumerable protests which have been made against evil, wrong, and falsehood. In some respects the attitude of men has been changed toward the divine government. The experiment in Eden practically revolutionized the law of progress. That experiment was with a positive command of God, and implicit obedience to this made everything safe. All that was necessary to be done was unhesitatingly to obey the divine command. Now, however, we are first of all concerned with the other side of things; we must refuse to obey the commandment of the evil one. This is the lesson which the tragedy in Eden has unmistakably taught the race.

Many illustrations could be given of the fact which has been stated. Indeed, the history of the past is full of striking incidents showing the value of earnest protest. A well-known example is furnished in the Protestant Reformation under Luther and his associates. Much of the power of this Reformation was owing to the refusal of the reformers to do that which they regarded as wrong. It is readily granted that they maintained some important positive principles; but, after allowing fully for the influence of these, it is still highly probable that the main impetus which the movement received had its origin in the earnest protests

which the reformers made against the evils of their day. In any case it cannot be doubted that the very name which the movement received — namely, Protestant — suggests that which was mainly fundamental in all of the success that was achieved.

In view of the foregoing statements it is not remarkable that there were at least a few protestants in Babylon at the time of the Exile. The names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ought to be written upon the same scroll with those of Luther, Melancthon, and Zwingle. Indeed, the protestants of Babylon were more severely tried than those of the Lutheran Reformation. And yet the faith of these heroic exiles stood the test in a manner which has commanded the admiration of all succeeding generations. Their case not only illustrates the imperious despotism under which they were placed, but it also strongly emphasizes the power of God to deliver his people from the severest trials when they implicitly put their faith in him. Of course, we must never forget that those were days of temporal deliverances. At that time the promises of rewards and punishments were confined mainly, if not exclusively, to the present life. Hence, miraculous interpositions in the temporal affairs of men were much more common then than now. Perhaps we ought not to look for such visible manifestations of divine power at all in the present day, though it is by no means certain that we are not subjected to trials even greater than those were who lived under the Jewish dispensation. Our trials are of a different kind, and our deliverances are also different; but all the same it is still true that the blessed man is the one who endures trials, for when he is tested he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

The incident to which reference is about to be made took place probably not long after the destruction of Jerusalem. There is no time mentioned, but there are some facts which seem to point to the period indicated. It is safe in any case to locate the time, when the golden image was set up, somewhere between the nineteenth and thirty-fifth years of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. It is known that during this period he was mainly concerned with beautifying Babylon and strengthening his power at home and abroad; or, to use his own words he was "at rest in his house and flourishing in his palace." In short, it was a period of comparative quiet throughout his dominions, and it may have been about the thirty-fifth year of his reign when the incident on the plain of Dura took place.

It has already been stated that Merodach was Nebuchadnezzar's favorite deity, but Merodach was the local deity of Babylon, and, as a younger god, had slowly taken the place once held by the elder god Bel or Belus. The Chaldean king was a politician, and in order partially to meet the prejudices of those who still held to the worship of Bel in preference to that of Merodach, the king compromised the matter by calling his favorite Bel-Merodach. But even this shrewd diplomacy did not meet the whole case. The people of Babylonia were polytheists, and many of them were evidently slow to accept of Merodach, the local deity of Babylon, even with his prefix Bel, as the god who should be worshiped above all gods. No doubt Nebuchadnezzar's pride was involved in the matter. He could not bear with patience any tendency which contested his own opinions. He may have thought, also, as Nabonidus did afterward, that the excessive polytheism of Babylonia was a constant danger to the empire; and, in such a case, his object was, no doubt, by the erection of the golden image, to secure for Bel-Merodach the recognition of all his subjects. The king himself was a polytheist, in theory at least, though probably in practice he was really a monotheist. But he was more than either of these—a shrewd politician. He undoubtedly understood the influence of the spectacular; and it is almost certain that his aim was, in setting up the golden image of Bel-Merodach, to make the occasion so impressive as to compel a very general, if not universal, recognition of his favorite god.

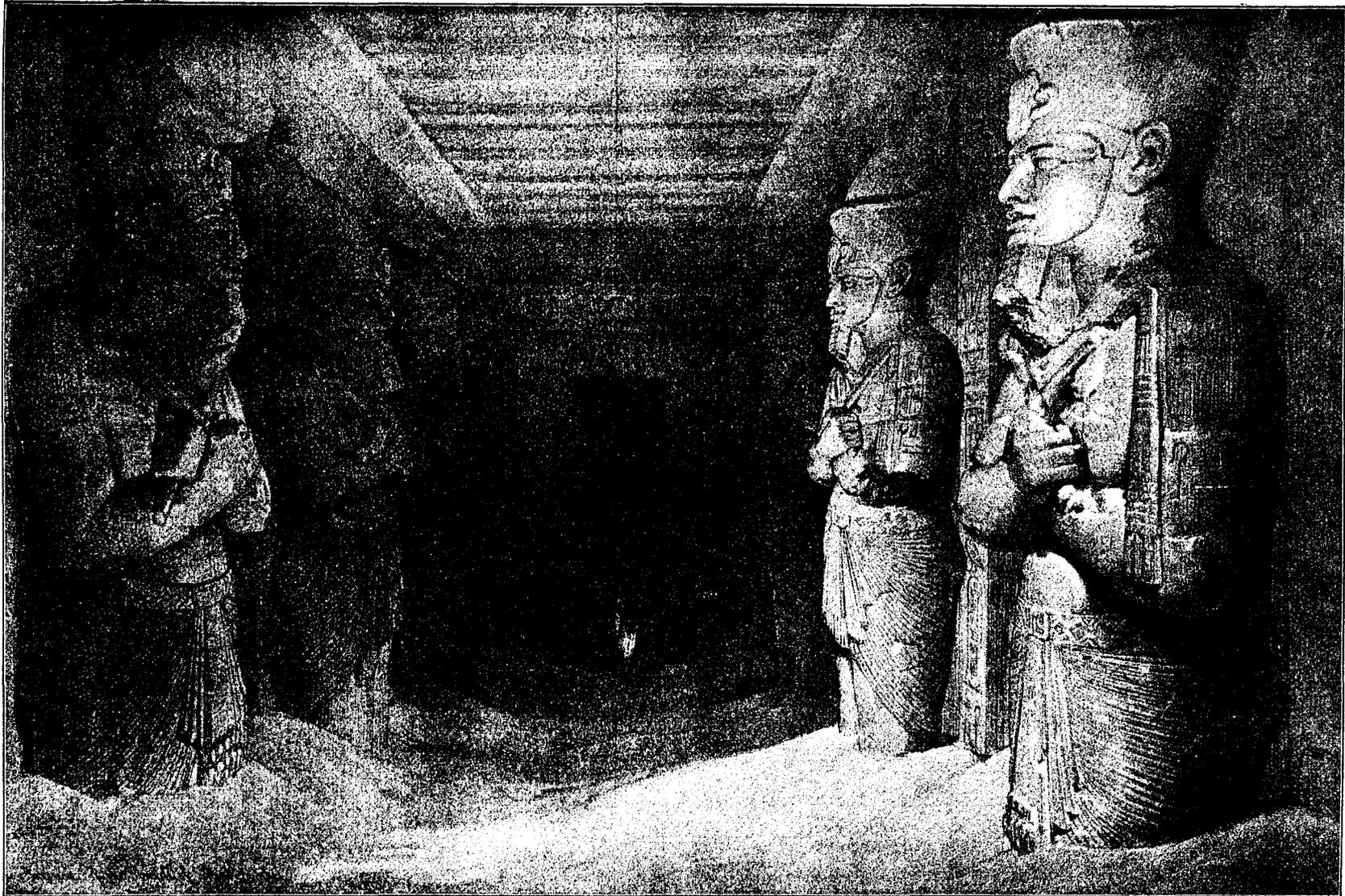
If this was his object it must be confessed that the means which he employed, looked at from a human point of view only, were well calculated to bring success to his plans. The image itself was remarkable. It may not have been of solid gold; though, in view of the wealth at the disposal of Nebuchadnezzar, even an image constructed of solid gold need not be

regarded as improbable. Still, as both Isaiah and Jeremiah have given us descriptions as to how idols were made, we may reasonably conclude that this one was constructed in the usual way; and if such was the case, it was first made from either palm wood or cedar wood and then overlaid with thin plates of gold. When placed upon the pedestal it would be fastened with silver chains so as to keep it unshaken in its elevated position.

The image under consideration, including the pedestal, was no less than 60 cubits (or about 100 feet) high. The breadth of the pedestal was 6 cubits. The image at the top, however, was only a head or bust; but as this was undoubtedly of considerable size and overlaid with gold, it would, from its elevated pedestal in the plains of Dura, reflect to the inhabitants of Babylon the rays of the rising sun at the very hour when prayers were offered. And, in view of this fact, it is easy to see that the king planned wisely in regard to spectacular effect. The inauguration ceremonies were also all designed with a view to impressing the people. There is nothing like a large assembly to inspire enthusiasm. This important factor had not been overlooked. On the day of the dedication the plain was filled with the officers of state and with representatives from all parts of the empire. A band of music was also present, composed of trumpets, flutes, harps, bagpipes, psalteries, drums, and cymbals; and though the music discoursed was doubtless of a very crude kind, it nevertheless added much to the impressiveness of the occasion. It is worthy of remark that the army was also well represented. It is probable that this feature was made indispensable on account of the imperious edict which was proclaimed by the king through his herald. This proclamation was as follows: "Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar, the king, hath set up; and whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."¹

Evidently the time for making this proclamation was wisely selected. Nothing was said about what would be required of the people until they were in the presence of the image. Now, for the first time, they were told what everyone must do or suffer the consequences of a horrible death. But even this despotic edict was made as easy as possible by that which was to accompany its observance. Not

¹ Daniel iii, 4-7 (Revised Version).



DAVID ROBERTS.

INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ABU-SIMBEL.

only was the sound of the music to be a signal for the people to fall down and worship the image, but it was intended also to be an inspiration to impel them to do what the king wished. With people whose religious convictions were rather easy-going, an occasion like this was all that was necessary to secure obedience to an edict, the full import of which they had no time to consider, and especially as they knew that protest would be in vain while they were in the presence of an army which was there probably for the very purpose of enforcing the king's decree. Consequently, notwithstanding many present did not take kindly to the worship of Bel-Merodach, they did not hesitate to bow down and worship the image at the time specified in the king's proclamation.

There were three, however, who did not obey the king's decree, and as these occupied prominent official positions in the province of Babylon, their conduct was soon reported to Nebuchadnezzar. These three men were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Their action was apparently a fine opportunity for their enemies; and that they had enemies is almost certain because of the readiness with which their refusal to obey the king's command was reported to him, and also for the reason that men of pure characters, when in official position, are almost sure to make enemies of those who envy them, or who cannot endure their righteous administration of public affairs.

But whatever may have been the cause, the three protestants were soon summoned before the king, who was very angry on account of their refusal to bow down and worship the golden image he had set up, though even in his anger he was inclined to the notion that they had not disobeyed his order purposely, and he was therefore willing to give them another chance. Their answer to his demand is worthy to be printed in golden letters. They said, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."¹ This answer expresses, in the first place, their faith that the God whom they served was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, and that he would rescue them out of the king's hand. And in the second place, it expressed also their utter unwillingness to obey the king's decree whether they should be delivered or not. Their answer was an emphatic *no* to his demand, and this filled the king with fury, so that his visage changed, and he commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times

more than it was wont to be, and that certain mighty men who were in his army should bind the Hebrew worthies and cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

The result was in every way remarkable, though in no way different from what the sublime faith of the Hebrews expected. They implicitly trusted in their God, and he did not forsake them. Their deliverance was complete, and it was all the more impressive because of the pains which had been taken to make the punishment certain and swift. The effect upon the king was, at least momentarily, overwhelming. He could scarcely believe his own eyes when he saw the three condemned men walking unharmed in the flames while they seemed to be supported by a fourth whose aspect was like a son of the gods. It is not surprising, therefore, when the victory of faith had been fully achieved, that Nebuchadnezzar should make a decree that every people, nation, and language which might speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego should be cut in pieces and their houses made a dung-hill; "because there is no other god that is able to deliver after this sort." Nor are we surprised that the king should have promoted the noble protestants who had been so signally delivered by the God whom they worshiped. However, there are a few things that are forcibly suggested by this deliverance, and it may not be amiss to notice these briefly before the incident is dismissed.

(1) The king does not accept the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego as the only God worthy of worship. He recognizes him as able to deliver in a manner which no other god could do, but he does not recognize him as even the chief of deities.

(2) The king's conversion was, therefore, only half accomplished, and even what he did confess was practically extorted from him, and was probably a sort of perfunctory recognition which did not promise to be either permanent or of much benefit to the king himself.

(3) The proclamation of the king no doubt did much good in making the God of the Hebrews known, as well as in bringing the captives into the favorable consideration of the Babylonians.

(4) Refusal to obey the powers that be is sometimes the highest duty. There is nothing in Paul's teaching contrary to this affirmation. Paul simply guards against rebellion. When there is a conflict between civil authority and conscience, the only thing we can do is to say *no* to the demand of human government and either suffer or trust to the deliverance of God.

(5) Protest against evil has usually resulted to the ultimate advantage of the cause of the

¹ Daniel iii, 17-19 (Revised Version).

protestants. The blood of the martyrs has always been the seed of the Church. Persecution never fails to injure its own cause. It may have temporary success, but the day of reckoning is sure to come. All bigotry must ultimately come to grief. "Now abideth faith, hope, love; and the greatest of these is love."

(6) The deliverance of these Hebrews was immediate, and doubtless for the reason that it was necessary for the power of God to be manifested in a very striking way before Nebuchadnezzar and the people. It does not always follow, however, that we should expect temporal deliverance from persecutions. It may be better for us to *endure* the trial so that we may be purified and thereby be made "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

(7) All persecutions as well as all unrighteousness will ultimately end in the glory of God. This is one of the most marvelous facts connected with an overruling providence, and yet it is a fact easily demonstrable from the Scriptures as well as from the history of the race. Faith has never been opposed to idolatry when the former did not finally triumph, and this triumph has always brought honor both to God and men.

The setting up of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image strikingly illustrates the proverb that "pride goes before a fall." It has already been stated that the period under consideration was characterized by the reign of peace throughout the king's dominions. It is well known that he devoted several years and all the vast resources at his command in making Babylon the wonder of the world; and some idea may be gathered of the magnificent city when we take into consideration a few facts with respect to it. The wall was at least sixty miles in circumference. The city itself was laid out in 625 squares, formed by the intersection of 25 streets at right angles, and the whole area included a space nearly three times as large as that covered by London. The walls were at least 75 feet high and 32 broad. The river Euphrates divided the city into two parts, namely eastern and western, and these parts were connected by a bridge which was remarkable for its construction. This bridge was built by Nebuchadnezzar, as was also the western part of the city. Besides these, he built several lines of fortification round the entire city, and erected palaces which in splendor eclipsed every other thing of the kind in his day. The celebrated "hanging gardens," which were erected mainly to please his wife, were the wonder of the ancient world. So marvelous were the descriptions of ancient historians with respect to the splendor and magnificence of Babylon that some have been disposed to doubt their historical accuracy. Now, however, the whole matter has

been set at rest. The testimony of the inscriptions fully corroborates Berosus, while an examination of the ruins of Babylon at the present day shows that fully nine-tenths of the bricks found among these ruins are stamped with Nebuchadnezzar's name; and according to Sir Henry Rawlinson the same is true of "the bricks, *in situ*, belonging perhaps to a hundred different towns and cities in the neighborhood of Bagdad." Hence we may conclude that internal improvements were carried on throughout wide extents of country, as well as at Babylon, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; indeed, this was so much the case that his reign was specially distinguished for achievements in architecture, art, education, and commercial activity.

At last, in effect, he tells us with much self-satisfaction, that he had reached the highest point of his ambition; and it was about this time that the golden image was set up, probably for the purpose already indicated, though the elevation of this image symbolically represented the pride of the great king. Some have thought that the image was of himself instead of Bel-Merodach; and if this was the case then it intensifies the suggestion that it fitly represented the king before his fall. This view of the matter is certainly worthy of consideration. Still it does not destroy the force of the contrast between what the king was and what he soon came to be, even if the image was that of Bel-Merodach. In any case it embodied Nebuchadnezzar's ideal of his own greatness and the splendor and extent of his reign. Hence, it is from this high pedestal that we are to behold the fall of the Chaldean king.

It is not necessary to give the details of the dream in which the king's humiliation was clearly portrayed. These may be found in the fourth chapter of Daniel. But it may be interesting to read the following vivid passage by Doctor Joseph Parker on dreams as a means of punishment: "Let us not tamper with this graphic language, but take it as it stands in the English tongue. Nebuchadnezzar 'saw' a dream: it was part of himself, yet it was wholly outside, so that he could fasten his eyes upon it; it was in him and without him, above him, round about him, beneath him; and he was 'afraid.' Sometimes we ask the question, Do dreams come true? Why they *are* true. A dream does not need to come true, because it is there, a fact; it is already part of the history of the brain. There need be no other hell than a dream. Who can count the resources of God? In a dream we can be burned; in a dream we can be encoiled by serpents; in a dream we can be eternally suffocated; in a dream a serpent's fang may be within one inch of striking our life, and we may have no power of resistance

or flight. The dream made Nebuchadnezzar afraid, and Nebuchadnezzar was not accustomed to fear, for he had brass enough, iron enough, chariots enough, horse-men enough; at the blast of his trumpet an empire stood up in his defense: but a dream made a fool of him. You cannot strike a dream; you cannot lay your hands upon it and compel it to make terms with you. These are the resources of God. If he would fight us with lightning we could make some device that might catch the lightning and bear it away; if he would fight us always with whirlwinds we could order our masonry accordingly, and hide ourselves behind the granite wall till the great Euroclydon cried itself to rest: but he will not do this; he will trouble us with dreams, and make us afraid with visions; and whilst we are flourishing in the palace he will make the floor tremble under us, or there will be a movement behind the screen, the curtain, the arras, and that movement will frighten us more than we ever were affrighted by thunderstorm at midnight. If Nebuchadnezzar had heard that an army was thundering at one of the gates of Babylon, he would have been delighted: war is the amusement of kings; battle is the recreation of royal luxury and ambition: but this was a dream that came through the great brass gates that made the great wall of Babylon memorable as one of the finest structures in the world. You cannot bar out a dream, or lock it out, or bolt it out, or set a watch to keep it out; a wakeful sentry, armed at every point, may be looking at the dream while it touches him, and he cannot touch it, or blow it back, or threaten it, or defy it; it smiles upon him, and passes on, to work its murder in the king's head and the king's heart, and turn the king's imagination into an intolerable perdition. When Pilate was puzzled about the new king, and the new theology, and the unheard-of sedition which was not written in the Roman books, 'his wife sent unto him, saying, have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.' God has made great use of dreams in history. Spiritual impressions may be laughed at by those who read nothing but cold type; but they are regarded as having unutterable suggestion to those of a more sensitive and exalted order of mind."¹

As in the case of the first dream, Nebuchadnezzar sent for the wise men of Babylon to interpret for him. But they were wholly unable to give the meaning. When they had failed, Daniel came before the king and finally gave the interpretation. It is rather remarkable that the king did not send for Daniel at once, in view of

what had transpired with respect to the dream of the image; but it is possible that the king meant to make another test of his magicians; or perhaps his pride had lifted him far above any recognition of either Daniel or the God whom he served. This latter view corresponds more exactly to the character of Nebuchadnezzar at this time, and it seems also to justify the punishment which he subsequently received. Daniel's interpretation, as addressed to the king, was as follows: "It is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: that thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee; till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule."¹ This language was followed by an earnest exhortation to the king to break off his sins by righteousness and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor so that there might be a lengthening of his tranquility.

At the end of twelve months the dream was literally fulfilled. The king was walking in the royal palace of Babylon and was in the very act of saying, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" And while the word was in the king's mouth there fell a voice from heaven proclaiming that the time had come for the fulfillment of the dream, and the same hour was Nebuchadnezzar "driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."²

Many opinions have been expressed by commentators as to what was the character of Nebuchadnezzar's illness. At present there seems to be a very general concurrence in the view which ascribes to him a certain species of insanity called zoanthropy or lycanthropy, and this interpretation is strengthened from what the king says in reference to his recovery. His words are, "mine understanding returned unto me." Undoubtedly his understanding left him during his illness; and from the description of the whole case, physiologists have concluded that his affliction was a certain kind of madness in which, according to Doctor Pusey, "the sufferer, while retaining his consciousness in other respects, imagines himself to be changed into

¹ Daniel iv, 24-26 (Revised Version).

² Daniel iv, 33 (Revised Version).

some animal, and acts, up to a certain point, in conformity with that persuasion. Those who imagine themselves changed into wolves howl like wolves, and (falsely, as there is reason to believe,) accuse themselves of bloodshed. Others imitate the cries of dogs."

This condition does not necessarily imply that Nebuchadnezzar was entirely unconscious of his real identity. He imagined that he was an ox, and acted accordingly, eating grass and exposing himself in the fields to all kinds of weather. Still he may have been able to attend to ordinary business, notwithstanding the sad hallucination under which he was laboring. Doctor Browne, the Commissioner of the Board of Lunacy for Scotland, speaking from an experience of thirty years, says: "My opinion is that of all mental powers or conditions the idea of personal identity is but rarely enfeebled, and that it is never extinguished. The *ego* (self) and *non ego* (not self) may be confused. The *ego*, however, continues to preserve the personality. All the angels, devils, dukes, lords, kings, gods, many that I have had under my care, remained what they were before they became angels, dukes, etc., in a sense, and even nominally. I have seen a man declaring himself the Savior, or Saint Paul, yet sign his own name James Thomson, and attend worship as regularly as if the notion of divinity had never entered into his head. I think it probable, therefore, because consistent with experience in similar forms of mental affection, that Nebuchadnezzar retained a perfect consciousness that he was Nebuchadnezzar during the whole course of his degradation."

But whether Nebuchadnezzar's conscious identity remained with him or not it is certain that his punishment was very great; and it has puzzled some writers that no reference is made to this affliction of the king by any of the ancient historians. But there is nothing, after all, very strange in this omission. Even Berossus is mainly indebted to Nebuchadnezzar's own inscriptions for the facts respecting that monarch's reign; and it would be unreasonable to suppose that the proud king would perpetuate on tablets or stone such an episode in his life. But even if Berossus knew of the affliction referred to he would probably say nothing about it, as his admiration for Nebuchadnezzar would lead him to pass over so unpleasant an incident. The Eastern kings had a habit of perpetuating only such things as glorified their reigns, and it is not surprising, therefore, that the temporary fall of the great Chaldean ruler is found recorded only in the Book of Daniel.

It is pleasing, however, to notice the fact that this affliction seemed to change the whole aspect of Nebuchadnezzar toward the God of the Hebrews. It is not known exactly how

long the affliction lasted, as it is impossible to tell just what is meant by the "seven times" that were to "pass over him." But whether seven days or seven years, there can be no doubt about the influence exerted upon Nebuchadnezzar himself, for when the king's understanding returned to him he "blessed the Most High and praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation." And he, furthermore, extolled and honored the King of Heaven, declaring that all his works are truth and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

These are the last words we find recorded of the great king whose long reign was so intimately associated with the Jewish captives in Babylon; and in concluding this chapter, it may be interesting to note a few things that are suggested by the closing days of one of the greatest rulers of antiquity.

(1) There is no specific reference anywhere as to where or how Nebuchadnezzar died. Berossus says that he suffered from a lingering sickness before his death. Megasthenes, after mentioning that he invaded Libya and Iberia, goes on to say that the king went up to the top of his palace and was there overpowered by some god, and said: "'I, Nebuchadnezzar, foretell to you, O Babylonians, the calamity which will befall you, which both Bel, my forefather, and the queen Beltis, are unable to persuade the fates to avert. A Persian mule will come, who will find your gods his allies, and will bring slavery upon you.' . . . He then, after uttering his oracle, disappeared."

(2) While we may not attach much importance to such a statement as the foregoing, his last words, as recorded in the Bible, cannot fail to suggest the strong probability that finally the great king was brought to worship the true God. And if such were the case, then the affliction to which reference has been made is only another illustration of how God "from seeming evil" is "still educing good." The good in this case was of a threefold character: the king was blessed, the captives received more favor, and the true God was glorified. Surely such a result as this was worth all it had cost in suffering and anxiety.

(3) If we take the whole history of Nebuchadnezzar, included in the erection of the golden image and his own terrible abasement, we shall find in it an important lesson to human governments as well as to individuals. With respect to Nebuchadnezzar's affliction, John Ruskin has the following memorable passage in "Modern Painters": "This Nebuchadnezzar curse, that sends men to grass like oxen, seems to follow but too closely on

the excess or continuation of national power and peace. In the perplexity of nations, in their struggles for existence, in their infancy, their impotence, or even their disorganization, they have higher hopes and nobler passions. Out of the suffering comes the serious mind; out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of endurance, fortitude; out of deliverance, faith; but when they have learned to live under providence of laws and with decency and justice of regard for each other, and when they have done away with violent and external sources of suffering, worse evils seem to arise out of their rest, evils that vex less and mortify more, that suck the blood though they do not shed it, and ossify the heart though they do not torture it. And deep though the causes of thankfulness must be to every people at peace with others and at unity in itself, there are causes of fear, also — a fear greater than of sword and sedition — that dependence on God may be forgotten, because the bread is given and the water sure; that gratitude to him may cease, because his constancy of protection has taken the semblance of natural law; that heavenly hope may grow faint amidst the full fruition of the world, that selfishness may take the place of undemanded devotion, compassion be lost in vainglory, and love in dissimulation; that enervation may succeed to strength, apathy to patience, and the noise of jesting words and foulness of dark thoughts to the earnest purity of the girded loins and the burning lamp."

These words of Ruskin are supported by the testimony of history. It is a suggestive fact that very few nations have been able to maintain dominion where they have been invaded by a self-conscious security during the reign of peace. Indeed, in many instances, it seems that the pursuit of culture instead of war has been fatal to national prosperity. Why is this? Is it because war is essential to progress and peace contrary to national safety? Surely not. What, then, is the explanation of the curious fact to which reference has been made? It certainly cannot be said that war and refinement are helpmeets to each other. On the contrary, it may safely be affirmed that a highly educated, polished, and refined people cannot perpetuate their civilization by military power. Especially is this true where the religious element enters largely into national life.

How, then, are we to understand this matter? Evidently we must not resort to war methods in order to maintain a peace footing. Arbitration is the only method for settling difficulties when once we have passed through the war period of national existence. History furnishes abundant evidence of the truth of this

statement. While the Greeks cultivated the "manly arts," as they are called, and gave much attention to the development of physical strength, they were invincible in battle. But when they had been led, by Pericles and other rulers, to a high degree of mental culture during a period of peace, they lost their military prowess and became easy victims to the superior strength of the rude, warlike nations around them.

The Roman empire fell in the same way. The basic principle of its civilization was force. It had been built up and perpetuated by the sword. And as it is forever true that "they that take the sword" must "perish by the sword," we find that, so soon as the intellectual culture of the people overcame their relish and aptitude for war, they fell under the superior military power of the uneducated and uncultivated barbarians whom every Roman had been taught to despise. The Roman empire did not fall, as is generally supposed, because the people had no worthy leaders, or because the people themselves had become extravagant, but rather because both rulers and people had risen above that culture in which military power is an essential element of success. The ruin came because it was attempted to perpetuate the empire by warlike means, when the warlike spirit and prowess had departed before a growth of intellectual and social culture which demanded peaceful negotiations as the means by which all difficulties should be solved.

The workings of this same principle may be seen in some of the present nationalities of Europe. Many of the oldest of these are falling into decay, while those that a few years ago were known only for their rudeness, are rapidly coming up to the first importance. Why is this? Is it because France is intellectually feeble, that she is no longer a match for Germany? By no means. It is rather because France has outgrown the possibilities of war to perpetuate her existence. And as she failed to recognize this fact, she failed to adopt the true policy of national ripeness; namely the solution of difficulties through the instrumentality of enlightened statesmanship. Germany is just now in the war period, and is in the very height of her glory. But it will not be long before the German civilization will be turned backward, if the German people do not exchange the arbitrament of the sword for the more enlightened policy of peaceful negotiation.¹

In view of what has been stated, it is not surprising that Nebuchadnezzar's encouragement of culture only increased the dangers which

¹See author's "American Civilization," *Christian Quarterly*, Vol. IV.

surrounded him, and finally led to the fall of the empire under the almost peaceful reign of Nabonidus. Both of these kings encouraged the peaceful arts without adopting the law of national life which is necessary to the perpetuation of a cultured civilization, or a civilization which has outgrown the war spirit. If Nabonidus had been as wise in avoiding war as he was in encouraging the peaceful arts, the final catastrophe which happened during his reign might have been averted. He ought to have either been prepared for war or for peace, and the first step in preparing for peace is the adoption of arbitration as the means of settling international difficulties. There is, however, another matter to be considered from the peace

standpoint. Luxury, frivolity, vice, and all other evil ways, nearly always come in like a flood tide during times of peace. This ought not to be the case, and it will not be the case when religion holds its proper position and wields its normal influence. This was largely the weak point of Nebuchadnezzar. He was religious, but his religion was for the most part superstition. At last this superstition found its embodiment in the golden image which was set up in the plains of Dura. From the time that image lifted its head in the rising sunlight Nebuchadnezzar began to fall, and he never rose again until, through the saddest affliction, he was led to acknowledge and honor the God of all the earth.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

IT has been truly said that "Man proposes, but God disposes." Nothing, perhaps, more distinctly marks the reign of providence in the affairs of men than the final fate of Babylon. The prophecies concerning the fall of the great city are so vivid and so precise that they have all the value of veritable history; and these prophecies have been so literally fulfilled, so far as we are able to verify the facts of the case, that even where facts of history are wanting or confused there is really justification for following the prophecies in order to supply these defects.

Jeremiah's prophecies are especially valuable with respect to the fall of Babylon. He was loyal to his countrymen even when they were disloyal to him; consequently when Zedekiah and the captives associated with him were carried away, Jeremiah wrote a prediction on a roll and committed it to the care of Seraiah, the officer in charge of the royal gifts, with instructions that he should read the roll to the exiles after reaching Babylon, and afterward tie a stone to it and sink it in the Euphrates, repeating at the same time a form of prayer and concluding comment thus: "O Jehovah, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate forever"; and after the book sank out of sight in the waters, he added, "thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I, Jehovah, bring upon her; for the Babylonians will, in their turn, wax faint and perish." This prophecy was made more than a half century before its fulfillment, and it is remarkable that it should have been proclaimed, first of all, right in the country against which the prophecy was delivered. It was doubtless read

to the captives in secret before the roll was destroyed. However, the original was left by Jeremiah, and whoever will read the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters of his book cannot fail to be impressed by the remarkable character of the prophet's predictions concerning the great city whose doom is so distinctly foretold.

No doubt Jeremiah intended the reading of the roll to the captives to be an encouragement to them. They are not only reassured as to their own deliverance, but they are informed with a literalness which must have made a deep impression upon them, that their oppressors would finally be punished, and Babylon itself should become desolate, so that no one should dwell in it, neither man nor beast. The vividness of the prophet's picture is truly wonderful, and the accuracy with which he forecasts both the fall of the city and the return of the Jews makes it impossible for us to doubt that he was guided by divine wisdom in every word he uttered. It must be remembered that this prophecy was spoken at a time when the Chaldean empire was at the height of its glory, and when there was no sign at all of its decay.

It has already been shown that with the death of Nebuchadnezzar the coming doom of the empire began to be foreshadowed. It was during the reign of Nergal-Sharezzer that a great revolution occurred which exerted a powerful influence on both Western Asia and Europe. This revolution was the overthrow of the old dynasty in Media and the foundation of the Persian empire by Cyrus the Great. His accession probably took place in 558 B. C.

It is difficult to reconcile all the statements of ancient historians with respect to the period under consideration. Xenophon and Herodotus differ in several particulars, but enough is

known from these and other writers, as well as from the chronicle of Nabonidus and Cyrus, to make it certain that Cyrus dethroned Astyages, the last king of Media, and transferred the control over the Medo-Persian empire to the royal family of Persia. Ecbatana (Agbatana) was fixed upon as the capital of the new dynasty.

When the news of the revolution effected by Cyrus reached Cræsus, king of Lydia, the latter determined on an attempt to check the growth of the Medo-Persian power. Accordingly he sent envoys to Amasis, king of Egypt, and to Nabonidus, king of Babylon, to unite with him in an alliance against Cyrus. It is probable that about this time Nabonidus constructed the great defenses of Babylon, including the works for inundation of the surrounding country. Meanwhile Cræsus crossed the Halys, where he met Cyrus, and after a severe battle was defeated and shut up within the walls of Sardis. This was soon followed by the capture of Cræsus and the extension of the undisputed dominion of Cyrus as far as the Ægean Sea.

The conflict with Babylon did not properly begin for nearly fifteen years afterward. During this interval Cyrus was engaged in finishing the conquest of the tribes of Asia Minor and in strengthening his power in Media. Nabonidus contented himself with building defensive works at Babylon, and, though cultivating the arts of peace, he was really inviting the invasion which soon followed. His own people were by no means reconciled to his reign, and needed only a pretext to betray him into the hands of his enemies. This was especially true of the priests. Nabonidus appears to have attempted a revolution in religious matters; and in his effort to establish a monotheism he came in conflict with the prejudices and self-interest of the priests as well as many of the people. He, therefore, found himself at last threatened with an invasion by Cyrus, while at home he had not the hearty support of certain influential classes who had been alienated from him by the king's revolutionary notions with respect to religion. At length Cyrus left his capital and, crossing the river Gyndes, began his march on Babylon.

The rest of the story relating to the fall of the city is involved in considerable uncertainty. However, taking all that is said by historians in connection with the chronicle of Nabonidus and Cyrus, the following facts seem to be fairly well established:

(1) A battle was fought at Uh with the troops of Akkad, and Nabonidus was defeated. At the same time the inhabitants of Akkad rose in rebellion. Soon after this battle, Gobryas, governor of Gutium, and the troops of Cyrus entered Babylon without a battle.

(2) The capture took place during a feast.

(3) The son of Nabonidus died or was slain.

There is no important difference of opinion with respect to a battle being fought prior to the capture of the city. There is very general agreement that such a battle did take place. The testimony is also strongly concurrent that the capture took place during a feast; and it is very noteworthy that this point, as well as the preceding one, was clearly indicated by the Prophet Jeremiah in the very roll which accompanied the captives to Babylon. It is worth while to quote a passage from this remarkable prophecy: "I laid nets for thee, and thou wast taken, O Babylon, when thou didst not expect." Evidently the city was so strongly fortified that the inhabitants believed it to be impregnable, and hence Herodotus speaks of the astonishment of the inhabitants at its capture. The Prophet Isaiah, also, in referring to the fall of the city, said that God would open before Cyrus the "two-leaved gates" and that he would "break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron." Now, these prophecies were literally fulfilled when the city was captured.

The third fact mentioned above needs to be specially emphasized. It must be remembered that the "chronicle," to which frequent reference has been made, is far from being perfect. If the last column had been preserved intact it is probable that the concluding portions of the narrative of Berosus would be vindicated. As it is, there is a striking agreement between the historian and the chronicle. They both place the capture of Babylon in the seventeenth year of the reign of Nabonidus; both refer to a preliminary battle in which the forces of Nabonidus were defeated by Cyrus; and both refer to the flight of Nabonidus and to his intrenching himself in or near Borsippa; Berosus mentioning Borsippa, which was in the close neighborhood of Babylon. There has been some difficulty in settling whether reference is made in the chronicle to the death of Nabonidus himself, for whom mourning was prescribed, or that of his wife, or son. Mr. Pinches, of the British Museum, regards the true reading of the doubtful passage as *u mar Sarri imât*—"and the son of the king died." Doctor Hagen suggests the shafel *ušma-at* instead of *ima-at* or *mita-at*, and this would justify the rendering—"and [Gobryas] slew the son of the king." Doctor Schrader is willing to accept Mr. Pinches' suggestion. If this view of the matter should be finally adopted the whole difficulty would be practically cleared up. As Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus and co-regent with his father, Daniel's account of the feast of Belshazzar and the death of the king is at once strikingly corroborated by the testimony of the tablets.

There are still some apparent contradictions. Both Herodotus and Berosus ascribe the capture of Babylon to Cyrus, while the chronicle says that Gobryas, with the troops of Cyrus, captured the city. But there need be no serious difficulty with respect to this matter. No doubt Cyrus directed the operations, and the fact that his troops are mentioned in the chronicle shows conclusively that, whether he was present or not, he was really the director of the operations which led to the final capture. According to Herodotus, I, chapters cxc and cxci, Cyrus having advanced upon Babylon, the Babylonians marched out of the city, and awaited him. Upon his approaching near the city, the Babylonians came into collision with his troops, were defeated in battle, and shut up within the city rampart. They had long foreseen the siege, and had taken precautions to meet it by the accumulation of provisions. For a time Cyrus was in considerable perplexity. At length he stationed the whole army, some at the point where the river enters the city, and the rest behind the city at the point where the river issues from it. He then gave orders to the army to enter the city whenever they saw that the river-bed had become fordable. Having made these dispositions and given these instructions, he himself retired with the noncombatant portion of his army. "Having arrived at the lake, Cyrus did to the river and the lake what the queen of the Babylonians (Nitocris) had done. By diverting the stream, by means of a canal, into the lake, which was at that time a marsh, he made the old river-bed fordable, when the river had subsided. When this subsidence had taken place, the Persians, who were posted for that express purpose, entered Babylon by the river-bed of the Euphrates, after it had retired to the depth of about the middle of a man's thigh. Had the Babylonians obtained previous information of, or had understood what Cyrus was doing, they would not have allowed the Persians to enter the city, but would have destroyed them utterly. For, having closed all the gates that open on the river, and having themselves mounted on the stone dams that lined the edges of the stream, they would have taken them [the Persians] like fishes in a weel. But as it was, the Persians came upon them unexpectedly. Owing to the size of the city, when, according to the report of the inhabitants, the distant portions of the city were captured, those of the Babylonians who occupied the center of the city did not realize that they were in the hands of the foe; but, as there happened to be a festival, were at this time dancing and enjoying themselves until they learnt the reality in grim earnest."

Now, while this account seems to differ in

some respects from that given by the cuneiform inscriptions, there is nothing in it, after all, which contradicts what the inscriptions distinctly say. It is true that they do not mention some of the facts related by Herodotus. But if we had the inscriptions intact, it is at least probable that they would corroborate the testimony of the Greek historian. Undoubtedly what Herodotus says not only sustains the main points of the account in Daniel, but also the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

The description of Belshazzar's feast in the Book of Daniel is as remarkable in its vividness as it is true to the facts of history. It has already been seen that the inhabitants of the city felt themselves perfectly secure against the attack of Cyrus. The great feast was, no doubt, planned by Belshazzar in order to inspire courage in the hearts of the people. It is quite possible that the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah may have been repeated at this particular time, and it was perhaps for this reason that Belshazzar caused the vessels of the sanctuary, which had been taken out of the Temple at Jerusalem, to be brought, so that the king, his princes, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. He wished to show his contempt for the God of the Jews whose prophets had spoken evil against Babylon. "In the same hour came forth finger's of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." At the sight of this Belshazzar was very much frightened, and cried aloud to bring the enchanters, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers, and, though he offered them the highest inducements, none of them could read the writing nor make known to the king the interpretation. Of course, this only increased his perplexity. At this moment the queen, probably his wife, or, as some believe, the wife of Nabonidus, and Belshazzar's mother, came into the banquet house and reminded the king of how Daniel had interpreted his grandfather's dream, and urged him to call Daniel that he might interpret the inscription on the wall. When Daniel came into the presence of the king he at once repudiated the gifts which the king offered, but agreed to read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation; and after telling Belshazzar that he had not humbled his heart, though he had abundant reason to do so, and had lifted up himself against the Lord of Heaven, and had desecrated the vessels of the holy sanctuary, he then proceeded to read the writing, which was MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. The interpretation he declared to be as follows: "God hath numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end; thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; thy kingdom is

divided and given to the Medes and Persians." It is further stated: "In that night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about three-score and two years old."

Such was the tragic end of the Chaldean dynasty, according to the Book of Daniel; and the story of the fall of the city, as related by Xenophon, in his "Cyropædia," instead of being romance as some have thought, turns out to be veritable history. According to him, a feast was held practically in harmony with the description given in the Book of Daniel. Meanwhile Gadatas and Gobryas, with Babylonian nobles whom Belshazzar had alienated from him, found an entrance into the city by the river-bed, which they had drained, and, coming to the palace gates, found these shut. The account then goes on as follows: "And they that were posted opposite to the guards, fell on them, as they were drinking, with a great deal of light around them, and used them immediately in a hostile manner. As soon as the noise and clamor began, they that were within, perceiving the disturbance, and the king commanding them to examine what the matter was, ran out, throwing open the gates. They that were with Gadatas, as soon as they saw the gates loose, broke in, pressing forward on the runways, and, dealing their blows amongst them, they came up to the king, and found him now in a standing posture, with his sword drawn. They that were with Gadatas and Gobryas, being many in number, mastered him; they likewise that were with him were killed; one holding up something before him, another flying and another defending himself with anything that he could meet with. . . . When day came, and they that guarded the castles perceived that the city was taken and the king dead, they gave up the castles."

It is possible that all the particulars that have now been given with respect to the fall of the city may not be fully substantiated, if further light should be thrown upon the subject; but it is believed that the summary presented is in harmony with the facts of the case, so far as these facts are at present revealed. But it is not needful to dwell longer on the *manner* of the capture. The fall of the city is the main point to be considered in connection with the exiles, for this was regarded by them as a necessity prior to their return to their native land. The great city that had made the nations of the earth drunken with her own wine had now fallen at a wine banquet. She who had been the "*hammer*" of God with which to break to pieces the wicked nations surrounding her, had now received punishment for her own sins, and that, too, under conditions distinctly foretold by the Prophet Jeremiah. The

inhabitants of Babylon "may roar like lions; they may growl like young lions, (yet) while they glow (with lust) I will prepare their drinking feasts, and will make them drunk that they may rejoice, and then sink into a perpetual sleep, never awaking, said Jehovah! I will drive them down like lambs to the slaughter house, like rams and he goats! How is Seshach"—that is, Babylou—"taken! How is the city that was the wonder of the whole earth made a prize! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!"

It must not be supposed that Babylon was completely destroyed by Cyrus. The prophecies concerning its fall do not necessarily imply this, though they do imply its final destruction in the most radical sense. Twenty years after its capture by Cyrus it was stormed by Darius Hystaspes, and at this time it received more damage than at the time of its capture by Cyrus. And it is probable that after this it went gradually into decay, though its complete destruction did not come for many years afterward. In any case it is certain that the predictions of the prophets concerning its final ruin and the desolation which was to follow furnish a remarkable example of the trustworthiness of such "forward-historians" as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. The last said little, but what he did say is in perfect harmony with the other two prophets; and it is worth while to consider how far this remarkable fulfillment of prophecy should be taken into account when we are weighing the value of historical descriptions and the incomplete and unsatisfactory statements of the tablets. We have no means of verifying all the statements of ancient historians, and the fragmentary testimony of the tablets cannot be implicitly trusted. But it is possible to compare the statements of the prophets with the actual ruins of Babylon, as they have existed since its final destruction, and as they appear at the present time. It is, therefore, proposed to close this chapter by pointing out some of the fulfillments of the prophecies concerning the destruction of the city as a proof of the complete trustworthiness of Scriptural testimony.

(1) The first thing that will strike the reader of the prophecies is the apparent contradiction which exists between two sets of statements, one of which ascribes the desolation of Babylon to the action of water, while the other speaks of the water as "dried up" and the site of the city "cursed with drought and barrenness." Isaiah's prophecies speak of the water, while Jeremiah's speak of the barrenness. The facts in regard to the ruins of the city make both statements perfectly correct. Travelers have noticed both of these aspects. The neglect of the embankments and canals

which were formerly a defense to the city has exposed a great part of the site of Babylon to the continual invasion of floods from the Euphrates, and when these floods recede the water left in the lower grounds stagnates, leaving large tracts, once included within the walls of the city, covered with lakes, pools, and marshes. It is likewise true that the vast mounds which cover the ancient site literally fulfill the predictions of Jeremiah. Ker Porter says: "The whole surface of the mounds appears to the eye nothing but *vast, irregular hills of earth*, mixed with fragments of brick, pottery, vitrifications, mortar, bitumen, etc., while the foot at every step sinks into the *loose dust and rubbish*." And again: "*Every spot of ground in sight was totally barren*, and on several tracts appeared the common marks of former building. It is an old adage that 'where a curse has fallen grass will never grow.' In like manner *the decomposing materials of a Babylonian structure doom the earth on which they perish to an everlasting sterility*." Sir Austen Layard says: "On all sides fragments of glass, marble, pottery and inscribed bricks are mingled with *that peculiar nitrous and blanched soil* which, bred from the remains of ancient habitations, checks or destroys vegetation, and *renders the site of Babylon a naked and hideous waste*." So it will be seen that, instead of the prophets contradicting each other, their testimony is altogether strongly corroborative.

(2) The prophets emphasize the fact of the absolute loss of inhabitants. The city was to be entirely depopulated. This could scarcely be believed to have been fulfilled were not the testimony overwhelmingly conclusive. It is not generally true of such cities as Babylon that their sites are entirely abandoned by human beings. Many of the ancient cities that have been destroyed have been either rebuilt or the sites are still occupied by a few residents, however imperfectly their abodes represent the former splendor. Not so of Babylon. It soon became, and has continued to be, an absolute desert. Strabo, writing in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, described the site of the city as a "great solitude," while Jerome says that the Persian kings had made it into one of their "paradises," or hunting parks. Its ruins furnished materials for building Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and other cities. Modern travelers bear practically the same testimony. "All around is a blank waste," is a summary of what these travelers say. Isaiah says, "neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there"; and so far as the mass of ruins, which now mark the ancient site, is concerned, this has also been literally fulfilled.

(3) The prophecies note the fact, with a great deal of precision and emphasis, that the foundations of Babylon were to fall, and her lofty and broad walls were to be thrown down; and furthermore, that she was not to present the appearance of a ruined city at all, but to "become heaps" or mounds. All travelers agree that this is the actual state of the ruins as they now exist. These ruins are referred to as "shapeless heaps of rubbish," "immense tumuli," while the walls have disappeared entirely. This seems almost incredible in view of the character of the city as it existed before its capture, and yet there can be no doubt about the present appearance of the ancient site. Surely this fact alone is sufficient to establish the trustworthiness of the prophecies concerning the fate of Babylon. Both Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied that the "wild beasts of the desert shall lie there." Mr. Rich says "there are many dens of wild beasts in various parts, in one of which I found the bones of sheep and other animals, and perceived a strong smell like that of a lion," while Ker Porter not only found the abodes of jackals and other wild animals, but actually saw through his glass several lions on the summit of the great mound at Bir Simroud, and afterward found their footprints in the soft soil of the desert at its base.

The complete obliteration of Babylon has a certain significance when studied in connection with the Exile. It is suggestive to notice the fact that the nations that have oppressed God's chosen people have always received punishment in due time. Although Babylon was made the instrument for chastising the Jews, when the period of this chastisement came to an end, the hand which inflicted it was paralyzed, and the great city, in which God's people were oppressed, had at last to pay the penalty in a destruction which amounted to annihilation. Nothing could more emphatically testify to God's love for his own and his hatred of those who oppress them.

The fate of Babylon also clearly indicates that God does not approve of evil in order that good may come. Undoubtedly one object of the Captivity was to benefit the exiles; to make them better men and women; and to prepare them for the new society which the prophets pointed out would follow the return to Judea. At the same time, God did not approve of the oppressors, either by carrying away his people into captivity or in treating them unkindly while they were in Babylonia. This suggests a marked feature in God's dealings with men. The crucifixion of Christ was a great blessing to the world, but the Divine Father could not look with complacency upon those who took the life of his Son. Evil may be overruled for good, and when God is dealing with it, this is

sure to be the case; but it is evil all the same, no matter what the end may be. It is precisely this wonderful fact which makes a directing providence such a consolation to all who heartily believe in such direction. Hence "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

There is still another important matter, suggested by the fall of Babylon, in its relation to the Jews. Not only has the city of Babylon been literally swept from the earth, but the people who inhabited Babylonia, over whom the great sultans reigned during the Exile, have

practically lost their identity among the people of earth. Not so of the Jews. Though their national existence has been broken up, and though they have been scattered throughout the world, they have maintained their identity as a distinct people wherever their lot has been cast. What is the meaning of this? Surely it cannot be explained on any other hypothesis than that God means them to be a perpetual monument, a living testimony, and a striking emphasis of the promises which he has made concerning his people, both as regards themselves and as regards the nations which are to be blessed through them.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEW MASTERS AND NEW TRIUMPHS.

WHO was Darius the Mede? This question suggests one of the difficult problems of history. There is no doubt about the fact that Cyrus was the real conqueror of Babylon. But it is also true that with him properly begins the Persian dynasty. At the same time there are reasons for believing that the first year of his reign actually begins two years after the capture of Babylon. This would at once explain how two years of the Captivity could be accounted for, which on any other hypothesis cannot easily be made to correspond with the seventy years which, according to prophecy, should be the duration of the Exile. When, however, we reckon two years for the reign of Darius the Mede, before the reign of Cyrus properly begins, then a difficulty that has been long felt at once vanishes.

Several theories have been advanced in order to explain who Darius the Mede was. Some very able writers have recently identified him as Darius the son of Hystaspes. But there are many reasons why this view cannot be sustained. We know the entire descent of Darius the son of Hystaspes, and there are very strong evidences that he was of pure Persian race and had not a drop of Median blood in his veins. Again, it has been thought by some that the word *Darius* is the name of an officer, such as governor, rather than a proper name, and these identify Darius the Mede with Gobryas, who, the tablets declare, was made governor of Babylon after its capture. But there are objections to this view which are far greater than the difficulties it overcomes; consequently it must be rejected without much ceremony.

A few well established facts may help us to get at the truth of this matter. It is a fact that Gobryas held the position of governor for only a short time; it is also a fact that Cyrus was much occupied with his campaigns in other

quarters, and was probably unable to give attention, for two years at least, to civil affairs at Babylon. It is further a fact, as stated by Herodotus, as well as by the inscriptions, that Astyages was conquered by Cyrus in the very beginning of the latter's great career. But Xenophon tells us that Astyages was succeeded by his son Cyaxares, who sent for Cyrus to help him repel a threatened invasion of the Babylonians. Cyrus accepted this proffered alliance. It must also be noticed that the success of Cyrus in conquering Astyages was greatly facilitated by a revolt of the latter's own subjects against him and in favor of Cyrus. This at once made Cyrus the friend of the Medians, and more readily disposed him to form an alliance with Cyaxares. Hence, he did not treat Media as a conquered country, and probably arranged for the succession of Cyaxares, though from Xenophon's account it is evident that the dominion of Cyaxares over the Medes was largely nominal. The people gave their affection to Cyrus rather than to Cyaxares, and this may have led Cyrus to make another disposition of his Median ally by appointing him king over Babylon.

This view is strengthened by the statement of Xenophon that Cyrus told Cyaxares that "a house and a dominion awaited him at Babylon." Xenophon further states that Cyaxares gave his daughter in marriage to Cyrus with the succession to the Median throne, as Cyaxares had no son. It is well known that for some reason or other Cyrus was anxious to conciliate both the Medes and Babylonians, and was fond of appointing Medes to high office. It is, therefore, highly probable that Cyaxares the Mede, the son of Astyages, was the Darius who "took the kingdom" and "was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans," according to Daniel. Both of these expressions clearly indicate that some

other than Cyrus occupied the throne. Evidently Darius the Mede "received" or "took" the kingdom *from the hands of another*, or was made king by Cyrus. This view of the matter is more or less sustained by Josephus, Prideaux, Hales, Hengstenberg, Von Lengerke, and others. It is true that Herodotus declares that Astyages had no male offspring, but is it not possible that the Greek historian confounds Astyages with his son Cyaxares, who, according to Xenophon, had no male offspring?

Some have thought that Darius was not Cyaxares, but his son, and therefore the grandson of Astyages and first cousin to Cyrus. The name Cyaxares corresponds to *Ahasuerus* and at once makes intelligible the statement in Daniel that Darius was the son of Ahasuerus. As Cyrus was about sixty years of age at the taking of Babylon, it is probable his cousin was sixty-two, and this again corresponds to the Biblical record. But if Astyages was alive when Darius "took the kingdom," he would have been more than a hundred years old. As Cyrus was born in 599 B. C., Darius may have been born in 600 B. C., and this would make the former sixty-one and the latter sixty-two, in 538 B. C. This view harmonizes very well with all the known facts, if we except the statements of Herodotus and Xenophon, the former declaring that Astyages had no son, while the latter says Cyaxares had none.

In any case it seems fairly certain that Darius the Mede was appointed by Cyrus to govern Babylon precisely as he appointed Nabonidus governor of the country of Carmania. Cyrus did not assume the position of sole ruler at Babylon until after the two-years' reign of Darius, and this view is strongly supported by the Book of Daniel, which says: "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian"; and also by the testimony of Fr. Lenormant, who, referring to the two-years' reign of Darius, says: "I have found an indication of it in this significant fact, that, on the Babylonian and Chaldean contracts in cuneiform writing, Cyrus is designated king of Babylon, king of the nations, only from the third year, counted from the capture of the city. In the contracts of the first and second years after the capture, he is called only 'King of the Nations'." This seems to clearly imply that someone else besides Cyrus was king of Babylon for two years after the fall of the city, and the Book of Daniel fills this space with "Darius the Mede."

But be this as it may, and let Darius the Mede be identified with whomsoever we wish, the facts stated in the Book of Daniel have not been shaken by either ancient historians or recent discoveries. The latter have tended to confirm the statements of Scripture, and this

has been so much the case, it is now believed that if we had the unbroken testimony of the tablets we should have a full and satisfactory confirmation of all the facts stated in the Book of Daniel; and it is hoped that the activity just now displayed in making excavations in Babylonia will bring to light the testimony which is still wanting.

At the same time it should be distinctly understood that there are good reasons for trusting the Book of Daniel rather than either the historians or the tablets. It has already been shown that there is solid evidence why the book should occupy the canonical position it does. Indeed, it is very difficult to understand why Herodotus, or even the tablets, should be trusted more than a book which contains all the internal evidences of truth, and which must have been written near the time the events took place which are recorded in it. But notwithstanding this fact, there are those who are ready to believe the fragmentary testimony of a broken cylinder, whose age and authorship are both somewhat doubtful, in preference to a book which has been preserved in the sacred archives of a people which, though frequently scattered, have never lost their distinct identity. The miracle of the Jewish people has not had its due weight in determining the authority of the documents which have come down to us through them. We have not yet learned the full force of the apostle's language when he tells us in the letter to the Romans that the Jews had intrusted to them the "Oracles of God."

Of all the exiles at Babylon, Daniel was undoubtedly the most distinguished. Others occupied important places among the Jews themselves, but Daniel was more or less prominently associated with the Babylonian government. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar the great seer passes out of sight until the fatal night of Belshazzar's feast, when he suddenly comes to the front again. But it was under Darius the Mede that Daniel's true character shone out in its most distinguishing light.

He was probably born about 620 B. C., in the reign of Josiah, and as he was carried away to Babylon in 605 B. C. he was over fourteen years old when he reached the great city where he was to spend the remainder of his days. He must have been a remarkable youth, for he was one of those who were selected for the king's service, and, as the qualifications for this service required nobility, and beauty, skill in wisdom, cunning in knowledge, understanding of science, and power to stand physical and intellectual strain, he must have been a very promising lad to meet all these requirements. He was at once put into training in order that he might learn the Chaldean language and thus

become familiar with the culture which at that time was a marked feature of the Babylonian civilization.

This special training lasted three years, and we may be sure that Daniel made rapid progress under his new masters. At the very start he showed his independence, and also his devotion to his Jewish traditions, by refusing to eat the prescribed allowance for such students, consisting of bread, meats, fruits, fish, game, wines, etc. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore, he requested of the prince of eunuchs that he might not defile himself." The language of Daniel was most courteous, but it was firm, and after proving that he could live on herbs and water, and make a better appearance than those who used the king's diet, it was decided to let the youth have his way.

This glimpse at the early life of Daniel will help to prepare us for the great test to which he was subjected under the reign of Darius the Mede. It will be remembered that on the accession of Darius the administration of the kingdom was committed to 120 satraps, or subordinate governors; and that over these were appointed three superior presidents of whom Daniel was one. It must be noted, also, that on account of the excellent spirit which was in Daniel he soon became distinguished above the other presidents, and this was so much the case that the "king thought to set him over the whole realm." This at once excited the envy of the other presidents and satraps, who sought occasion against Daniel that they might destroy his power with the king. Daniel's justice interfered with their dishonesty, and they were, therefore, quite anxious to have him disgraced or removed out of their way.

It is probable that they were also influenced by the fact that he was a foreigner, and, worse than all, a captive, whose place was servitude rather than the wearing of distinguished honors. But whatever the controlling motive of his enemies may have been, they determined to get rid of him, and to do this without any respect to the justice of the means employed. But this is the way of envy or spite. First of all, they sought to find fault with the administration of public affairs, but they could not place their finger upon a single thing wherein they could accuse him with respect to the discharge of his official duties; and this is the highest possible compliment which could be paid to Daniel's administration. Nevertheless, they knew their man, and were therefore not long in selecting a point from which to attack him. Consequently, they said, "we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of

his God. They immediately concentrated all their efforts at this point, and finally persuaded the king to sign a decree that whoever should ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save the king himself, should be cast into the den of lions. "And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem;) and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

That is precisely what his enemies expected Daniel would do, and they therefore felt confident that their device had succeeded, and no doubt exulted accordingly. But when Daniel's conduct was made known to the king, he "was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he labored until the going down of the sun to rescue him." However, the king's intercession was all in vain, as the law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed; consequently the king commanded that Daniel should be cast into the den of lions, though he seems to have thought that in some way Daniel's God would deliver him. A stone was laid upon the mouth of the den, and sealed with the king's own signet, and that of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. It is evident from these precautions that Darius was determined that Daniel should have fair play in the matter; that his accusers should not have even the semblance of an excuse, if Daniel's life was preserved.

After everything had been made secure the king went to his palace and passed a sleepless night in fasting, and when the morning came he went early in haste to the den of lions and cried with a lamentable voice, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God."¹

The result of this trial was not only a triumph for Daniel and an overthrow of his enemies, but, like all unwavering trust in God, the end was the prosperity of Daniel and the honor of the God whom he worshiped. The king published a decree, commanding that all

¹ Daniel vi, 20-25 (Revised Version).

men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, while the record closes with the suggestive statement that "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Before dismissing this man of God it may be well to summarize a few of his most prominent characteristics:

(1) He never separated his own life from the God whom he worshipped. He was religious in the best sense. In all the affairs with which he was identified he always reckoned with the divine factor in human history. This made his character doubly strong. In a word, it united human and divine strength in all that Daniel undertook to do.

(2) He was always true to his honest convictions. This of itself is almost an unconquerable force in any character. With Daniel the only question was, What is duty? It was not his to ask the reason why; wherever duty led him he unhesitatingly followed. He evidently studied faithfully the law of God, and whatever that enjoined upon him, he accepted without the slightest regard to consequences.

(3) His was a life of faith; he endured because he believed the promises. He looked forward to the redemption of Israel from the Exile, and also to their redemption through the coming Messiah. In short, he believed in the final triumph of all who trusted in God, even though that triumph must be preceded by trials of the severest kind. In this he illustrated what is a common principle in every life. To believe in victory is victory half won, but to doubt is to court defeat.

It is no part of this work to enter into an exposition of the remarkable prophecies of Daniel. Reference has already been made to his dreams and visions, and it is now only needful to emphasize the wonderful precision with which he foreshadowed the most important historic events from the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede until the end of the Christian dispensation. Of course, the whole of this period has not yet passed, but the verifications of Daniel's prophecies, with respect to the return of the Jews, their history up to the coming of Christ, the death of the Messiah and the subsequent fortunes of the Church, down to the present time, inspire the fullest confidence. That which is yet to come, as predicted by Daniel, will surely happen, just as he foretold it.

The prophecy of the 70 weeks has long been a debating ground for expositors, but there is a very general agreement that they represent 490 years, reaching to the time when the Messiah was to be rejected and cut off. The chief difficulty has always been to agree upon a definite starting point. But reckoning from the decree

of Artaxerxes,¹ in 7 weeks or 49 years, Jerusalem would be rebuilt; in 62 weeks, 434 years, the Messiah would begin his ministry; and in the middle of one week, or three and one-half years, he would be cut off. There are other ways of computing this time which may be more satisfactory to the reader, but, whatever may be the method adopted, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the coming of Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, and the spread of the Messiah's kingdom are embraced in the scope of Daniel's prophecies.

It must not be forgotten, however, that the whole period embraced in Daniel's prophecies has not yet passed, and it may be we shall be able to recast some of our reckonings when we have the light of all the facts before us; undoubtedly some of the difficulties which are now in the way will then be removed. Nevertheless, the parallel historic facts are already sufficiently clear to show the great value of Daniel's prophecies in demonstrating the presence of the divine factor in all the affairs of human history. At the same time, the very difficulties which exist with regard to past events should make us cautious with respect to what is yet to come to pass. Surely there is no room for dogmatism concerning the future of Daniel's prophecies. Indeed, the main object of prophecy is to confirm divine testimony, and consequently its real value is retrospective rather than prospective. History is prophecy teaching by example, but it is more than this; it is a practical demonstration of the truthfulness and fidelity of God with respect to all his promises; and in no part of history is this great purpose more distinctly and emphatically shown than in the prophecies of Daniel and the fortunes of the Jewish people.

The truthfulness of prophecy is unmistakably illustrated in the case of Cyrus. In Isaiah, forty-fourth and forty-fifth chapters, the conqueror of Babylon is mentioned by name as God's shepherd who would perform all his pleasure, even to proclaiming that Jerusalem should be rebuilt and the foundations of the Temple be laid. Cyrus is also called the Lord's anointed, whose right hand the Lord holds to "subdue nations before him" and to "loose the loins of kings; to open the doors before him and the gates shall not be shut," etc. This, it must be confessed, is very definite prophecy, and, as if to make some explanation for this definiteness, the Lord goes on to say, "for Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen, I have called thee by thy name: I have summoned thee, though thou has not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else; beside

¹ Ezra vii, 8-11.

me there is no God; I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord and there is none else."

This language is so remarkable that some modern critics have assigned this portion of Isaiah to a period after the fall of Babylon. These writers contend that the naming of Cyrus, and, indeed, the whole description as to his mission is so precise and so perfectly in harmony with the facts of history that whoever made the record must have done so after the facts had transpired. But all such criticism only shows the great value of the prophet's predictions. And there is nothing peculiar in this case except the naming of Cyrus, and, as if anticipating just such criticisms as have been made on this passage, the Lord gives a most reasonable explanation of the whole matter. But in any case it is absurd to find fault with this portion of Isaiah on account of the definite precision with which he predicts future events. The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as well as others, use the same definite style, and yet no one supposes that their records were written long after the events had transpired. But the passages in Isaiah are written in the form of prophecy, and have a prospective bearing. The style is descriptive of events yet to come and not of events which have already happened.

It is probable, also, that this very prophecy of Isaiah was intended to be a comfort to the exiles during their captivity. They would not only feel assured that the time of their deliverance would come at the end of the seventy years, but the moment they would hear of the victories of Cyrus over Croesus and the dethronement of Astyages, the Median king, they would feel confident that their deliverer was nigh. Doubtless this portion of Isaiah was frequently read in the meeting places of the captives, where the prophecies of Jeremiah were also read to comfort the waiting exiles. Probably Ezekiel and Daniel added their own testimony to the fact that the prophecy of Isaiah would certainly be fulfilled at the end of the seventy years. And though Ezekiel died before Cyrus began his conquering march toward Babylon, Daniel still lived to identify the new power which was rising in the northeast, with the Cyrus who had been named in Isaiah. And this view is emphasized when we remember that the main consolation of the captives was the teaching of the prophets. Though they still possessed the law, it was really of little value while they were in exile. It required the environment for which it was intended in order to make it effective. In short, the law was for their national existence and not for the period of exile. This fact made the

teaching of the prophets most important to the Jews while they were separated from their native land.

It is not at all improbable that even Cyrus was made familiar with the prophecy in Isaiah concerning him, and this may have had considerable influence upon him in finally determining his course with respect to the captives. Indeed, it may have encouraged him to make the invasion he did, and may have even helped him in his capture of the city, since the prophecy clearly points to the very means by which it was finally taken. But, however this may have been, it is very clear that the whole course of Cyrus shows that he was a wise ruler as well as a great conqueror, and there is certainly no reason why we should doubt that as God's instrument to carry out a great purpose he was divinely guided with respect to whatever was necessary to its accomplishment. In any case it is certain that what we know of him justifies us in ascribing to him the following characteristics:

(1) He was a brave and skillful general. He knew not only how to strike but when to strike.

(2) He was an able statesman. He made a wise use of his victories. We have already seen how he conciliated Media by giving them a ruler of their own blood, and how he offered this ruler help when it was needed. We have seen, also, how either this same ruler or his son was made king of Babylon after the city was captured. This last was a stroke of policy which marks a high degree of statesmanship. Media and Babylonia were practically one under the Chaldean kings, and it was, therefore, an act of conciliation on the part of Cyrus to give a ruler to Babylon who was one of their own people.

(3) Cyrus fully recognized religion as a most important factor in human affairs. He was probably deeply religious himself, and it is almost certain that in his heart of hearts he was a monotheist, and really believed in the true God, though for prudential, political reasons he recognized the polytheism of the nations with which he had to deal. Probably his religious views were considerably confused by the numerous systems with which he came in contact; but he was, at least, tolerant of all, and in this respect he possessed much of the modern spirit as regards religious liberty. Nabonidus had made a great tactical mistake in having the local deities removed to Babylon, where Merodach was made chief. This gave offense to all the provincial towns, and was no doubt one reason why many nobles and other citizens of Babylonia joined Cyrus in his attack upon the city. One of the first acts of the conqueror was to restore these deities to their

original localities and to give the people the privilege of worshiping according to the dictates of their own consciences.

It must be remembered that Cyrus was a foreigner. He was not even a Persian, but an Elamite, and was king of Elam before he was king of Persia. Canon Driver and others think that the reference in Daniel to Cyrus as a Persian proves the late composition of the book. It is not easy to see how this is true. If to call Cyrus a Persian was a mistake, the mistake is much easier to account for if made at a time when the Persian influence was dominant than if made during the Maccabean period. However, no mistake was made. It was altogether proper to speak of Cyrus the Persian, when referring to him as king, for the reason that he it was who introduced the Persian dynasty to Babylon.

But it is with the proclamation of Cyrus that we are concerned at present. This included the Jews as well as others who at different times had been settled in Babylonia from other

countries; and to the Jewish exiles he granted special privileges. His proclamation was issued during the first year of his reign, which was the third year after the capture of Babylon. We have already seen that Darius the Mede reigned two years before Cyrus began to exercise kingly authority over Babylon.

The act of Cyrus in granting the Jewish captives the great privileges set forth in his proclamation was one of noble generosity, no matter how much it may have been a political movement when considered simply from the standpoint of statesmanship. But it may be questioned whether the king was influenced by any other consideration than a willingness to carry out what he believed to be the will of Jehovah. In any case it is highly probable that he was largely influenced by Daniel in the wording of the great proclamation which he published with respect to the captives. It is to be hoped that this very proclamation may yet be found among the buried treasures of Babylonia.

CHAPTER IX.

HOME AGAIN.

IT must be remembered that there were other colonies in the Persian empire besides the Jewish. The kings of Babylon had followed the policy of removing from the conquered towns and districts many of the inhabitants to desolated regions, or to the vast area included within the walls of Babylon. At the time of the invasion of Cyrus it is probable that these foreign elements had become a considerable power throughout the empire, and being somewhat disaffected toward the central government, Cyrus had not much difficulty in securing the aid of these elements in his attack upon Babylon. This fact may account for the general character of his proclamation; but it does not account for the special privileges which were granted to the Jewish exiles. We have already seen that he was influenced by the Jewish prophets, and especially by Daniel, in his generous treatment of the Israelites; for it must not be forgotten that his proclamation embraced all who had been carried away from Samaria as well as from Judea; and, as has already been intimated in a former chapter, there can be little doubt about the fact that many of the ten tribes were included in the number who set out for Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of Cyrus over Babylon. After the Return the new nation was called Jews, but the tribal distinctions entirely disappeared except in their pedigrees.

The first great band who availed themselves of the privileges granted in the decree of Cyrus was led by Sheshbazzar, who is probably the same as Zerubbabel. This identification has been disputed by some who think that two distinct names would not be used in the same connection to refer to the same person without some explanation. But this difficulty is not serious when it is understood that the narrative in the Book of Ezra is not in the form of a homogeneous history. It must be remembered, also, that it was a common habit in those days to give two or three names to the same person, and this was specially true of captives in Babylon. However, if the two names do represent different persons we must suppose that Sheshbazzar's position was only temporary and that he was quickly succeeded by Zerubbabel. Sheshbazzar is called the Prince of Judah, and he seems to correspond to the description given of Zerubbabel.

The whole number of the congregation accompanying Zerubbabel was 42,360, besides 7,337 menservants and 200 singing men and singing women. Their horses were 736; their mules, 245; camels, 435; their asses, 6,720. Among the chief men were Joshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Bilsham, Mispar, Bigrai, Rehum, and Baanah. It is rather remarkable that the numbers are so specifically given, but there was no doubt a good reason for this. It enables us to compare the number of those who

returned with the number that had been carried away in the four deportations. But the number that returned at this time was small when compared with those who still remained in Babylonia. The enumeration includes the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin with the priests and Levites.

They did not return empty-handed. Their neighbors made them presents and encouraged them to take up their long and arduous march to the land of their fathers. Many freewill offerings were also made for the rebuilding of the Temple, while Cyrus commanded his treasurer, Mithredath, to deliver the sacred vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away, to the number of 5,400.

It is worth while to notice two very suggestive things connected with the Return. The first is the fact that the people go out of Babylon laden with the treasures of the country very much as they went out of Egypt with the treasures of that country. It is also significant that the name of the high priest who led the exiles from Babylon is the same as that of Joshua who led the Israelites into the land of Canaan. The same name is applied to Christ, who is our Joshua or Jesus to save us from sin, to lead us to the heavenly Canaan, and to the new Jerusalem, the city of the Living God.

We have no record of the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem. The whole band consisted of about fifty thousand souls, under the command of Zerubbabel, a grandson of Jehoiakim, who was appointed governor of Judea. We cannot doubt that the journey was attended by many hardships, but all these were cheerfully endured by the now chastened and hopeful exiles. It is thought that the eighty-fourth Psalm is a description of their longing desire to behold the house of God, notwithstanding all the hardships of the way.

One of the conditions of the Return, as stipulated in the decree of Cyrus, was that the Temple at Jerusalem should be rebuilt. It must be remembered that "the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia," to make the proclamation which gave the exiles the right to return to Judea, and we may be sure, therefore, that the provision about rebuilding the Temple was a divine inspiration, probably coming to Cyrus through Daniel, who no doubt had considerable to do in wording the decree of the Persian king. But in any case the rebuilding of the Temple was necessary to the new commonwealth which was about to be established. The kingdom, which came to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem, was never to be restored until Shiloh should come, and then only in the spiritual sense. It was never altogether popular with the people, and was no necessary part of the

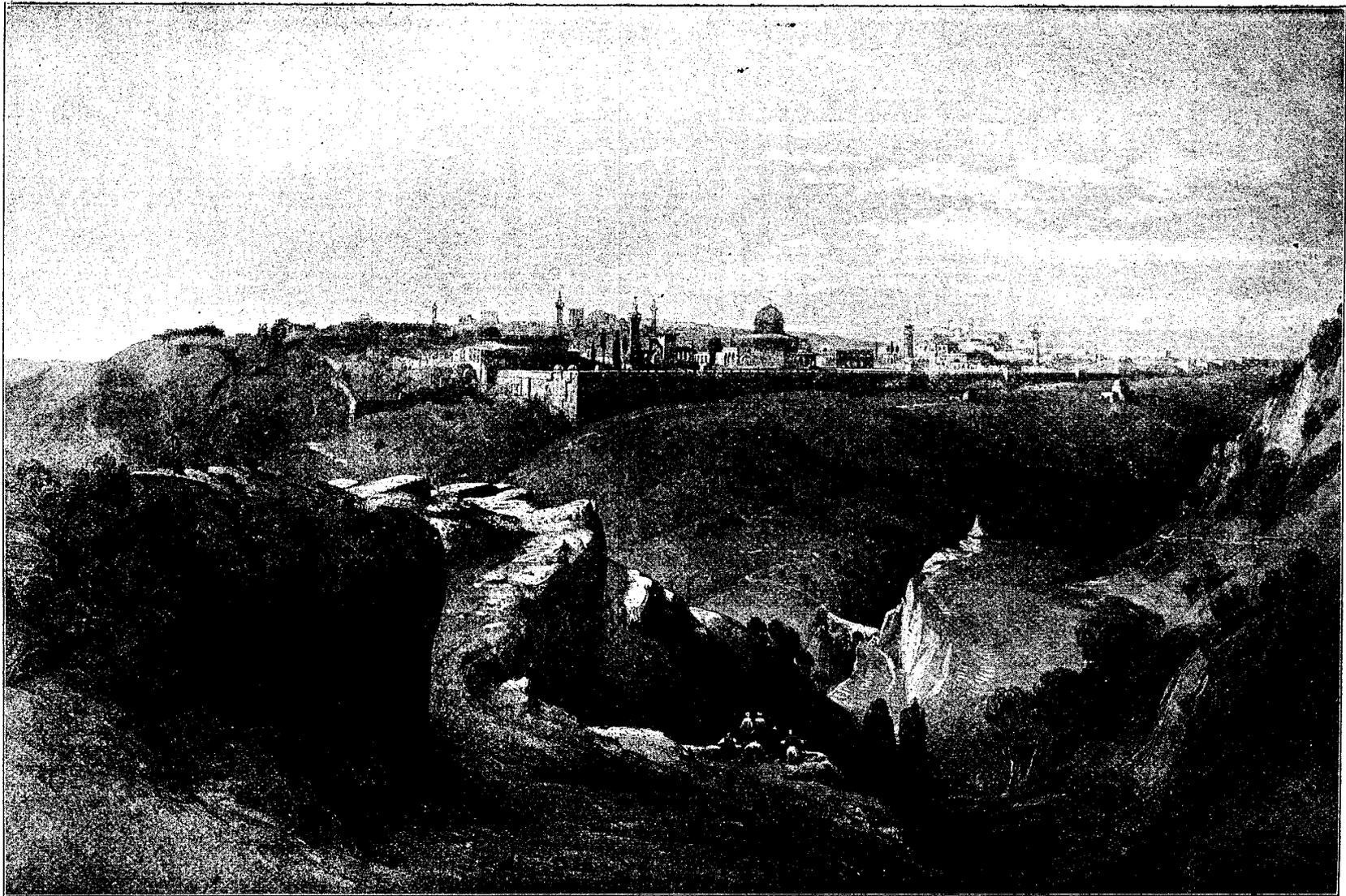
Mosaic legislation. The divine model was a theocracy, and this is what the Jews practically return to after the Captivity. During their exile they had kept up their worship in their synagogues, but they needed the Temple to nationalize their religious life, as well as to provide for that homogeneity of worship which is always essential in a national religion.

The first act of the Jews, after their return, was to rebuild the altar of burnt offering, and this was speedily followed by the laying of the foundations of the Temple. The latter took place probably in 534 B. C., or the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem. This account of laying the foundations of the Temple has been regarded by some writers as unhistorical, on the ground that the beginning of the work on the Temple is spoken of in Ezra v, 2, as taking place in the second year of the reign of Darius the son of Hystaspes, and that this view of the matter is practically sustained by the prophet Haggai who assigns the laying of the foundation of the Temple to the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month in the second year of King Darius. It is furthermore pointed out that the governors in their letter¹ speak as if the work had been carried on without any special interruption.

There is nothing, however, in these apparent contradictions which cannot be readily explained. For instance, there is nothing in the expression "began to build," which necessarily contradicts the statements already made with respect to laying the foundations of the Temple in 534 B. C. As the work was stopped for some years, the phrase "began to build" is fitly enough used to express what took place in the second year of King Darius. Evidently the language of Haggai has not been understood. The date which he gives is the date of his utterance, and from that time he refers back to the laying of the foundations of the Temple. The statement of the governors was almost certainly made from information received by them from the enemies of the Jews, and they probably did not take the trouble to correct the impression these enemies made. In any case there is no sufficient evidence to throw the least doubt upon the statement that the work was begun by Sheshbazzar in the reign of Cyrus, that it was for a time hindered by the bitter opposition of the Samaritans, and that it was finally resumed under the reign of Darius and brought to completion.

The laying of the foundations of the Temple was an occasion of great solemnity. There was the sound of trumpets and also the chorus of the sons of Asaph, "praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah because he is good, for his mercy

¹ Ezra v, 16.



DAVID ROBERTS.

JERUSALEM FROM THE ROAD TO BETHANY.

endureth forever towards Israel." But the joy of this occasion did not last long. The descendants of the colonists, who had been settled in Samaria by Esar-haddon, were anxious to form an alliance with the Jews, probably because they claimed kinship with them, or that such an alliance would be beneficial to them. They also knew that the Jews were especially favored by Cyrus, and this might make the alliance desirable. The Samaritans may have worshiped the true God, but they also "served their graven images." They claimed that they had worshiped Jehovah since the days of Esar-haddon, and it was on this ground especially that they offered to assist in rebuilding the Temple. The Jews indignantly refused to allow these semi-idolators and "adversaries" to have any part in a work which was regarded as intensely religious in its nature. They had been charged with a great duty, and their very existence, as a commonwealth, would depend upon their faithfully performing this duty. A mere political alliance might have been regarded with more favor, but it was impossible for them to allow the Samaritans to participate in the building of a temple to Jehovah.

This refusal enraged the Samaritans, who, by hired influence at court and constant opposition at home, finally succeeded in arresting the work, greatly to the discouragement of the returned exiles, whose fondest hopes were blighted when they learned that the work had to be suspended. To some it has appeared singular that Cyrus did not enforce his decree, but his wars in Asia at this time were absorbing his attention so much that he gave little or no thought to the returned captives at Jerusalem. Neither did Cambyses, his son and successor, do anything to enforce the decree of his father. The reign of Pseudo-Smerdis was short, but he gave a willing ear to the representations of the Samaritans wherein they charged that Jerusalem had been destroyed for its continued rebellions. And if we identify Pseudo-Smerdis with Artaxerxes,¹ it is evident that the decree which completely stopped the work was issued during his reign of seven months. Darius Hystaspes succeeded Pseudo-Smerdis, ascending the throne 522 B. C. Two years afterward, through the influence of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, a new enthusiasm was kindled in the interests of the completion of the Temple. The work was resumed in 520 B. C., and to the appeals of the prophets mentioned the people responded with alacrity and recommenced the work with great vigor. The Persian officials in the country west of the Euphrates made no objection to the work. Meantime an appeal was made to King Darius to search for the

edict of Cyrus. This search was ordered, and the edict was found at Ecbatana, one of the cities where the Persian kings resided. As soon as this edict was found, Darius gave orders that the building of the Temple should proceed; at the same time he gave assurance of State assistance, both for the construction of the Temple and the maintenance of sacrifice. The Temple was completed and the dedication took place in 516 B. C., during the sixth year of Darius Hystaspes, or about eighteen years after the foundation of the Temple was laid.

Some have thought the work was stopped fifteen years, others that the time was only nine years. But if we identify Pseudo-Smerdis with the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv, 7, then it is evident that only about three years elapsed from the issue of his decree, by which the work was completely stopped, until it was resumed again during the reign of his successor. Doubtless very little was accomplished for several years prior to the issuing of the royal decree of Artaxerxes, but it seems clear that the date of the complete stopping of the work must be fixed during the year 522 B. C. As the work of Ezra does not attempt to follow Persian history, it presents some chronological difficulties; but there is certainly no need to conclude that there is any such difficulty in the case under consideration. The only real difficulty is to determine what Persian kings are referred to in the sixth and seventh verses of the fourth chapter of Ezra. If Ahasuerus¹ be identified with Cambyses, then Gomates, or Pseudo-Smerdis, must be Artaxerxes.²

There is another way out of the difficulty which arises from the introduction of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. These two names must be identified with Xerxes, who ascended the Persian throne in 485 B. C., and Artaxerxes I.—the Latin Longimanus. If this view be accepted most of the fourth chapter of Ezra must be regarded as chronologically out of place. This is supposed to have happened because the writer was aiming to give a connected account of the opposition to the Jews from their return to the time of the completion of the wall by Nehemiah. This view is supported by the fact that, in the letter written to Artaxerxes, reference is made to building the city, finishing the wall, and repairing the foundations, while no reference at all is made to the building of the Temple, and for the reason that the Temple had been completed many years before. This view compels a severance in sequence between the sixth and twenty-fourth verses of the fourth chapter of Ezra.

No matter which view may be taken there is a certain amount of confusion which must nec-

¹ Ezra iv, 7.

¹ Ezra iv, 6. ² Ezra iv, 7.

essarily be encountered. If the writer of Ezra had attempted to give us an orderly succession of Persian kings there would probably be no difficulty about the matter; but as he refers to these kings only so far as they are related to certain facts in Jewish history, it is not always easy to make his kings correspond to the kings of that history as we have it from the ancient historians. Still, we must not forget that even these ancient historians are not always correct in their statements of some of the simplest facts, and especially with respect to the line of kings. Of one thing we are well assured. The facts of Ezra are thoroughly trustworthy, whether we can make these facts fit our chronological conceptions or not. Indeed, there is no inspired chronology, and consequently we must always receive with caution anything that depends upon chronological exactness.

The dedication of the Temple, at its completion, was an inspiring occasion, and the ceremonies included much that must have been impressive to the people. Seven hundred victims were offered for a burnt offering, and twelve goats were offered for a sin offering "for all Israel," one for each tribe. This fact shows very conclusively that other tribes, besides those of Judah and Benjamin, were represented in the returned "children of the Captivity." Only four of the original courses of priests were represented, but each of these was divided into six, and in this way the number of twenty-four was restored, and also the old names were adopted. The whole ceremonies were concluded by the keeping of the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, and of the seven days of unleavened bread. But all the notes were not joyful. There were some present who had seen the former Temple, and they therefore wept, partly for joy and partly for grief; joy because the new Temple was completed, and grief because by comparison it came far short of the one which had been built by Solomon.

It is certainly very remarkable that the Book of Ezra passes over a period of nearly sixty years, during which the history of the Jewish community at Jerusalem is almost a blank. The Book of Esther partly fills this blank, and it is only necessary to determine who the Ahasuerus of the book is, in order to fix the date of the facts narrated in it. There can be little doubt that Ahasuerus must be identified with the Persian king known to the Greeks as Xerxes. This conclusion is reached from at least three considerations:

(1) The identity of the names, Xerxes being the Greek for *Akhashverosh*, the Hebrew spelling of the Persian name *Khshayarsha*.¹

¹ Meaning "The Ruling Eye"; hence, a royal title applied to several Persian kings.

(2) The character of Ahasuerus, as we find it in the Book of Esther, corresponds to the character of Xerxes as we have it in Grecian history.

(3) The extent of his empire makes the identification with Xerxes necessary. This extended from India even to Ethiopia, and this was not true of any Persian king before Xerxes. As his reign lasted from 485 to 464 B. C., the events recorded in the Book of Esther fall between 483 and 470 B. C. The Persian kings at that time had four residences in different parts of the empire. They spent the spring at Babylon, the summer at Ecbatana, the autumn at Persepolis, and the winter at Susa, the Shushan of Esther. This city was sacked and partly destroyed by Sardanapalus about the year 650 B. C., and it remained in a ruined state till Cambyses restored it to its former splendor; and at the time of Xerxes it was at the height of its new glory. It was here that a remarkable event took place which had far-reaching results on the destiny of the Jewish people.

Xerxes was a proud, haughty, vacillating, and unreasonable despot. He had none of the ability of his father. He had been brought up in luxury, and consequently Susa was just the city where he could display the qualities which most distinguished him. The story of his invasion of Greece is well known. The battle of Marathon had been fought during the reign of his father, Darius Hystaspes, and Xerxes undertook to avenge that signal defeat of the Persian forces, a defeat which broke the power of oriental despotisms in Europe and practically changed the tide of civilization from a semi-barbarism toward the development of the highest culture. The story of the invasion of Xerxes and his final defeat in a great naval battle at Salamis is well known.

It was this proud, insolent Persian monarch who, in the third year of his reign, issued a decree that all the satraps from the different parts of his kingdom should be gathered by royal summons at Susa to prepare for the great expedition to Greece which ultimately ended so disastrously. The deliberations lasted six months and were attended by great pomp of feasting and luxurious entertainment. The object was to enlist all parts of the kingdom in the preparations for the grand invasion of Greece. The great conference at length ended by a banquet at which we are told 15,000 men sat down each day, at a cost of £90,000 daily, or about \$450,000, seven days being required to feast the vast number invited. Recently the dining room in which this feast was held has been excavated, and it is found to have inclosed a space equal to an acre and a half, with a

double portico on three of its sides. Its decorations, and the material out of which it is constructed, clearly indicate that everything was of the most costly character.

On the occasion of the feast Xerxes was seated on a golden throne, under a crimson canopy; and on the seventh day, when he was very much inflamed with wine, he ordered that his chief queen, Vashti, should expose herself in an indelicate way before his half drunken nobles. This she positively refused to do, and the result was that the infuriated king dismissed her and refused to recognize her any longer as his queen.

Four years succeeded, during which period Xerxes made his memorable invasion of Greece. He had returned to Susa, and doubtless needed the consolations of a wife. Vashti had been dismissed, and now the question was who should take her place. Finally Xerxes selected a young Jewess without knowing her nationality, and thus Esther became Queen, and in her the Jews had a steadfast friend at the royal court.

It is not needful to relate in detail the tragic events which followed; how that Haman, probably the last of the Amalekites, a high court official, who, being stung by an affront from the Jew, Mordecai, succeeded in obtaining a royal decree for the destruction of the Jewish race throughout the Persian empire; and how Esther, who was the niece of Mordecai, not

only obtained a practical reversion of the decree, but also such conditions as enabled the Jews to take vengeance on their enemies by slaughtering several thousand of them. The whole story is so familiar that nothing more need be said about it here further than that the feast of Purim became the memorial of this national deliverance, and is even yet celebrated among the Jews.

The remaining period of this long silence in Jewish history is a complete blank. When the silence is again broken, the old actors on the scene when the return from captivity took place, are all gone. The generations to which Zerubbabel and Joshua, Haggai and Zechariah belonged have passed entirely out of sight. At the same time the chief power among the Jews has departed from the family of David. The sons of Zerubbabel have not succeeded him. The governors of Jerusalem who did succeed him were foreigners, and as such they probably did not sympathize with the policy which had been pursued by Zerubbabel and Joshua. It had been a time of testing. Though the Temple had been completed before the long silence commenced, when we reach the end of the silence, it is evident that the religious condition of the people had not improved. Indeed, it is certain that it had gradually grown worse and worse. Surely the outlook at this time was anything but encouraging. But it was the dark hour before the dawn.

CHAPTER X.

UNDER PRIEST AND GOVERNOR.

XERXES was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes Longimanus, 465 B. C. The new king was only a lad when he began to reign, and he had some difficulty at first in maintaining his position, but after seven months of indecision, he adopted a vigorous policy by punishing the murderers of his father, and soon made himself felt as a wise and powerful monarch. In the fifth year of his reign a rebellion broke out in Egypt, which was not finally suppressed till six years later; and it may have been that during this insurrection Artaxerxes was convinced that a wise policy required a judicious and kind treatment of the Jews, as they would be important allies in his struggle with Egypt. Or it may have been that he was reminded of the generous treatment which the Jews had received from Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes; and, as he was a truly great monarch, he was anxious to imitate the example of his great predecessors.

But no matter what was the moving cause, there can be no doubt about the fact that the

new Persian king was disposed to be very friendly toward the Jews; and, in harmony with this feeling, he practically renewed the permission, which had been given eighty years earlier by Cyrus, for as many Jews to return to their native land as wished to do so. Consequently, he issued a decree to that effect, and he finally gave Ezra a commission in writing, expressed in very generous terms, granting among other things exemption to the Jewish priests and Levites from the usual toll or tribute. It is well to remember that the Persian kings had already shown a fondness for elevating some of the Jewish captives into high positions of trust in the government, and it is not strange, therefore, that a man of Ezra's high character was able to secure the confidence of Artaxerxes. Doubtless Ezra had already proved himself to the king by some important service before his departure to Jerusalem. He had perhaps kept himself well informed of the progress of affairs in Palestine. There was frequent intercourse between the Jews there and

those that remained in Babylonia. Indeed, the latter continued to send contributions to the former by special messengers appointed for that service, and by this and other means there was cultivated a very decided sympathy between the Jews of their respective countries. Ezra had no doubt already learned that the restored Jews had fallen into great declension and that their prospect was really very gloomy. It is not surprising, therefore, that he was deeply moved in their behalf, or that he was willing to lead a caravan to join those who were already struggling for a national existence in the land of their fathers.

It was in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, 458 B. C., that Ezra's caravan, numbering 1,596 men, besides a certain number of priests, set out for Jerusalem. They carried with them also a liberal supply of wealth. The poverty of the Jews in Palestine was well known, both to Artaxerxes and the Jews in Babylonia. The king accordingly took this state of things into the account; and he, his chief counselors and lords made a large contribution, in gold and silver, which was intrusted to Ezra for conveyance to Jerusalem, where it was to be appropriated for the adornment of the Temple and other purposes connected with the temple worship. A subscription was also taken from the non-Jewish inhabitants of the empire for the benefit of the Jews in Judea. The king also presented to the Temple a number of vessels of great value, at the same time conferring the right on Ezra to draw upon the provincial treasuries in Palestine and Syria, within a specified limit, for whatever he might need. The whole contribution in specie amounted to 650 talents of silver and 100 talents of gold, the latter being worth perhaps four times as much as the former. The object of Ezra's mission was to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

It is not needful to follow the caravan to its destination. The journey occupied exactly four months. A halt of three days was made at Ahava for the purpose of collecting the caravan and making necessary preparations for the long march. As soon as he arrived in Judea, Ezra found the people were already infected with the very evil which had been the foundation of nearly all their former troubles, namely, intermarriage with the idolatrous nations by which they were surrounded. His mission was mainly religious in its aim, and, being well read in the law of Moses, he saw at once that the evil referred to must be removed before national prosperity could again come to Israel; and, in view of this conviction, he set about in earnest to effect a reformation. After public mourning and prayer, at the suggestion of some of the chief men, the whole people

were summoned to Jerusalem on penalty of heavy forfeiture and expulsion from the congregation. This assembly took place on the twentieth day of the ninth month (December, 458 B. C.), and during the conference there was a great storm of rain. The result of this assembly was a general agreement to put away the strange wives by the beginning of the new year (end of March, 457 B. C.). At this point the narrative of the Book of Ezra ends, and the story of the Jews is not resumed again until several years later.

What took place during this interval cannot be determined with certainty. However, from the scant information we have it is fair to conclude that the Samaritans and their allies had strongly opposed the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. This wall had been in a broken condition ever since the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, but it is probable it had not been completely dismantled and the gates burned until some time between 450 and 445 B. C. Meantime the news of this condition of the wall was carried to Nehemiah, who was a cupbearer of Artaxerxes.

It has been difficult to explain the sudden break in Ezra's narrative and his own comparative obscurity during the governorship of Nehemiah. It has been supposed by some that his policy of repudiating the mixed marriages had raised against him such a bitter opposition that he was forced into practical obscurity. It is supposed that for twelve years his opponents in Jerusalem made common cause with the Samaritans. Others think that, having accomplished the object of his mission to Jerusalem, with respect to mixed marriages and other evils, he left the city and did not return again until the dedication of the wall. One thing at least is certain: the condition of things at Jerusalem went from bad to worse, and it was only by the exercise of the strong hand of Nehemiah that any improvement took place.

Nehemiah was at Shushan when the news was brought to him by Hanani, one of his brethren, concerning the unfavorable state of things at Jerusalem. This was in the twenty-fifth year of Artaxerxes (440 B. C.); and when Nehemiah, who was the king's cupbearer, came into his presence, the king noticed that his servant's countenance was sad. This led the king to inquire as to the cause, and when he was informed that this sadness came from news which his servant had received from Jerusalem, he at once commissioned Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem and undertake the rebuilding of the wall. He also guaranteed him a suitable escort and gave him a governor's commission, so that Nehemiah was well provided for definite and effective work.

Nehemiah had waited four months for an opportunity of speaking to the king, but when the opportunity did come his patience was amply repaid. While he was waiting he was not idle. He spent a great deal of his time in praying to God that the heart of the king might be well disposed toward the plea which he had to make. The whole case is strikingly suggestive; there is a pathetic side to it which at once challenges our interest. But most of all we admire the patriotism of Nehemiah and his profound faith in the guiding hand of the God who had so often brought deliverance to the Jews. It certainly is a very impressive fact that all the movements of these great leaders were inaugurated by prayer and closed by thanksgiving. They began nothing without reckoning with that divine factor in human affairs to which attention has been frequently called; and it is not possible for a rationalistic theory to explain this fact. Undoubtedly the Jews, at least, have a history which is indissolubly connected with divine agency.

When Nehemiah and his escort arrived at Jerusalem, he found his worst fears more than realized. Before he reached the city he had learned of the hostility of Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite; but this only nerved him to greater activity in preparing for his work. After the usual three days of rest or purification, he quietly reconnoitered the condition of the city by night, so that his movements would not be observed; as doubtless he did not wish to excite any special attention until he had made himself master of such details as would enable him to speak with authority. The result of his observations was the calling of the rulers to the work. All the rulers, except the nobles of the Tekoites, labored arduously and enthusiastically at their appointed stations.

The work had only fairly commenced when the opposition of the Samaritans became very marked. The city of Samaria was, at that time, held by a Persian garrison. The governor was Sanballat, who is called a Horonite. His nationality is not certain, but his position was one of dignity and influence. He and Tobiah, an Ammonite chief, were evidently in close alliance, though the latter was probably not a representative of the Persian government; still, no doubt, he occupied a position of considerable importance. It appears that Sanballat had also had some kind of connection with a sort of Arab sheik called Geshem, who had at his command a band of marauders who were always ready for just such work as Sanballat had under consideration. It seems that the latter was also allied by marriage to Eliashib the high priest, while Tobiah had married a daughter of Shechaniah.

This was a strong combination against Nehemiah, who had little time to organize a force with which to meet the threatened opposition. But emergencies not only make men but make expedients also; and opposition often defeats its own purpose by stimulating watchfulness and activity in those who are opposed. Nehemiah was not unconscious of the difficulties by which he was environed. But he was a man of courage and persistent determination. He had also that special characteristic which is always the accompaniment of good generalship, namely, the power to decide an important matter quickly; and having once made up his mind, he was not the kind of man to change it without cause.

He was not long in determining that he must count upon the persistent opposition of Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, and consequently he made his arrangements accordingly. First of all, he sought the guidance and help of the God whom he served. This was a good beginning. The work which he was aiming to do had back of it all a religious inspiration. The Temple had been rebuilt, and the city partially reinhabited, and the building of the wall was now an essential condition to secure that freedom of worship which was necessary to revitalize the temple service. It was proper, therefore, that a work which had such a religious aim should be inaugurated with a petition for help from the Divine Father.

But Nehemiah did not rely wholly upon prayer. We are told that they made their "prayer unto God and set a watch against their enemies day and night." In other words, they watched as well as prayed. This is the true philosophy of service. We should always unite the divine and human in all our undertakings, and these can never be separated in the affairs of human history. The same idea was continued throughout all the arrangements which Nehemiah made for defense as well as for carrying on the work. Indeed, the whole story of rebuilding the wall is full of suggestive analogies for every kind of successful work. They began by clearing away the rubbish in order to secure a firm foundation upon which to build; then all instrumentalities were united, while all parts of the organization were in touch with one another, so that, at the signal of the trumpet, help could be secured wherever it was most needed. But after all, the most important element, perhaps, in achieving the final success was the fact that "the people had a mind to work." That fact of itself was more than half the battle. We may have every other advantage on our side, but if we have not a mind to work, in all probability we shall make little or no progress. This is especially true as regards the difficult work of

rebuilding spiritual Jerusalem. And hence there is little hope that very much will be accomplished in the right direction unless we can inspire the people with a love for the work. If we look simply at an individual church we shall have a striking illustration of what must be true all round the wall. No matter how good a preacher a church may have, no matter how beautiful or comfortable the church premises may be, no matter how thoroughly united the people may be, and no matter how watchful and prayerful they may be, or how lovingly they may cooperate—all this will be of little account if the people have not a mind for the work itself. Indeed, so important is this preparation of mind, that with it there is practically no difficulty, while without it nearly everything is a difficulty. We never see how to work when we do not love the work.

As the wall began to rise, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem attempted to bring the work into disrepute by making light of it. Tobiah even suggested that the wall they were building would not stand the force of a jackal if it should run against it. This is nearly always the method of enmity when a work is in an uncertain stage of progress, or has in it little promise of ultimate success. Making light of it is sometimes a successful way to hinder a work. Many people can bear almost anything better than to be laughed at. But Nehemiah and his associates were not to be driven from their work because their enemies affected to treat it with derision. So energetically and continuously did everyone labor that very rapid progress was made at all points, and it soon became evident to the conspirators that the wall would shortly be completed if the work was not stopped. And after every other measure had failed, as a last resort, Sanballat and his friends sought to decoy Nehemiah into a conference on the Samaritan border. Perhaps they hoped at this conference to intimidate him, or it may have been their purpose to kidnap him. But to all their entreaties Nehemiah had but one answer—"I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it and come down to you?"

This reply of Nehemiah deserves to be carefully considered by all earnest workers. There are several steps always in a determined opposition. The first step is generally affected indifference; the next is contemptuous treatment of the work, if not of the workers; a third step is organized opposition; when this fails the next thing is to secure, if possible, a conference in which everything is sure to be decided in favor of the intriguers. This conference idea was the last hope of Sanballat and his friends; and when their first invitation was

practically rejected, they sent another embodied in a formal document, which was left open so that the contents might be read by all. In this document they told Nehemiah that rumors were afloat that his object in rebuilding the wall was to enable him to lead a rebellion against the Persian government and finally to make himself king of the Jewish people. The object of these representations was certainly not to influence Nehemiah himself, for by this time his enemies knew that he was not likely to be intimidated by this last cunningly devised trick. But what they expected was that their document would fall into the hands of Persian officials and others, and would probably have the effect to place Nehemiah under strong suspicion of treason. This would have been fatal to his enterprises. But the plot failed, and certain other schemes, which either accompanied it or followed it, were equally unsuccessful.

The work continued, and finally, after fifty-two days, the wall was completed, though some days elapsed before the gates were finished and put into their proper places. At length, however, these were set up in the gateways, and then the work was accomplished for which Nehemiah had asked and obtained leave from Artaxerxes to visit Jerusalem.

There are many lessons in this incident of Jewish history. Among these lessons may be mentioned the following:

(1) The power of earnestness. One earnest man is more than a match for a thousand unrighteous schemers.

(2) The power of organization. Nehemiah had all his forces subject to a well-defined system which enabled him not only to bring every man into service, but so to dispose of him as to make his service count for all he was worth.

(3) The power of union. The work would never have succeeded had there not been perfect unity of action. This was manifest in every department of the work. First of all there was unity in the means used. The sword and trowel were united and made to cooperate in the work. The priests, workmen, and soldiers made a common cause. Meantime the cooperation was so complete that every part of the work was always able to command whatever assistance was needed.

Just as soon as the wall was completed, Nehemiah began a reformation which finally marked a new era in the history of the Jewish people. He knew well enough that fortifications alone would not suffice for national defense; consequently, he began to institute such reforms as he believed were necessary in order to preserve the solidarity of the Jewish community and give strength to their national aspirations. The work on the wall had brought

some evils into prominence, and these, with others, Nehemiah set himself in earnest to correct. The poor had been oppressed by the Persian tribute which they had to pay, and in many cases they had to borrow from their rich neighbors. These rich nobles exacted extortionate interest, and when the poor were unable to pay it, their little holdings were seized and their children taken as slaves to serve their rich masters. This was one of the first evils which Nehemiah sought to reform, and the radical way in which he managed the case shows conclusively how seriously the evil was regarded. He abolished usury between Jew and Jew, but he did not stop there; he required the money lenders to make full restitution by restoring the mortgaged property to their debtors. He furthermore took measures to provide for an increased number of residents in the city. This was an important measure in order to give efficiency to the means of defense.

But a still more important movement was that which restored the law to its normal place. For more than a century and a quarter the law of Moses had been almost obsolete in the affairs of the Jewish people. The teaching of the prophets had practically taken its place. No doubt portions of the law were occasionally read by the prophets and others in the synagogue during the Captivity, and there was some effort to restore the sanctions of the law under Zerubbabel and Ezra; but for various reasons very little was accomplished in this respect until the governorship of Nehemiah. Prior to his time the law had remained exclusively in possession of the priests; and, consequently, the people knew nothing about it, except by oral tradition. It was, therefore, a great step in the right direction when the law was again brought into contact with the whole Jewish people, and they were again made to feel its solemn sanctions.

At this time Ezra again came to the front. He was not only a priest but a scribe. His special function was to deal with the law, and it is probable that his reformation was partially a failure, for the reason that he insisted upon a rigid observance of the law before there was any definite organization to enforce his requirements. Under Nehemiah's governorship the conditions had somewhat changed, and it was now possible for the two men to work together in effecting a great reformation for the Jewish people. Accordingly there was a solemn recitation of the law by Ezra, during which the people stood up and wept; and on a solemn fast day the ancient covenant was renewed, and the law which Ezra had read to his countrymen was accepted as an authoritative rule of life for Israel. This covenant embraced

specially the strict observance of the sabbath, the observance of the sabbatical year and its remission of debt, the payment of tithes and first fruits to the Levites, and a tax of one-third of a shekel to defray the expenses of the temple worship.

When everything was in readiness a great festival was held for the *Dedication of the Wall* of Jerusalem. For this service the priests and Levites were called together from all the cities of Judea. These purified the walls and the people, while the rulers, divided into two parts, went round the walls in procession to the right and to the left, the one headed by Ezra and the other by Nehemiah, each being accompanied by priests and Levites who blew the trumpets and sang thanks to God. Finally the day was closed with sacrifices and shouts of joy from the people.

After his reforms had been inaugurated, Nehemiah returned to the Persian court; but in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes he again visited Jerusalem. At this time he found that some of the old evils which had been abolished had reappeared. But he was not the man to be utterly discouraged by this revival of old habits. He knew how deeply seated these habits had become, and he also understood the difficulties arising from the peculiar environment of the people. He found the Temple was desecrated by the presence of Tobiah, with whom Eliashib, the high priest, had allied himself. The Jews had also again begun to contract mixed marriages, and, to make bad worse, it was found that the priests were prominent offenders. In fact, the high priest's own grandson had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite. The result of these things was beginning to be most disastrous. The Jewish children were beginning to lose their native dialect by frequent commingling with the children of the surrounding nations. The sanctity of the sabbath was also practically destroyed in the interests of trade with foreigners. While Nehemiah did not attempt to conceal his indignation, he immediately set about the purification of the Temple and the gathering of the dispersed Levites together again, compelling the rulers to do them justice and the people to bring the tithes that were due them. He also strongly reproved the nobles for the profanation of the sabbath. His last reform dealt with the evil of the mixed marriages with the women of Ammon, Moab, and Ashdod. He exacted an oath of the offenders to abstain from all such alliances, and as an example to all the rest, expelled from the priesthood the grandson of Eliashib on account of his marriage with the daughter of Sanballat. What came of these energetic measures the sequel will show.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW COMMUNITY.

THERE are at least three factors which must be taken into account, if we are to understand the character of the new society which grew up in Judea under the formative influences of Ezra and Nehemiah. These factors are: (1) The Persian government, (2) The religious organization among the Jews, and (3) The post-exilic literature.

The first of these has not usually received the attention it deserves by writers on the period under consideration. It must never be forgotten that while the Jews had been permitted to return to their native land, they were not permitted to occupy the position they did prior to the Captivity. They were still subject to the Persian government, were compelled to pay tribute to that government, under Persian governors or satraps, while the officers with whom the Jews had immediate dealings were called *pekhahs*. Each satrapy was probably divided into districts and the *pekhahs* were the governors of these petty provinces.

The tribute was collected and remitted to the Persian king by the satraps. The amount assessed varied considerably in the different provinces, but it was everywhere an oppressive load upon the people. Besides the tribute in money there were other tributes levied, especially of grain, while there were "custom" and "toll" exacted upon merchandise, monopolies, etc. There were probably also special local taxes to defray the expenses of local governments.

The civil organization of the Jewish community was largely controlled by foreign influence. It is certain that the chief power rested in the hands of the *pekhah*, and generally the *pekhahs* were foreigners, though occasionally some of them were natives who had been in the king's service. The cases of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were exceptional, and there is no evidence that Ezra ever occupied the position of a *pekhah*. But even Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were governors under the authority of their Persian masters. They held commissions for certain purposes, and had authority to do certain things, but beyond these commissions they were not allowed to go. In short, the Jewish community, from a civil point of view, was no longer Jewish at all, except so far as the people themselves were concerned; and even the people, by intermarriage with the foreigners, gradually lost some things which distinguished them from other communities.

One thing, however, must be kept in mind while studying this period of Jewish history. At this time the new community was more of a church than a nation. The work of Ezra was chiefly religious, and, though Nehemiah exercised civil authority over the people, the work which he did was also mainly intended for religious development. The Temple was the center of everything pertaining to the national life, and this made the high priest a most important functionary, as it practically placed him at the head of the whole community. His office was hereditary, and this fact gave rise to a sort of religious dynasty, which finally, after the break-up of the Persian empire, placed the high priest in the position of a petty Jewish monarch. It is evident that his influence was not so potential in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah as it afterward became. Indeed, Ezra does not even mention the high priest. As he himself was a priest it is not improbable that he discharged the duties of his office, at least so far as he deemed it necessary to do so, without recognizing the high priest of the regular line; and there are strong evidences that Nehemiah paid very little attention to the high priest's authority, as he certainly, in one instance at least, acted directly in opposition to the high priest's wishes.

The ordinary priests are, for the most part, clearly distinguished from the Levites in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The former represent a superior class, occupying a position somewhere between kings and princes and nobles and rulers. They are sometimes called the sons of Aaron, and evidently were held in high esteem by the people during the Captivity as well as after the Return. It is worthy of remark that at the time of the Return the number of priests was 4,289, being practically one-tenth of the whole company; and yet there were only four families represented in this number, namely, Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur, and Harim. However, during the high priesthood of Joshua and Jehoiakim, the number of families had grown to twenty-two. Ezra brought with him to Jerusalem two priestly families, one of the line of Eleazar and the other of the line of Ithamar. It is well here to notice the important fact that while the Book of Chronicles speaks of sixteen families belonging to the line of Eleazar, and eight to that of Ithamar, Ezekiel confines the priesthood to the "sons of Zadok," thereby limiting the priestly claims to one branch of the Eleazar line. As Ezekiel

wrote during the Exile it is probable that some change had taken place in the priesthood succession, and, as there was no temple service during that period, this change may have been for the purpose of reducing the number of priests.

The Levites had certain functions to perform, but they occupied a very subordinate position. During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, there were three inferior orders under the priests. These were: (1) Levites, (2) singers and porters, (3) Nethinim, or those who were the servants of the Levites. At the return from the Captivity there were only 74 Levites compared with the 4,289 priests, while Ezra had considerable difficulty in persuading 38 Levites to accompany him when he went to Jerusalem. In the list of those who sojourned in Jerusalem, we find only 284 Levites (including the singers) and 1,192 priests.

Another most important class was the scribes. These, in the later meaning of the term, had their origin, no doubt, during the Exile. The sopher, or scribe, was the title of the state official at the royal court, and his position was that of a secretary or chronicler. However, during the time of the Exile, an order grew up called Sopherim, the Hebrew for scribes, and their functions were to guard, transcribe, and interpret the sacred oracles. It must be remembered that at the same time the synagogue worship had its origin. The loss of the Temple was partly supplied by these extemporized places of worship; and, as these places were doubtless quite numerous, in order to meet the convenience of the scattered captives, and as each one of these synagogues would need one copy at least of the sacred writings then in existence (especially the Pentateuch), it is easy to see how a number of persons would necessarily be employed in transcribing, reading, and annotating the sacred literature of the Jews, during the entire period of the Exile. Ezra's training was in this school, and it is not surprising that the order to which he belonged was perpetuated in the new community after the Return. Though the Temple had been rebuilt, there was still need for a considerable amount of clerical work in connection with the extensive organization of the priests and Levites. A record had to be kept of the payment of tithes and offerings for the maintenance of the Temple service, and there was also need for other secretarial work. The synagogues were transplanted from Babylonia to Judea, and, consequently, each of these synagogues still required at least one copy of the sacred oracles. This fact alone made the sopher a necessity.

Gradually, however, the most important function of the scribes became that of interpretation. They not only transcribed the law, but

they were also its expounders. When Ezra read the law from the pulpit of wood the people were made to understand it by those who stood beside him. It is probable that Ezra gave the meaning first, and then this was communicated to the people who listened, in the languages with which they were most familiar; for it must be remembered that, at this time, at least three dialects of the Semitic language were spoken by the Jews, namely, the Aramaic, Babylonian, and Hebrew. It is probable also that many spoke the Canaanite or Phœnician language. And as Nehemiah found that the children of those who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab could not speak the Jewish language, but only a sort of mixture of that language and the language of Ashdod, it is probable that toward the close of the governorship of Nehemiah there was, growing out of the confusion of tongues, considerable difficulty with reference to the true meaning of the sacred canon. The scribes were generally learned men, able to speak fluently most, if not all, of the languages in common use. They were also necessarily familiar with the Book of the Law. Not only were they engaged in reading and expounding this book, but they also frequently transcribed it.

This brings us to the consideration of the third influential factor in developing the new Jewish community. Much has been written concerning post-exilic literature, but most of this has been based upon pure conjecture. This much, however, is fairly certain: the Old Testament Canon was settled during the time of Ezra, and certainly not later than the time of Malachi. If, as is generally believed, Ezra was chiefly concerned in the foundation of this canon, he may have lived long enough to add to his work the last of the Old Testament prophets.

There are many traditions connected with both Ezra and Nehemiah as regards the final settlement of the Old Testament Canon. It was believed by the early fathers that when the originals of Scripture were burned with the Temple, Ezra was inspired by the Holy Spirit to restore the Law and the Prophets, and to write or authenticate the books which followed these. Another tradition affirms that Ezra, or Ezra and Nehemiah, instituted the Great Synagogue, numbering 120 associates, and that it was in conjunction with them that the Old Testament Canon was settled. This tradition, however, was confined to the Talmud and finds no support in the Canonical or Apocryphal Scriptures. It is doubtful, therefore, whether any such synagogue really existed for the purpose indicated, and it is more than doubtful whether either Ezra or Nehemiah had anything to do with such an institution. Recently

a school of critics has arisen whose views are totally at variance with the traditional notions concerning the Old Testament Scriptures. These critics do not hesitate to invent an editor whenever his services are needed, and, consequently, they do not find much difficulty in placing the origin of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah in the second century before Christ, and in asserting that the three books were originally one and by the same editor.

However, this fanciful view has very little to support it. The traditional view assumes that the three books were originally distinct, that their true editor was Ezra, and that only a few additions were made after his time. While this view is more reasonable than that suggested by some extreme higher critics, it is, however, open to objections which are not easily overcome. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that Ezra either wrote in whole or in part the Books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, besides collecting, editing, and arranging the whole Jewish Scriptures, in one canon, under the threefold division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. In performing this work he is supposed to have added those passages which cannot have been written by the authors whose names the books bear, such as the account of the death and burial of Moses. It is believed, also, that Ezra wrote several of the Psalms, especially the one hundred and nineteenth.

For the benefit of the general reader, it ought, however, to be distinctly stated that the time and place of fixing the canon cannot be definitely determined; nor is it certainly known who was chiefly instrumental in effecting this work. That which concerns us most is the fact that the canon was settled some time toward the close of the fifth century before Christ. Some have thought that the Prophet Malachi may have assisted Ezra in editing and arranging the books of the Old Testament, but even the name of this prophet is uncertain, and some have identified him with Ezra. Evidently his testimony fits well the condition of things found at Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah's second visit there, and it is probable that his prophecy falls within the closing days of the fifth century, or about 400 B. C. In any case the Prophet Malachi properly connects the Old Covenant with the New, and this view of the matter is distinctly emphasized by the fact that the prophet predicts the coming of John the Baptist as the Elijah of the new dispensation, and as the forerunner of him who was to be the great deliverer of Israel, the Shiloh to come, to whom, more or less, all the prophets refer.

In any case it is inconceivable that several of the Old Testament books were not written till more than two hundred years later, and that

the canon was not settled until the first part of the second century before Christ. The divine factor in Jewish history ceased to be so prominent after the days of Malachi, and it is scarcely probable that the remarkable providence which always guided in Jewish affairs would have left to uninspired men, and to a period when the divine presence was no longer especially assured, the important matter of determining the canon which was to be practically settled for all future time. Another fact needs to be very strongly emphasized. The whole hypothesis upon which those critics build who contend for a late period in settling the canon is a pure assumption, and virtually begs the very question in controversy. We are told that the period following after 400 B. C. was one of considerable literary activity, and that this was just the time when we ought to look for such a work to be done as that of settling the canon. But the Jewish Scriptures were nearly all written in Hebrew, and it is well known that the Hebrew soon ceased to be the language of the people, and whatever literary activity there was certainly did not show itself in a Hebrew literature. Most of the works of the subsequent period was written in Aramaic or Greek, but the Old Testament Canon was written not only in Hebrew (except a few portions in Aramaic, belonging to the Exilic period or to the period of Ezra and Nehemiah), but in such Hebrew characters as were used during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah — characters which no doubt had a Chaldaic origin, and were introduced by Ezra, who was familiar with both Hebrew and Chaldee. He used the "square" or Assyrian character, with certain modifications, probably to distinguish the sacred books which he edited from the Samaritan Pentateuch and Book of Joshua, which retained the old Phœnicic-Hebraic letters. However, a still more probable hypothesis is that he used the Babylonian characters because the people, during the Exile, had become more familiar with these characters than the Archaic letters of the Phœnician type. He, no doubt, wished to facilitate the study of the books in the collection, and therefore, caused his copies to be made in characters best known to the people at that time.

It is no argument to say that this same character is still used in Hebrew copies of the Bible, and, therefore, the canon might have been made sometime after the days of Ezra. This is quite true, but it proves nothing. If the "square" character was used as early as the days of Ezra, then it is certain that Ezra could have edited the canonical books; that is the only point upon which it is necessary to insist; and this fact once established, the evidence is very strong that Ezra had much to do with

determining and editing the canonical books of the Old Testament.

There is one thing, however, that needs to be emphasized with respect to this matter. Undoubtedly the "square" character was brought from Babylon, and the people were familiar with it during the Captivity and immediately afterward. Now, it is not probable that they went back to the old character for two hundred years and then returned to the new during the second century before Christ. Such a notion is as absurd as it is unhistorical. But if Ezra and Nehemiah introduced the new character into Judea, it is easy to see how it may have continued in use even to the present time. But if an interval is allowed, as some contend for, then it is inconceivable that the Babylonian character would again be adopted. This fact is alone sufficient to make it highly probable that the canon was settled in the days of Ezra.

The reference to the Samaritan Pentateuch suggests the origin of the Samaritan temple which was erected on Mount Gerizim. Just how this temple came to be built is not certain. Reference has already been made to Nehemiah's treatment of the high priest's grandson who married Sanballat's daughter. This act showed treasonable alliance with Nehemiah's enemy; it violated the rule laid down against mixed marriages; it also compromised the purity of the high-priestly house. It was no doubt for these reasons that Nehemiah chased the offender away. Josephus refers to a certain Manasse, the brother of Jaddua, who took to wife Nikaso, the daughter of the Cuthean Sanballat.

Refusing to put his wife away, he was expelled from Jerusalem by the Jewish nobles and took refuge with the Samaritans, among whom, as a member of the high-priestly family, he set up a rival temple and priesthood upon Mount Gerizim. However, Josephus assigns this to the period of Alexander the Great, but there is conclusive evidence that long before Alexander's time the Samaritan worship had been fully established; and, as it is well known that the chronology of Josephus is sadly at fault in many places, it is probable that this incident which he relates may be identified with the grandson of Eliashib.

But be that as it may, it is certain that a temple was built upon Mount Gerizim and that this tended to widen the breach between the Jews and Samaritans, which continued during subsequent history and was certainly not healed even in the days of Jesus Christ. The Samaritan temple upon Mount Gerizim was destroyed by John Hyrcanus about 109 B. C. The remains of a temple are still to be found upon Mount Gerizim, and a small band of Samaritans still hold an annual sacrifice in its ruins. The oldest copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch is in possession of this little band of less than one hundred, who claim to be the genuine remnant of the Samaritans who once occupied the land. Meantime the Jews have been scattered throughout the civilized world; but amid all the changes which have taken place in their native land, the tribe of Judah remained intact until Shiloh came, and even now the tribe retains many of its original characteristics.

CHAPTER XII.

RECAPITULATORY SURVEY.

IF ever an ideal failed to be realized it was in the case of the Jewish people. There can be no doubt about the divine purpose in the Captivity. The nation had grievously sinned and God punished them for their sin; but he meant this punishment to result in their good. This was really the keynote in all the prophecies both before and during the Exile. Isaiah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Obadiah, and Ezekiel all had a note in their prophecies which looked to a regenerated society of the Jewish people that would illustrate a glorious period in the Jewish history. There was to be a night of weeping—the long, painful Captivity—but joy would come with the morning, when they should return to their native land rejoicing, rebuild the Temple, re-establish the ancient worship, and again serve the God of their fathers.

This was the high ideal, and while all the

prophets contributed more or less to creating it, Ezekiel, probably, more than any of the others, depicted it in glowing language. His temple was even more glorious than that of Solomon; his new society was a step in advance of either the old Israelitish commonwealth or the kingdom. It is true that he did not confine his vision to the period immediately after the Return. His look was far down the ages. He saw the coming glories of Messiah's reign and the spiritual temple which should be built out of the "lively stones" of the men and women in Christ Jesus. Nevertheless, it cannot be doubted that he, as well as the other prophets mentioned, gave an ideal picture of what the Jews would be immediately after the return from their Babylonian Captivity.

Doubtless much of the optimistic language used by the prophets was intended for encouragement; and it must not be forgotten that

most of this language is not so much in the form of a forecast as to what would actually take place, as in the form of an inspiring ideal to which the Jews could attain if they would learn the lessons aright which had been taught them. But be this as it may, it is certain that the ideal was not realized, for there was disappointment from the very beginning of the chapter to the end of it.

After all, no one need be surprised at this result. God can never give us less than the highest ideals. This he does in Christianity, and yet there is failure everywhere in realizing his ideals. The reason for this is not far to seek. Men and women are weak. The human side is always breaking down, however high its aim may be. God inspires by placing before us noble ends to be achieved and lofty ideals, but, alas, we fail to reach the one or to realize the other.

It is not strange, therefore, that the Jewish return was not equal to the glowing pictures of prophetic vision; nor even to the hopes of the Jews themselves. It is true that at the very start from Babylon there was an apparent lack of enthusiasm, and it is certainly somewhat remarkable that many of the exiles utterly refused to leave with Zerubbabel. They gave of their substance to help their brethren who were going, but it is estimated that less than half of the captives availed themselves of the privilege granted by the edict of Cyrus. It is freely admitted that when those who returned first reached Jerusalem there was something of the feeling manifested which had been foreshadowed by the prophets. But this did not last long. The opposition of the Samaritans very soon made the work of rebuilding both onerous and dangerous, and soon the first earnest zeal was exhausted; and the people lapsed into either indifference or else into such a state of discouragement that the whole undertaking came very near failing entirely; and had it not been for the earnest exhortations of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, it is probable the rebuilding would not have commenced in the second year of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, if, indeed, it would ever have commenced at all. There were at least three causes which hindered physical progress:

(1) The Persian oppression. This was mainly in the tribute exacted. In other respects the Persian domination was not tyrannical. Still it was a great impediment to national prosperity in very many ways. Liberty is worth a great deal as an inspiration. The Jews were laboring under the disadvantage of conscious national servitude. Nothing breaks the spirit of a people sooner than such a load as the Jews had to carry; and yet this fact has not received the attention it deserves from historians in

treating the period now under consideration. It was really next to impossible for the Jewish civilization to rise to a high level during the Persian domination; and this fact at once sharply antagonizes the notion that the period after the Exile was one of considerable literary activity. The people were, for the most part, poor, and apparently there was very little ambition among them to excel in anything that promised physical and intellectual progress.

(2) Another factor entered largely into the general stagnation which characterized the Jews after their return. This was the opposition of the Samaritans. It must be remembered that Samaria was always very close at hand, and every movement of the Jews was constantly watched by the Samaritans, who had nothing but enmity for their returned neighbors. It is not difficult to understand how this fact must have operated to hinder the Jews from making any worthy development. The real danger to be feared from the Samaritans was not so great as the annoyance which they caused. They were a source of considerable anxiety, and certainly made the Jewish position anything but a bed of roses.

(3) It must be said, however, that the Jews were themselves greatly to blame for the deplorable state to which they were reduced. While they doubtless learned something during their captivity that was profitable, they brought with them from Babylon many vices. Among these vices may be mentioned the oppression of the poor by the rich. There were a few rich nobles, and from these the poor had to borrow in order to be able to pay tribute and have something upon which to live. The per cent exacted by these money lenders was exorbitant, and, as the poor man often pledged himself as security, he frequently had to surrender himself as a slave in order to meet the debt which he had contracted. The Mosaic law made provision for the release of a debtor at the end of a prescribed period, but during the Captivity the sabbatical year was not observed, and even after the Return it was difficult to reinstate it as it had existed before the Exile. This made the system referred to very oppressive, and it was one of the things that Nehemiah attempted to reform as soon as the wall was completed.

From a religious point of view the condition of the people upon the whole was improved after the Return. It is true, there was much sluggishness, coldness, and even waywardness during the very best days. The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah leave no doubt concerning this matter. The tendency to intermarry with foreigners seemed to be almost irrepressible. This sin invaded even the priesthood, and it was probably this fact which made it necessary on

the part of the Divine Father to close the Old Testament Canon with the Prophet Malachi, whose prophecies were almost certainly delivered immediately after the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem. The character of his prophecies exactly suits the state of things which existed when Nehemiah returned, after his year's absence at the Persian court. Evidently the prophet regarded the priesthood as having become thoroughly corrupt. He states that they were offering polluted bread upon the altar. And he declares that the Lord had no longer any pleasure in them, neither would he receive an offering at their hands. Surely it is a remarkable fact that the Old Testament should close with an intimation that the priesthood of the Jewish people could no longer prevail with God, and that the only hope of the nation was in the return to the law of Moses, and a promise that God would send Elijah, the prophet, before the great and terrible day of reckoning should finally come.

There were, however, at least three decided religious gains which came to the Jews out of their captivity:

(1) They were completely cured of their idolatry. Prior to the Exile this was their besetting sin, and it was for this more than for anything else that they were carried away into captivity. After their return they seemed to have had no more desire to worship strange gods. Their zeal for the true God may not have always been very earnest. It is probable that the religious flame did not often reach a very high point; indeed it is certain that much of their religious life, even under the inspiring counsels of Ezra and Nehemiah, was not at any time very intense. Nevertheless, even when at the lowest tide, there was no return to idolatry. No doubt the people had seen enough idolatry in Babylonia to satisfy them. There they beheld it in its most disgusting forms, and while in some instances they practiced it during the Captivity, they were undoubtedly decided monotheists ever after the Return.

This fact has a curious significance when viewed in connection with the rejection of Christ by the Jews. They had no patience at all with any kind of polytheism after the days of the Exile; and when Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be the Son of God and, therefore, worthy of worship, the Jews at once regarded this claim as equivalent to a species of polytheism, and nothing of this kind was tolerable after the days of the Captivity. Misunderstanding the true character of our Divine Lord, all the later traditions of the Jews compelled them to reject his claim, for they could not consistently allow anyone to share the honors which they regarded as belonging exclusively to Jehovah.

(2) There was at least a partial return to the sanctions of the law of the Lord. During the Captivity, sacrifice and three great sacrificial feasts, namely, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles were discontinued, though the three feasts were commanded to be celebrated in the one place where the Lord "placed his name." The removal to a foreign country made it necessary to end the sabbatical year and such laws as related to it, as well as the feasts just mentioned. It was, therefore, the aim of Ezra and Nehemiah to reestablish, as soon as possible, what had so long been neglected; and it was a great triumph for these reformers when they succeeded in getting the people to accept again the law of the Lord as the rule of their lives. And, in view of recent discussions, it is worthy of remark that the law to which Ezra called the attention of the people was a law which, at that time, was *written*. We are told that Zerubbabel "buildd the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, *as it is written in the Law of Moses*, the man of God."¹ Again, we are told that "they kept the Feast of Tabernacles, *as it is written*, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required." Surely this is a reference to Numbers xxviii, 11-15. It is furthermore stated that "they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their courses for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem, *as it is written in the Book of Moses*." This is an allusion to Numbers viii, 9-15. From these statements the proof is conclusive that, in the days of Ezra, there was in existence what was called the "Law of Moses" or "the Book of Moses," and that this *was written* so that it could be referred to and quoted from whenever it was necessary to do so.

In this connection it may be well to mention that even Ezekiel was well acquainted with the Levitical legislation, and must have regarded the Book of Deuteronomy as a part of the Pentateuch in his day. In food, he clearly discriminated between that which was defiled, or ceremonially unclean, and that which he had a right, by the law, to eat. And this being true, a late origin of the Pentateuch is inconceivable. In fact, a careful study of the Prophets and the later Jewish writings makes it practically impossible to deny the existence of the *written Law of Moses in a book* during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This book was no doubt edited at the time the Old Testament Canon was completed, but only such additions were made as were necessary to complete the historical parts. Ezra and Nehemiah

¹ Ezra iii, 2.

added nothing to the law itself. They were not lawmakers, but executors of the law. The people were law breakers, and the two reformers aimed to reestablish the law as the rule of individual and national life. Their position was very much the same as that of a religious reformer of the present day, who seeks to restore the primitive Gospel in its purity and simplicity. He has no new Gospel to introduce, but the old Gospel as it was preached by the apostles of Jesus Christ. He has no new commandments to enforce, but the old commandments of our Lord and his apostles. He has no new church to establish, but he aims to reproduce, as far as is possible in the new conditions of society, the old church which had its beginning at Jerusalem and its further development during the apostolic age.

Ezra and Nehemiah were zealous for the law, and their reformation consisted mainly in emphasizing its importance, and securing obedience to it. Some have thought that there was too much rigidity in their contention and that a few of their requirements were illiberal in the extreme. But it must be remembered that the whole Jewish system was pivoted on the law, and that any failure with respect to its sanctions could not be otherwise than disastrous. Such a failure was like moving the center of gravity from the whole political, moral, and religious sphere, the result of which could only end in complete confusion and national ruin. Even the enforcement of the law, with respect to the prohibition of marriage with foreigners, was a necessity in view of the importance of keeping the Jews a separate people. This separation was essential to the fulfillment of the Messianic redemption. The Coming One, or the *Yaveh* of the Old Testament, was identified by the prophets with the tribe of Judah, and it was, therefore, a part of the divine purpose that this tribe, at least, should be preserved in its integrity until Shiloh had come. There was nothing, therefore, in either the government of Ezra or of Nehemiah which was not in harmony with the providential scheme which God was working out through the Jewish people.

(3) The Captivity restored to the Jewish community something of the ancient religious prominence of the Jewish system. It has been remarked that the priesthood came distinctly into power soon after the Return. During the fifty silent years, to which attention was called in a previous chapter, there can be no doubt about the fact that the priests and Levites came to be regarded as important factors in the new Jewish community; and while these finally fell into the disfavor of both Nehemiah and Malachi, there is abundant evidence that the people still largely followed them as their

duly authorized spiritual leaders. Undoubtedly they came to be leaders in almost every respect. Their influence was subsequently somewhat abridged by the rise of the Sopherim, or scribes, a class which ultimately became very powerful in all the affairs of the Jewish people. But during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah the priests and Levites represented the religious aspirations of the Jews. It must be confessed that these aspirations failed to realize the high ideal of the Mosaic law, but it is probable that the law never was fully realized in the life of the people. This is one of the reasons why a Divine Deliverer was necessary. The Apostle Paul tells us that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." From this it would seem that, on account of the weakness of the flesh, the fulfillment of the requirements of the law by the Jews was practically an impossibility, and that its fulfillment was reserved for us who "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit"; and, furthermore, that it can be fulfilled in us only because God's Son has "condemned sin in the flesh," and through "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" has made us "free from the law of sin and death."

Hence, notwithstanding the repeated failures of the Jews to keep the law of Moses, it is nevertheless true that the community became a much more distinctly religious organization than it was at any time during the period of the kingdom. The latter was practically a parenthesis in Jewish history. It had no proper place in the Mosaic economy; and, consequently, the new community was, in its organization, decidedly more primitive than was the kingdom. However, the realization of the high ideal was not reached at any time during the whole period of Jewish history. The prophets had called the people to a truly higher spiritual life. These flaming teachers emphasized righteousness as of much more value than ceremonial exactitude. But, after all, they regarded the letter of the law as expressive of what that righteousness should be. It was the faulty inner life more than the outward observance that the prophets condemned.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah contain no specific reference to the Messianic hope of the Jewish nation. Evidently the work of the two great reformers was confined to the immediate necessity of the Jewish people. Under their potent influence we see a gradual return to the old order of things which existed prior to the

establishment of the kingdom. The chief place among the people passes from the son of David to the high priest. Prophecy begins to give place to the absolute reign of the written law, while the influence of the scribe is clearly seen dawning upon the race. The story of Ezra and Nehemiah marks practically a new period in the history of the Jews. Legislation takes the place of the monarchy, and the sovereignty of the law rules everywhere among the Jews, whether in Babylon, Judea, Egypt, or in any other lands. Judaism is no longer confined to Palestine, but soon becomes a power in many other parts of the world; and wherever it goes it takes its governor with it, namely, the written law.

It is pleasing, however, to know that the final word of revelation, through Malachi, represents Jehovah, first, as a loving Father and Ruler of this people; second, as the supreme God and Father of all, and third, as their righteous and final Judge; and, as Malachi clearly indicates, the coming of John the Baptist, as well as the coming of the "Son of righteousness with healing in his wings," his last words practically bridge over the four hundred silent years (which followed the closing of the Old Testament Canon until the coming of the Messiah) with a distinct promise of the new age to which all Jewish history had been but a prelude. The types and shadows all have their fulfillment in Christ.

W. J. Moore



THE BLESSED FUTURE.

BOOK X.

FROM THE CLOSE OF THE OLD ERA TO THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW.

BY REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOOKS CALLED "APOCRYPHA."

WE have come to a period in the history of the Bible which someone has fancifully called the "four silent centuries." By this phrase it is meant that, between the history in the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, there is a period estimated as about four hundred years. But, in truth, this period is partly covered, in bold, figurative outline, by the Book of Daniel. And, in the books of the Apocrypha, which are more frequently printed in Bibles published in England than in those published by the American Bible Society, these 400 years are in a great measure covered. A short account of the books of the Apocrypha will be found farther on in this chapter. These centuries are not silent in any other sense than that their history scarcely comes into the Old Testament or the New. They are centuries crowded with movements, of which the history is well known, and which is of the first importance to Israel and to the world. For we have now come to a period when Israel, which has been separated from all the world, is to become the point of union of all races. We have seen an Israel, thus far, whose prophets have generally deprecated all connection with outside nations. They have taught that Israel is a peculiar people, holding special relations with the supreme God. But when we begin to read our New Testament, we find that Herod, who is king of the Jews, is but the ruler appointed by the Roman empire, mistress of all the nations of the West. We find Palestine, more than ever the Holy Land, traversed by caravans, which belong to a system of trade uniting Asia, Africa, and Europe. We find this land studded with Greek cities, bearing Greek names. The Salem of Melchizedek, the Zion of David, has received the Greek name Hierosolyma, which we call Jerusalem. We find Jesus of Nazareth speaking Greek familiarly, perhaps as his accustomed language.¹

¹ Dr. Alexander Roberts, professor in the University of St. Andrews has treated this subject fully in his

We find Jewish merchants and bankers, and colonies of other Jews, in all the important cities of the busy western world. These men, by the time of Christ, had established synagogues in most of those cities. From those synagogues yearly offerings to Jerusalem flow dutifully up regularly to the Temple. And the Jerusalem, which in David's time was a fortress which defied him for years, the Jerusalem which in later years shook off so many attacks from the East and from the South, is now a place where men gather from every section of the world as it is known in the geography of their day. Here are Medes, and Elamites, and Persians—men, indeed, from almost every country in Asia; here are Egyptians, and Lybians, and Cyrenians, and who shall say how many representatives from Africa?—here are Greeks and Romans from Europe. When our Lord is crucified, at the instance of Asiatic priests, a file of European soldiers is ordered to do their bidding, and an African bears the cross on which he is to die. The craft of Asia, the strength of Europe, and the submission of Africa appear together in the moment which is the crisis of the salvation of the world.

In the following chapters we are to trace the steps of the history which opened Israel to all mankind. And these four centuries, in the larger sense, are not silent. There are records, not so full as we could wish, but not insufficient, from which we can trace their unfolding, of which the results are remarkable.

Doctor Stanley, the distinguished Dean of Westminster, has called attention to the renewal, by which all the religious systems of all the world were awakened in the period which marked the return of the Jewish leaders from captivity. Confucius, to this hour the greatest leader of Chinese thought, could have met

book, "Greek the Language of Christ and His Apostles," London, 1888, 8vo. "The one great literary labor of his life has been," he tells us, "'to convince the world that Greek was the language habitually made use of by Christ in his public teaching.'"

and talked with Ezra, who reduced the Jewish Scriptures and system to their present form. The religion of Zoroaster, which was the religion of Cyrus, received its last important development in the same century. Socrates, with whom originated the idealism of Greece, as we know Greek thought, was born in the year 470 B. C. That is, it seems probable that Socrates, who was the contemporary of the prophet Malachi, was born before Confucius died. It thus appears that the century which witnessed the establishment of Judea as a province of the empire of Cyrus, was a century of critical importance in the religious development of all the great systems of the world's faith.

There is no immediate connection between the work, in India, of Sakya Muni or "Buddha," with the religious systems which have been referred to. But, considering the importance which his life has since held in the history of mankind, we must recollect that this life also comes into the century which we are now studying. In the recent enthusiasm of western scholars for the study of Buddhism every effort has been made to show that the system of Buddha very early affected the thought of Palestine and of Greece. Very little has been really achieved by this effort. Perhaps the most interesting suggestion which it has made is in the inquiry whether the Apostle Nathanael had not played with Buddhism, and whether the Savior did not refer to this when he said to Nathanael, "I saw thee under the fig tree." Some have supposed that he here made a reference to the Bodhi, the *Ficus religiosa*, which is the symbol of Buddhism, somewhat as the cross is the symbol of Christianity.

There seems very little probability that Buddhism had worked its way to the West in the four centuries under our view. But there is no doubt that the religious philosophy of Socrates and his pupils affected the life of all the people, Jews or Gentiles, with whom the Savior and newborn Christianity had to do. Socrates was a pure theist, who believed in one unseen Spirit as the Ruler of mankind. He would have been more than delighted had any good fortune brought to him any one of the noblest psalms of David. His religion and that of Plato, who records it, are so purely spiritual that the early Christian fathers constantly call them "Christians before Christ," and try to show what cannot be shown—that they had read the Hebrew prophecies of the Messiah. Such was the greatest religious teacher of Europe, whose religious philosophy was working in the Greek and Egyptian mind all through the period which separates the Old Testament from the New. Socrates died in

the year 399 B. C. Malachi, as has been said, was his contemporary. The first real impression which can now be traced in the literature of Greece and Rome as the result of the increasing intimacy of Israel with the West is to be found in the Sibylline books. Such references to prophecies in the Old Testament as were thus brought into western literature, are familiar even to schoolboys in Virgil's well-known poem to Pollio:

"The son shall lead the life of gods, and be
By gods and heroes seen, and gods and heroes see.
The jarring nations he in peace shall bind,
And with paternal virtues rule mankind.
The goats with strutting dugs shall homeward speed,
And lowing herds, secure from lions, feed.
His cradle shall with rising flowers be crowned;
The serpent's brood shall die; the sacred ground
Shall weeds and poisonous plants refuse to bear;
Each common bush shall Syrian roses wear.
But when heroic verse his youth shall raise,
And form it to hereditary praise,
Unlabored harvests shall the fields adorn,
And clustered grapes shall blush on every thorn;
The knotted oaks shall showers of honey weep,
And through the matted grass the liquid gold shall
creep."

It is generally supposed that the religious leader now known as Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, had proclaimed his simple and pure religion fifteen centuries before. At Baktra, "the glorious," now called Balkh, the "Mother of Cities," "he summons the princes to draw nigh and to choose between faith and superstition." Of the religion of Zoroaster the fundamental article was the identification of Truth with the Supreme Being. Of the education of the Persian youth, it was said that they were taught to speak the truth, and that here was the central law of life. From reasons which need not be here examined, this old faith of Zoroaster had just at this time been newly awakened. The influence of its revival appears in all the life of Cyrus, and in the history of the Persian dynasty afterward. Of the fundamental doctrine that truth is the God of the universe, the reader will find an illustration in the story of Zerubbabel and his speech to King Darius. "Is he not great that maketh these things? Therefore great is the truth, and stronger than all things. All the earth calleth upon the truth, and the heaven blesseth it. . . . As for the truth, it endureth, and is always strong: it liveth and conquereth forevermore. . . . Blessed be the God of truth . . . And all the people then shouted and said, Great is truth, and mighty above all things."¹

The reader must remember that, for more than a hundred years after the reestablishment of the Temple, Judea was only an outlying province of the Persian monarchy. In Jerusalem itself the Persian viceroy lived in a palace

¹ I. Esdras iv, 33-41.

close by the Temple built by Zerubbabel. His relation to the religious and social life of the Jews was quite as close as that, with which we are more familiar, between Roman governors like Pilate and the Jewish leaders in later times.

After the notices which we have of the celebration of the completion of the Temple comes a real period of silence. For seventy years we have but little detail of the history of the newly established city, or of the land of which it was the nominal capital. We have the names of the high priests in which the line was continued from Joshua, the son of Jozedek. It would seem, however, that a certain prosperity began to establish itself in the city, although it was still but thinly inhabited. The Jewish tradition, as it appears in the somewhat unreliable authority of the Talmud, makes Zerubbabel go back to Babylon to die. The English reader should remember that the name Zerubbabel means "He who has left Babel behind him." To us in America there is a certain quaint interest in the remembrance that when the great English preacher, George Phillips, crossed to Massachusetts in 1630, and a baby was born to him, he christened the little child by the name of Zerubbabel, because he wished to imply that he had left the Babel of controversy on the other side of the desert of waters.

After seventy years, however, the arrival of Ezra, to be followed soon after by the arrival of Nehemiah, gives that new life to Jerusalem of which the outside details are recorded in the books which bear their names. In the book to which the name of First Esdras is given, in the Apocrypha, some further detail, but nothing of great importance, will be found.

Meanwhile, the condition of things in the eastern empire is changing. The history recorded in the Book of Esther connects the sacred historians with those of Greece. The Ahasuerus of the Bible is the Xerxes of Herodotus. The Book of Esther is contained in all the Bibles; some chapters are added in the Apocrypha, with the general statement that they are the remainder of the Book of Esther. These chapters relate largely to the Feast of Purim, a feast still celebrated with enthusiasm among the Hebrews in all parts of the world. They contain details which fill in, with an exaggerated enthusiasm, the details of the simpler narrative in the earlier book. The critical students do not believe that these traditions have any real authority in history. The death of Xerxes is fixed, from the authority of Herodotus, as in the year 465 B. C.

The age of Malachi, the last of the prophets, may be roughly stated as extending from 480 to 400 B. C. Seventy years after the latest of these periods, the young Alexander, in the

flush of power, marched on his great campaign which was to change the face of the world. These seventy years, like the period of similar length before the work of Ezra and Nehemiah, seem to have made for Israel one of those periods of happy history of which it has been said that their annals are not written, or, if written, are not preserved. A Persian governor still lived in the city of Jerusalem, but such government as was administered was probably administered by the priesthood, well-nigh all-powerful. The jealousy between the North and the South, which had so long broken Israel asunder, had asserted itself again. Traces of it appear in all the history of the centuries which follow; but in the succession of one high priest after another, and in the other scanty annals of two generations, there is but little interest, excepting as it prepares the field for the more eventful centuries which follow.

According to the brief record of Josephus, who passes over this history in a few words, four high priests succeeded each his father, in regular hereditary succession. Johanan, the third of these, is recorded as slaying his own brother Joshua in the Temple. For this murder the general of the Persian army "punished the Jews for seven years." Such is the brief phrase of the historian, who gives no account of what the punishment was. At this time, according to their history, the temple on Mount Gerizim was built by Sanballat, who had been sent by Darius into Samaria. With the arrival of Alexander the Great and his conquering army in Asia, this period of comparative peace, which has left so short a record, ends.

The Apocrypha, as most people know, once formed an integral part of the English Bible, and was read and prized in the time of the Puritans as second only in worth to the canonical books. Perhaps the commonest impression to-day is that the Apocrypha is a collection of writings of little value, if not positively injurious. The very name has an unpleasant sound, for its original meaning, "hidden writings," has been replaced by the opprobrious one of "spurious scriptures," and a bad name is rarely a good introduction.

The word "Apocrypha" has passed through three stages. First, it was a title of praise bestowed by the Gnostics on their books of "hidden wisdom." Then it was a term of reproach given by the early Christians to the spurious gospels and other writings regarded as uninspired, expressly for the purpose of placing them in the same category as the Gnostic scriptures, which were rejected as being both unorthodox and mischievous. Afterward it was used to denote all the books

believed to be uninspired and unworthy of a place in the Canon. Now, after centuries of misconception and unjust neglect, the real character and use of the Apocrypha are becoming more widely known. We are not concerned now, as the Roman Catholics once were, to prove that nearly the whole collection should be regarded as inspired, and hence of supreme authority; but we maintain, that if all precious truth concerning God and man is divinely given, we are compelled to believe that the sublime and spiritual passages in the Apocrypha were written and have been preserved through the grace of him "from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

As there is a widespread prejudice against these writings, it may be of service to state a few of the reasons for studying them.

All history, whether of national growth and decline or of the development of moral and religious conceptions, is of great value. In fact, we cannot understand the men around us today unless we patiently read and consider the records of the past. Much of the Apocrypha is certainly not reliable history. Some of it is evidently fictitious, and in some books tame platitudes and feeble puerilities abound. Nevertheless, as the most precious metals are often found sparsely scattered amid masses of rubbish, so among these uncanonical books we may discover grains of fine gold. The real use of the Apocrypha will never be understood and appreciated unless it is regarded from the proper standpoint. When looked at as the bridge between two periods of history otherwise hopelessly sundered, we at once discover its true value. It is the connecting link in the records of an intensely interesting people, and thus affords us that sense of continuity and completeness which we all need and prize so much. It is not too much to say that our conception of the orderly growth and development of the Hebrew religion would be much less satisfactory than it is were it not for the existence of the Apocrypha.

To the student of Jewish history the value of the Apocrypha is great, for some of its books, — *e. g.*, the Books of Maccabees — afford us invaluable information about obscure periods not described elsewhere. No one can obtain an accurate and comprehensive idea either of the time "between the books" of the Old and New Testaments or of the conditions of life in Palestine, while Jesus trod her streets, and lanes, and holy fields, unless he is willing to study the much depreciated, but exceedingly useful, Apocrypha. No one can understand the orderly growth of religious doctrines — such as the doctrine of the immortality of the soul — without studying its pages. We also find many passages which throw light on the apocalyptic

symbolism, the figurative language and parabolic teaching of the Old and New Testaments.

In the New Testament, especially in John's Gospel, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the writings of Peter, Paul, and James, we find allusions to sayings in the Apocryphal books. There are also many instances of affinity of thought which can only be explained on the ground that Jesus and his apostles were well acquainted with the Apocrypha. Can there be a more interesting branch of study to Christians than that of the literature once read by Jesus and his disciples? Doubtless these writings influenced the thought and language of the disciples, and it should be a pleasant as well as a profitable task to trace the evidences that Jesus had "searched" these scriptures and found in them some of the elements which assisted his "growth in wisdom," to which Luke refers in the fifty-second verse of his second chapter. Doubtless he read them, and it is not improbable that he made use of them in his teaching, for nothing that related to Israel's past would be despised by him.

Those who love to study prophecy ought to give the most careful attention to the symbols used in the Apocryphal books, if they would gain a correct understanding of the Old Testament prophets. The same remark applies to many difficult passages in the New Testament, notably to the peculiar symbolism of the Book of Revelation. Dean Stanley says of the "Wisdom of Solomon" and "Ecclesiasticus": "They both furnish the links which connect the earlier Hebrew literature with that final outburst of religious teachings which is recorded in the gospels and epistles. The parables and discourses beside the Galilean lake, the epistles of James, of John, and of the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, have hardly any affinity with the style of Daniel or Malachi, of Tobit or of the rabbinical school, but they are the direct continuation, although in a more exalted form, of the two Apocryphal Books of Wisdom."

For these reasons, among others, we are constrained to acknowledge the great value of a careful study of these books, and to urge those who have neglected or grown tired of them to turn to them once again to see whether they may not, like Bunyan and Baxter, find "edification" and "comfort" therein. A brief account of the different writings composing this "intermediary" collection of ancient literature will be of service to those who would enter on the study of them.

The three questions most often asked in regard to any book are these: "By whom was it written? When was it written? Why was it written?" — thus showing that, after all, critics and ordinary people are very much alike.



GUERCINO.

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TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL.

First in order, though not in date, is the First Book of Esdras. Its date is unknown, but as it was written in Greek, it must belong to a time subsequent to Alexander the Great, probably about 100 B. C. It was used by Josephus as of equal authority with the canonical Scriptures of his day. The author is unknown, but was probably an Alexandrian Jew who "wished to preserve and hand down to posterity a tradition concerning the mission of Zerubbabel from the Persian court, to act as the prince of the returning captives to Jerusalem, and the chief promoter of the rebuilding of the city and Temple." The account given of this, however, is in some parts quite inconsistent with the records of the Old Testament; but the book contains many wise sentences, among others, as we have seen, the oft-quoted, "Great is truth, and mighty above all things."

The Second Book of Esdras was probably compiled by several writers, Jewish and Christian, between 25 B. C. and 260 A. D. It contains much that is noble and sublime, and, apart from the more apocryphal and legendary portions, might seem to deserve more attention than it has received from either party or late Christian authors and theologians. The inquiries into the great problems of human existence, the extensive propagation of moral evil, and the fewness of those who escape from it, are questions of much wider interest than many which have exercised the minds of theologians, and can by no means be regarded as the mere dreams of a recluse. At the same time, the contemplative life, such as was chosen by the early ascetics of Egypt, would be expected to give birth to such inquiries and speculations. When Judaism and Christianity were confronted by Pagan culture and philosophy, religious belief in the one God and Creator of all would naturally take an apologetic form in order to meet the obvious objection that he, of whom the creation of the world was asserted, and from whom all souls proceed, should have restricted his revelation to so small a portion of mankind. Hence, the perplexing thought arises that "the Most High hath made this world [or age] for many, but the world to come for few" (chapter viii, 1). The reply, in chapter viii, 47, "Thou comest far short, that thou shouldst be able to love my creature more than I"; or in chapter v, 33, "Lovest thou that people better than he that made them?" leaves the problem unsolved. Man is required to acquiesce in his ignorance of God's ways until the time of a fuller revelation shall arrive. In these visions the Apocalypse of Esdras has points of contact with Wisdom xi and xii, and with the teaching of the Epistle to the Romans on the relations of Jews and heathen to the one God of all.

Next in order comes the Book of Tobit, which Ewald thinks was composed in the far East toward the end of the Persian period, about 350 B. C. The author is not certainly known, but the advice of the good father Tobit to the good son Tobias is the very counterpart of that which a Jewish teacher of later days, addressing "the twelve tribes scattered abroad," described as "pure and undefiled religion."¹

Churton says: "The Book of Tobit must be regarded rather as a moral and instructive treatise, than as an accurate record of historical facts." It inculcates constant trust in the divine providence overruling all things for good to the upright and devout. It is also an "important Jewish testimony to the sanctity of marriage and to monogamy as the original divine institution. In this respect it affords a remarkable contrast to the corrupt and degenerate Judaism which permitted 'divorce for any cause,' thus departing from the teaching of the Prophet Malachi." By this sanction of prayers for the dead, it shows that some of the Jews of that period did not believe that at death man departs "straight to heaven or hell fixed in that state wherein he dies"; though the texts quoted from it certainly furnish slender enough support for the purgatorial institution of the Roman Church.

The intent of the writer was undoubtedly good, but the lessons he had to inculcate are almost buried beneath angel and demon stories of a most grotesque and superstitious character. Yet we must thank him for some most excellent teaching, especially for saying "God is our Father."²

The Book of Judith was probably written about 160 B. C., by one who wished to arouse a patriotic spirit among the women of his country. Luther thought it was a "good, holy, and useful book," etc., a statement which ought to make us grateful that our idea of "good, holy, and useful books" is somewhat different from that of his day. It is undoubtedly a wholly fictitious narrative, the "first unquestionable example of a religious romance. It is the story of Jael reënacted in the midst of the pomp and luxury of Persia or Syria, and is said to have nerved the hand of Charlotte Corday against Marat. It was the last direct expression of the fierce spirit of the older Judaism."³ It is a picture of a fanatical woman who, to save her people, risks her virtue and life in the attempt to destroy their fanatical foes. The days are gone by for such actions and such stories, and we need not regret it.

After Judith we come to "The Rest of the Chapters of the Book of Esther, which are

¹ James i, 27.

² Tobit xiii, 4.

³ Stanley.

found neither in the Hebrew nor the Chaldee." Very little loss would have been sustained if these chapters had never been found anywhere. The writer was probably a Jew residing in Egypt about 180 B. C. He appears to have aimed to show that the deliverance of the Jews recorded in the canonical Book of Esther was a special interposition of divine providence in answer to prayer. Also, he wished to "vindicate the character of Esther, who, though a daughter of Israel, had been willing to become the consort or concubine of a heathen prince." It is not regarded by scholars as having any historical value, but Clement of Rome referred to it as containing an edifying example of the value of prayer, fasting, and humiliation.

Next in order comes "The Wisdom of Solomon," one of the most valuable books in the whole of the Apocryphal writings. Grotius suggested that it was compiled from traditional sayings of Solomon; others have attributed it to the gifted Alexandrian Jew, Philo; but neither of these theories can be maintained. In all probability the book was written by a learned and devout Jew of Alexandria, not earlier than 160 B. C. He was evidently well versed both in the Hebrew Scripture and in the philosophy of Plato. "He was one of the earlier of those Jewish teachers who sought the aid of Greek learning and culture, in order to bring out with greater fullness the hidden meaning of the Law and the Prophets." One writer has called this book "an excellent and most elegant paraphrase upon many canonical Scriptures, containing many excellent expressions of God's special providence and infinite wisdom in governing the world, and in overruling both the policy and the power of the greatest princes."

The author wished to uphold the purity and excellence of his religion against those who attacked or disparaged it. Even at this early date the Grecian philosophers and others had denounced the fierce exterminatory wars of the Israelites. They maintained that God had not shown impartiality in his dealings with mankind. These points the writer of the "Wisdom" endeavored to meet. He pleaded that God had shown care and made provision for all men. Truth was never withheld from any who had sought it; moreover, God had often revealed himself to those who sought him not. Wisdom is communicated liberally, and God, from whom wisdom proceeds, is a "lover of the souls of men." It is true, Israel had been chosen as the Lord's firstborn; not, however, to exclusively possess the divine law, but as a means to impart it to the whole world.

Idolatry is fully and vigorously denounced as not only a foolish superstition, but as sinful and injurious to man's welfare.

The immortality of the soul is strictly maintained and the future glory and happiness of the righteous are described in glowing language. Man's soul is lent to him, and at death required again by the Great Owner of all. The author has much resembling the teaching of Plato. "Let our strength be the law of justice," has been compared with similar language in Plato's "Republic." "The conception of wisdom in chapter vii, 17, is Platonic, especially as embracing all kinds of science, the 'knowledge of things that are.' Wisdom, being an 'influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty,' answers exactly to the Platonic idea of the divine mind or reason. In chapter viii, 7, the four cardinal virtues of temperance, prudence, justice, and fortitude are evidently derived from the same source.¹ In these and other instances the author shows an anxiety to find points of contact between the Hebrew religion and Platonism."

Dean Stanley, who was an enthusiastic admirer of the "Wisdom," says: "It is the expression of an Alexandrian sage presenting his Grecian ideas under the forms of Jewish history. We feel with him the oppressive atmosphere of the elaborate Egyptian idolatry. We see through his eyes the ships passing along the Mediterranean waters into the Alexandrian harbor. We recognize the rhetoric of the Grecian sophists in the Ptolemean court; we are present at the luxurious banquets and lax discussions of the neighboring philosophers of Cyrene.² But in the midst of this Gentile scenery there is a voice which speaks with the authority of the ancient prophets to this new world. The book is a signal instance of the custom prevalent in the two centuries before the Christian era, both in the Jewish and Gentile world, of placing modern untried writings under the shelter of some venerable authority. No name appeared for this purpose so mighty as that of the great master of the wisdom of Israel. Solomon is evoked from the dead to address the rulers of mankind. 'Love righteousness, ye that are judges of the earth. Hear, therefore, O ye kings, and understand; for your power is given unto you of the Lord, and your dominion from the Most High, who shall try your works and search out your counsels. Being ministers of his kingdom, ye have not judged aright, nor kept the law, nor walked after the counsel of God.'³ It is the first strong expression uttered with the combined force of Greek freedom and Hebrew solemnity, not of the divine right, but of the divine duty of kings; and it might well be provoked by the spectacle of the corrupt rulers, whether of the Egyptian or Syrian dynasties. The importance

¹ Aristotle.

² Wisdom vi, 9-12.

³ Wisdom vi, 1-4.

of wisdom and the value of justice had often been set forth before, both by Jew and Greek. But there is a wider and more tender grasp of the whole complex relation of the intellectual and moral excellence, and, therefore, of the whole ideal of true religion, in the indications which this book contains of the universal workings of the divine mind in the heart of man."¹

"In one special quarter of the religious horizon there is a revelation which this unknown author is the first to proclaim, with the authority of firm conviction and deep insight, whether to the Gentile or the Jew, namely, the revelation of 'the hope of immortality,' the immortality of righteousness."²

"In the Psalmists and Prophets there had been bright anticipations of such a hope, inseparable from their unflinching assurance of the power and goodness of the Eternal. But it had never taken the form of a positive, distinct assertion. In the Grecian world a vast step forward was taken in the Platonic representations of the last teachings of Socrates. The seed thus sown by the doctrine of Athenian philosophy fell on the deep soil of a Hebrew faith, struck root downward to a depth from which it has never since been eradicated, and bore fruit upward, which has sustained the moral life of Christendom to this hour. Nor is it only the force and pathos with which this truth of a future existence is urged, but the grounds on which it is based, that fill the soul and intensify the teaching of this Jewish Phædo. It is founded on these two convictions, which, alike to the most philosophic and the most simple minds, still seem the most cogent—the imperfection of a good man's existence if limited to this present life; and the firm grasp of the divine perfections. 'The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die; but they are in peace.' 'He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time.' 'God created man to be immortal, and made him an image of his own eternity. To know God is perfect righteousness. To know his power is the root of immortality.'"³

This book has been dealt with at greater length than the others, because with Ecclesiasticus it "towers" far above them and has ever been held in great esteem even by those who disparage the rest of the Apocrypha. It is the "recommendation of the theology of Alexandria to Palestine," just as Ecclesiasticus is the "recommendation of the theology of Palestine to Alexandria." To those who doubt the possibility of conveying the religious

thought of a nation to one radically different, these two books are specially commended. Greek religious thought *was* received by the Jews, and Hebrew religious thought *was* assimilated by the Greeks, to the lasting advantage of both peoples and the whole world.

Ecclesiasticus, or as its original title runs, "The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach," was "The Church Book," the "Whole Duty of Man," "The Imitation," of the Jews of Alexandria and afterward of the early Christians. The author, Jesus the Son of Sirach, probably wrote it about 235 B. C. He was one of the earliest and best Biblical students. After prolonged and earnest study, he felt that he had learned much of value to himself and mankind generally. This led him to write his book and the same motive prompted his grandson some fifty years later—185 B. C.—to translate it from Hebrew into Greek. "It was a noble ambition, alike of the grandfather and the grandson, to carry into the most minute duties of daily life the principles of their ancient law—'laboring not for himself only, but for all who seek learning.' It is, perhaps, the only one of the Apocryphal books composed originally not in Greek, but in Hebrew; and the translator well knew the difficulty of rendering the peculiarities of his native tongue into the fluent language of Alexandria. It is the first reflection which we possess on the Old Testament Scriptures after the commencement of the formation of the Canon. And if not the largest book in the whole Bible (for the Psalms and possibly the book of Isaiah's prophecies exceed it), yet it is certainly the largest of one single author."¹

"Jerusalem is still the center, and Palestine the horizon of his thoughts. The priesthood, with their offerings, their dues, and their stately appearance, are to him the most prominent figures of the Jewish community. Nor is the modern institution of the scribes forgotten. He draws his images of grandeur from the cedars of Lebanon, the fir trees that clothe the sides of Hermon, and from the terebinth with its spreading branches. His images of beauty are taken from the palm trees in the tropical heat of Engedi, or from the roses and lilies and fragrant shade by the well-watered gardens of Jericho. It is, after Malachi, the one specimen of a purely Palestinian treatise during this period."²

"The author, although his birthplace and his home were in Jerusalem, was yet a traveler in foreign lands; he knew the value, even if he had the actual experience of 'serving among great men and before princes,' he tried the good and evil among men."³

¹ Compare Wisdom i, 7, ii, 16-18, vi, 17, 18, vii, 22-27, xi, 26.

² Wisdom i, 15, iii, 4.

³ Wisdom ii, 23, iii, 1, 2, iv, 13, xv, 3.

¹ Stanley. ² Stanley. ³ Ecclesiasticus xxxix, 4, li, 13.

"In some respects it falls below the dignity of the ancient writings of Solomon by the homeliness of its details for guidance of behavior, etc. But its general tone is worthy of that first contact between the two great civilizations of the ancient world, and breathes a spirit which an Isaiah would not have condemned. There is not a word in it to countenance the minute casuistries of the later Rabbis, or the metaphysical subtleties of the later Alexandrians. It pours out its whole strength in discussing the conduct of human life, or the direction of the soul to noble aims. 'It is not meet to despise a poor man that hath understanding, neither is it convenient to magnify a sinful man. Great men, and judges, and potentates shall be honored, yet there is none of them greater than he that feareth the Lord.'¹ 'Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord shall fight for thee.'²

"There is a tender compassion which reaches far into the future religion of mankind: 'Let it not grieve thee to bow down thine ear to the poor and give him a friendly answer with gentleness.'³ He must have been a delightful teacher who could so write of friendship in all its forms and rise above the harshness of his relations to his slaves."⁴

"The conclusion is, beyond question, original. It is the song of praise,⁵ which, beginning with the glories of the Creation, breaks forth into that 'Hymn of the Forefathers,' as it is called in its ancient title, to which there is no parallel in the Old Testament, but of which the catalogue of the worthies of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews is an obvious imitation. Here, and here only, is a full expression given to that natural instinct of reverence for the mighty dead, which has in these striking words been heard from generation to generation in the festivals of the great benefactors of Christendom, or when the illustrious of the earth are committed to the grave."⁶

In conclusion, we must call attention to the writer's doctrine that obedience to the moral law is far better than material sacrifices and ritual services.⁷ Forgiveness of injuries is affirmed to be the condition of obtaining mercy from the Lord.⁸ It is true that we find elements of "wood, hay, and stubble," but the gold and silver prevail, for, though there are maxims "commending worldly prudence or even subtlety," yet most of the moral sayings are based on the higher wisdom of the fear of God. In common with the "Wisdom of Solomon," the book insists on the duty of impart-

ing to others the treasures of knowledge which have been gained by prayer, study, and divine aid, thus inculcating the generous use of what has been so liberally given by God and anticipating the beautiful, sweet reasonableness of the words of Jesus, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

The so-called "Additions to the Books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Lamentations" are not in the English Bible of 1611 with the other Apocryphal books, but Churton includes them in his work. They consist of a few brief fragments, with no sufficient evidence of their genuineness. Nearly, if not quite, all the useful words in them can be found in our canonical Scriptures, and the rest are of no account whatever.

The "Book of Baruch" was probably not all written at one time; some portions may be as early as 350 B. C., while some are almost certainly as late as 100 B. C.—possibly even later. How much, if any, of it was derived from the writings of Baruch is not known. It contains two parts, the Epistle of Baruch the Scribe, which was evidently intended by the compiler "to encourage the Jews in a time of national trouble and perplexity, by leading them to reflect on the past glory of the Law, and the yet greater glory of the sayings of the prophets concerning their future." The second part is the "spurious" Epistle of Jeremy, which was probably written in Egypt as a reiteration of the early prophetic warnings against idolatry with the design of confirming the Jews in their adherence to the true religion while they were surrounded by the influences of paganism. As a book of prayer and praise, the Book of Baruch was doubtless suitable for the needs of the time in which it was written, though we find very little of value beyond what we possess in the Old Testament prophets.

Next we come to the "Additions to the Book of Daniel." The first section contains the prayer and "Song of the Three Hebrew Children," which is one of the most beautiful of all the ancient hymns of adoration to God. It has always held an honored place in the leading liturgies down to the present day. The second part is the "Story of Susanna," which may have been written, as the conclusion of it in the Septuagint tells us, "to show how, when the elders or aged men of Israel had corrupted their ways, God would raise up witnesses to his truth and righteousness amongst their young men." It is doubtless the invention of a prurient mind; and even if it was designed to censure faults in the administration of the Sanhedrim, and to inculcate morality, there is every reason to believe that it has done much to bring the Apocryphal writings into disrepute, and has also suggested more

¹ Ecclesiasticus x, 22-25.

² Ecclesiasticus iv, 28.

³ Ecclesiasticus iv, 8.

⁴ Stanley.

⁵ Ecclesiasticus xlii, 15, 1.

⁶ Stanley.

⁷ Ecclesiasticus xxxv, 1, etc.

⁸ Ecclesiasticus xxviii, 2-7.

impure thoughts than it has ever restrained. The third part is the history of "Bel and the Dragon," a grotesque fiction intended to expose the impostures of idol worship and to exalt the true religion of the Hebrews. The authors and dates of these "Additions" are unknown.

The "Prayer of Manasses" is probably an attempt by some Jewish teacher to extol the everlasting mercy of God, and to set forth the value of penitence and prayer even to the vilest men. Probably it was written not long before the Christian era. The author is unknown, but the prayer is an eloquent and beautiful expression of deep penitence, blended with a strong assurance of obtaining forgiveness.

As the "Wisdom" and "Ecclesiasticus" stand highest of all the Apocryphal writings for their noble moral teaching, so the First Book of Maccabees takes the first place for interesting and reliable history. It was probably written about 125 B. C. Who its author was has not been ascertained, but his book has always been highly valued as giving most important information on a section of history of which comparatively little is known. "The book extends over a period reaching from the death of Alexander the Great to the first year of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus; though it is chiefly the narrative of the events of forty years of Jewish history, from 175 to 135 B. C." Dr. Pusey says: "The First Book of Maccabees is generally allowed to be an accurate record. It is a proof of the antiquity of the work that the simple, unsuspecting trust reposed by Judas Maccabæus in the Roman people is such as would never have been expressed at a later period, when Rome's wider dominion and more extended ambition became the terror of the nations. Besides his admiration of the Roman character, the author shows a minute acquaintance with facts, places, and customs, such as would be expected in one who was nearly contemporary with the matters related." Critics have discovered errors in it, but they appear to be purely accidental as well as unimportant, such as the estimates given of the numbers of the armies, and of the strength of the elephants — new, strange beasts, which doubtless puzzled a Jewish writer to describe accurately. Still the narrative is of a high character and lights up a period of oppression and tyranny with the glory of heroism and devotion to the cause of truth and righteousness.

The Second Book of Maccabees was, in all probability, written by an Alexandrian Jew about 80 B. C. The object of the writer is to give an account of the circumstances under which Judas Maccabæus began his victorious campaign against the Syrians and accomplished so much toward securing independ-

ence for his people. It contains many errors, but its author plainly avows that his aim was not so much to write an exact history as to inculcate lessons of devotion, patriotism, and piety. The style is inflated and the taste very poor, yet the value of the book is considerable, because for the four or five years preceding the commencement of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes — 180 to 175 B. C. — it is our sole authority.¹ It is also valuable as giving a much more full and exact account of the events of the years from 176 to 166 B. C. than is given in the First Book of Maccabees.

Evidently the writer was a pious and God-fearing man whose sympathies were entirely with the orthodox Pharisaic party who wished to keep to the old traditions and avoid all Gentile innovations. He desired to promote a more strict observance of the Jewish festivals by his countrymen in Egypt and to strengthen their reverence for the temple services in Jerusalem. He had a strong conviction that all things are under the rule of divine providence; hence he urges absolute obedience to the law and unshaken trust in God's protective care over all his saints. If he allows them to be afflicted, it is only to purify and discipline them. Even if they suffer death, it is still for the best, since they will surely be rewarded at the resurrection of the just.

Thus ends the Apocrypha as given in the English Bible of 1611, but in Churton's Apocrypha, the Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees are included. These are much inferior to the two we have described. It should be mentioned, however, that the Third Book of Maccabees contains many noble sentiments, and that the Fourth is remarkable for its strong expressions of faith in the reality of future rewards and punishments, and the contrast between things temporal and things eternal. Hence, though of much less value than the First and Second Maccabees, they are yet quite worthy of a place in the Maccabean literature.

There are other ancient writings sometimes called Apocryphal, and sometimes "spurious" Scriptures, of which we can here give only the briefest account.

The Fifth Book of Maccabees is at present little known. It is thought to have been compiled by a Jew, and purports to be a history of his people from 186 to 6 B. C. If it had been a plain, independent account it would have been most useful, but it is simply a reproduction in a less trustworthy form of what may be found in all its essential features in the Maccabean books and Josephus. Its religious teaching is similar to that in First and Second Maccabees, though a development is observed in its state-

¹ II. Maccabees iii, iv, 6.

ment of the doctrine of the future state. The authorship is not known; it may have been written as late as 70 A. D.

The Book of Enoch, probably written before 160 B. C., was the work of a Palestinian Jew. It has attracted attention because of the quotation from it found in the Epistle of Jude; but it is mainly composed of records of grotesque visions. An account of it will be given in a later chapter.

The "Psalter of Solomon" — which does not claim to have been written by him — was most likely composed about 63 B. C. It does not possess many important features, except the resemblance between some passages and certain parts of the Gospels, which has led some scholars to think it was one of the books read by Jesus in his home at Nazareth. It is the first book in which the word "Messiah" is used.

The "Apocalypse of Baruch," the "Assumption of Moses," the "Ascension of Isaiah," the "Book of Jubilees," the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," and over a score of others are mainly pious frauds, of no use to anyone except scholars who wish to study the peculiar growth and expression of the religious ideas of that interesting period just preceding and succeeding the Christian era. They are of service, also, because they show us that the conscience

of that time did not condemn the issuing of books under fictitious titles and containing false versions of events, provided the intention of the writer was to edify mankind, promote morality, or arouse the patriotic feeling of the people.

A critic says: "A large number of such spurious writings are *happily* lost or forgotten." It may be so; nevertheless, when all that remains has been thoroughly investigated by scholars, we shall gain, as the result, a more accurate idea of the progress of religious thought and a more connected view of the real condition of the world during that important period of its history. Doctor Edersheim's "Life of Jesus, the Messiah" shows us how much more lifelike and clear that wonderful life can be made to appear to people of the present day — especially those living in western lands — by the patient study of dry and unpromising materials. No study is grander and more elevating than the study of man's religious conceptions. The blurred records of man's dealings with his Maker in the past touch us with pathetic force, and, from their very imperfection and broken utterance, and weighty testimony to the inspiring and consoling belief that "the hand that made us is divine," will work with us forever.

CHAPTER II.

FROM 423 TO 323 B. C.—NEHEMIAH TO ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

THE period between the Old Testament prophets and the advent of Jesus Christ has been called the "silent centuries." It is, however, by no means a correct designation, for "God hath not left himself without witness" at any time, and during the special season of trial and change his Spirit continued to "move," and inspire, and comfort not less than in the ancient days.

It is true, however, that less is recorded of the events of this century — that is, from the time of Nehemiah to the death of Alexander the Great — than of any period in Jewish history after the reign of David. Josephus, who helps us to fill up some gaps and to understand certain difficulties in the Bible, has written only a few lines about this obscure period.

These few lines let in enough light for us to see that the priests of that day were "men of like passions" with the common people. About 354 B. C., in the reign of Artaxerxes II., one of his generals, an avaricious man, named Bagoses, who had succeeded in raising himself to a position of great power under the Persian monarch, was commander of the troops in Syria and Phœnicia. Like most oriental offi-

cial, he took advantage of his position to amass wealth. The high priest Johanan had a brother, named Joshua, who sent bribes to Bagoses with the design of getting the office for himself. Bagoses received the money and promised the high priesthood to Joshua, who went to the Temple, probably, to announce his success to his brother. Johanan was enraged at such conduct; a fight took place, and Joshua was killed. When Bagoses heard of it he proceeded to Jerusalem under the pretext of punishing Johanan for resisting the Persian authority and slaying his brother. In reality his motive was to use the opportunity to extort more money for himself. He accordingly ordered the people to pay a fine of 50 drachmas for every lamb offered in sacrifice and to bring the money every morning before the sacrifice was performed. Probably this expiatory tax amounted to more than ten thousand dollars per year. And for seven long years the Jewish people had to pay it; when the Persian monarch died it was remitted. Bagoses also violated the precept which forbade any layman to enter the Sanctuary, and when the priest pointed to the decree of prohibition, and

attempted to prevent his intrusion, he tauntingly asked, "Am not I purer than the dead body of him you slew in the Temple?"

This seems to have been the first time that the office of high priest was made an object of intrigue; afterward it was bought and sold, to the serious degradation of the priestly dignity and the injury of religion. The rulers of Judah considered themselves qualified to appoint the occupant of the holy office and made it a means of gain. This story of Johanan and his brother does not give us a favorable opinion of the spirit which existed in the family of the high priest.

It was well for the Jewish religion that its existence and growth did not depend on the priests and Levites. There were many godly men and women who did far more for the preservation and extension of the knowledge of God than those who professed to be the teachers and guardians of the truth. When prophet and priest erred and strayed from the right way, the simple, devout people who feared God and strove to keep his commandments, held fast their integrity and trained their children to imitate the ancient saints and heroes.

One very important development of the religious system of the Jews probably took place during the Persian era. The synagogue became one of the chief supports of Judaism, but of the circumstances attending its commencement we know very little. Probably we shall be safe in ascribing its origin and extension to the need felt by the people for more help in their religious life than was furnished by private devotion and occasional visits to the Temple at Jerusalem. Some have thought that Ezra was the founder of the synagogue. He is also said to have originated the sects of Pharisees and scribes. But origins are often difficult to trace, and especially so when they belong to periods of war and disturbance. It is, however, both interesting and important to observe that even in this dull, silent century (423-323 B. C.), some progress was being made, and that in the hearts of the people existed the desire to know more of God and his law.

The Captivity had taught the Jews that their religious life could be maintained at a distance from Jerusalem and its grand services. When ritual could not be performed, they turned their energies to the teaching of their children and neighbors, to reading their Scriptures, and to private devotion. It is in the furnace of affliction that the richest experience is acquired; men "learn in suffering what they teach in song!" By enforced absence from their own country the Jews learned the lesson of independence—a lesson which, in all probability, they would never have learned if they had remained in peace and prosperity at home. Its

immense value was not apparent until they returned to their own land. When they reached Jerusalem, their first desire was to build the Temple and reestablish its services. In spite of great difficulties this was accomplished, but the troubled state of the country, caused by Samaritans and others, prevented many people from visiting Jerusalem in order to perform their vows and hear the reading and exposition of the law. The synagogues, therefore, were instituted throughout the land to meet the wishes of the people for more religious instruction. Thus defeat, captivity, hindrances, and disturbances all worked together for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

One of the good results of the synagogue services was the diffusion of copies of the sacred writings throughout the land. The scribes, who appear to have been few in the time of Ezra, increased in number. They made copies of the Scriptures, read them in the synagogue and expounded them to the people. This not only conveyed to all the wise and beautiful words of comfort and counsel uttered by the seers and prophets of old, but in addition the multiplication of rolls of the holy writings helped to prevent the annihilation of the Hebrew Scriptures in the dark days of Antiochus Epiphanes. A Temple library and the few rolls possessed by priests may be easily destroyed, but when copies of the written Word have become the cherished treasure of hundreds of people, it is impossible for tyrants or bigots to burn all of them, however they may strive to do so.

A further advantage was that no one could plead ignorance as an excuse for violating the moral law, for the scribes had made it possible for the religious teacher to say, "The Word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

Kuener tells that it was in this period that "Temple song and Temple poetry were at their prime." The service itself had assumed a more spiritual character and had been made to minister less to symbolic representation, and more to the clear expression of moral and religious thoughts. Thus this "silent" Persian period was by no means a time of barrenness or starvation, for God who works unceasingly, influences his children and leads them to be coworkers with him.

The comparative peace of the Jews while they were under Persian rule was no doubt partly caused by the affinities of belief between the two nations. With some important differences, it was yet true that there was more resemblance between their religious customs and ideas than between those of any other peoples of antiquity. As the result of these similarities in their religions, it became possible for

each race to learn valuable lessons from the other. Both nations had a high conception of the Supreme Being; both believed in heavenly hosts occupied in his service as messengers to mankind. They both forbade the use of images, and both discountenanced the immoralities allowed if not enjoined by the religious systems of some of the neighboring nations.

The Jews believed in one Great Cause; the Persians in the dual powers of good and evil, light and darkness. On the doctrine of God, the Jew doubtless contributed something to elevate the conceptions of the Persians, while the doctrines of the resurrection and immortality were rendered clearer and more convincing to the Jews by the contributions the Persians brought to them on these subjects. As one writer expresses it, "the germs which lay hidden in Judaism were fertilized by contact with a religion in which they had arrived at maturity. Thus life's storms and changes enlighten mankind, men run to and fro, and knowledge is increased." On the whole, earth's antagonisms destroy evil and develop goodness. The psalms of the Captivity are among the most beautiful as well as the most profound in the Bible. Graetz says: "While the Exile lasted, the grief and longing, which kept the captives in constant and breathless expectation, brought forth the fairest blossoms of prophecy and poetry." In the same way the contact with Persian thought aroused the Jews to fresh mental exertions, which proved their capacity and worth as religious teachers and thinkers.

In the year 334 B. C., Alexander the Great began his campaign against Persia. He soon triumphed over Darius III. The Jews had been very loyal to the Persian monarchs and might have been disposed to resist Alexander; but the reputation of his valor and mighty army had been carried everywhere, and for once in its history the little nation of Palestine had sufficient sense not to resist where there was no chance of success. Arnold in his "Rome" gives a graphic picture of the resistless march of Alexander and the impression it created on the mind of the world: "Asia beheld with astonishment and awe the uninterrupted progress of a hero, the sweep of whose conquests was as wide and as rapid as that of her own barbaric kings or of the Scythian or Chaldean hordes; but, far unlike the transient whirlwinds of Asiatic warfare, the advance of the Macedonian leader was no less deliberate than rapid. At every step the Greek power took root and the language and civilization of Greece were planted from the shores of the Ægean Sea to the banks of the Indus, from the Caspian and the great Hyrcanian plain to the cataracts of the Nile; to exist actually for nearly a thousand years and in their effects

to endure forever. In the tenth year after he had crossed the Hellespont, Alexander, having won his vast dominion, entered Babylon, and resting from his career in that oldest seat of earthly empire, he steadily surveyed the mass of various nations which owned his sovereignty and revolved in his mind the great work of breathing into this huge but inert body the living spirit of Greek civilization. In the bloom of youthful manhood, at the age of thirty-two, he paused from the fiery speed of his earlier course, and for the first time gave the nations an opportunity of offering their homage before his throne. They came from all the extremities of the earth, to celebrate his greatness or to solicit his protection." It was in his early, dashing, victorious days that he "ran in the fury of his power," overthrew the forces of Persia, and won a world-wide reputation and an almost universal empire.

No wonder, then, that when, in the year 333 B. C., he visited Jerusalem the Jews promptly submitted to his rule. As they peaceably accepted his sovereignty, he dealt kindly with them, "granted free use of their ancestral laws, and especially of the year of jubilee inaugurated so solemnly a hundred years before under Nehemiah; he promised to befriend the Jewish settlements of Babylonia and Media and invited any who were so disposed to serve in his army." Under Alexander the Jews seem to have lived in peace and quietness in the enjoyment of their religious rites and undisturbed by the wars and commotions of the world outside Palestine. In the year 323 B. C., Alexander died, and his dominions were divided among his generals, Judea becoming a province of the Egyptian kingdom of Ptolemy Soter. But the introduction of Greek influence into Palestine by Alexander was destined to produce marvelous effects, not only on the Jews, but through them on the world. The religious thought of the world to-day is very different from what it would have been if the New Testament had not been written in Greek; and, the influence of Grecian philosophic and religious ideas on the constitution, the doctrines, and the spirit of the Christian Church has been simply marvelous. We have reaped the advantages of Alexander's conquest; but to the Jews this infusion of Greek ideas proved the fruitful cause of strife, division, and calamity.

From the days of Ezra and Nehemiah — perhaps even earlier — the germs were gradually developing which finally found manifestation in the Jewish sects, or schools of religious thought. Of these most important were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

THE PHARISEES. We have no clear and full accounts of the rise of these different schools

of thought, and hence we can only faintly trace the connection between the separatist or puritan party of Ezra, and the Chasidim or the "Pious" who become numerous and influential by the time of the Maccabean revolt, and the Pharisees who were so powerful in the days of John Hyrcanus—135 B. C. Still, there is no doubt the Chasidim were the religious descendants of Ezra's puritans, and the Pharisees were the successors of the Chasidim. Many Christians are somewhat hard in their judgment of the Pharisees; the conflict between them and Jesus Christ led them to take an active part in the controversy which caused him to be put to death. For their conduct on this occasion they have always been under a ban; but there is no doubt that in their early days the Pharisees were among the most zealous for the Jewish religion, and rendered good service in resisting the lax and idolatrous tendencies of the people. It was not easy then, any more than it is now, to come forward and protest against worldliness; and yet the Pharisees did this with unflinching courage and persistency. The very name "Pharisee" was probably a term of reproach. They called themselves the "Associates"; their opponents styled them the "Separatists," and ridiculed their professedly pious isolation and rigid attention to the minute details of the laws and rites of the Jewish code.

One admirable trait in their character must not be forgotten. Originally they took the side of the poor against their rich exactors, and the part of the people against their powerful oppressors. Moreover, anyone, whatever his station, could join the ranks of the Pharisees, while the Sadducees formed a select social order, which none but Aaron's descendants or the sons of distinguished families could enter. A scribe or Sadducee might feel free to swim with the popular stream, but a Pharisee was bound to maintain at all cost the tenets of his party. Had there been no resolute upholders of the strict letter of the law, it is difficult to see how the Jews would have been preserved from becoming degraded, licentious idolaters, "like to the nations about them."

In course of time the Pharisees became more powerful and less popular, and in the days of Jesus by far the majority of the scribes belonged to their party. Hence, they are often mentioned together in the Gospels as partners in crafty and unrighteous schemes to acquire "widows' houses," and also everything else within reach. Doubtless the Pharisees, as a class, deserved all the "woes" Jesus hurled at them, and yet there must have been many among such a large body, who, like Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, Hillel, and Gamaliel, were earnest, self-denying, God-fearing men. Some of them, we know, believed in

Jesus, and in later days Pharisees took Paul's part when he was in great disfavor and danger. Hence we ought not to think so hardly of them as some Christians do, nor condemn a whole sect because many of its members were unworthy and wicked.

A gifted Jewess¹ writes thus of the Pharisees: "The Pharisees were rigid upholders of the law. They believed it to be the guiding rule of life, not only for the individual but for the State. They tightened and narrowed while they strengthened the obligations of the law. They insisted not only on a high standard of duty, but on the most minute observance of every precept, Mosaic and traditional. To be always dreadfully in earnest makes a man a distinctly uncomfortable companion. The zeal of the Pharisees might make them pious and devout, might render them first-rate martyrs, and even very tolerable bigots, but hardly, under any circumstances, good courtiers. The Sadducees must always have been pleasanter people to live with. In the fighting days, the 'zealous' Chasidim had been a very satisfactory court circle of soldiers for the warlike Maccabees, and the first two priest-kings were well content to find their mainstay in the Pharisaic faction. But as things grew more settled and peaceful, the Pharisees grew more exacting, somewhat irksome companions. The numerous restrictions which traditional law enforces on the will and desires of man made princes and courtiers look on the Pharisees as uncomfortable people, as obstacles."

We have endeavored to do full justice to the virtues of the Pharisees. They were conscientious, conservative guardians of the law, and yet they were sufficiently open-minded to accept the later and clearer views regarding the immortality of the soul. But with them, as with many other earnest people in various lands and at different periods, zeal degenerated into unreasoning bigotry, so that they finally "reached the point at which lofty aspirations petrify into hard dogmatic form, at which patriots become partisans and saints are turned into fanatics, and the holiest names are perverted into by-words and catch-words." This state is fatal to candid study, to clear perception of truth, and to that spirituality which intuitively discerns the prophet of God and welcomes his message. Consequently, the Pharisees, instead of accepting Jesus of Nazareth as a teacher sent by God, disdainfully rejected his Gospel, and joined hands with those who put him to death. Blindness had overtaken them through their neglect of the internal reality for external affairs and innumerable rites. They could not recognize the real character and

¹ K. Magnus.

aims of Jesus, for if they had, "they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory," nor have allowed others to do so. We see the errors of the Pharisees, but the same mistake is made by members of Christian churches now. Men and women, of whom the world is not worthy, are persecuted—sometimes sacrificed—by the same blind, intolerant spirit which in ancient days possessed the Jewish Pharisees.

THE SADDUCEES. "The name Sadducee was probably derived from the word 'Tsedakah,' or 'Righteousness,' which was the leading watchword of the party. The Sadducees were more correctly regarded as a class than as a sect. If Rabbis and scribes were often the representatives of the Pharisees, the Sadducees were represented by the official leaders of the nation. Many of the priests were Sadducees, and for a considerable time the head of the State was also the high priest. The Sadducees had no taste for the painful strictness and self-denial of the Pharisees. They were satisfied with the law as it appeared in the written code, without adopting the oral tradition on which the Pharisees laid so much stress. They were contented with the reputation of being 'just' (as their name implied) and fulfilling the requirements of the law, without aspiring to the reputation of 'sanctity'; that is, of increasing the minute distinctions between themselves and their Gentile neighbors. Their view of human conduct was that it was within the control of a man's own will, and was not overruled by the decrees of fate; their view of the future existence was that, as in the Mosaic law, a veil was drawn across it, and that, according to the saying of Antigonus of Socho, men were not to be influenced by the hope of future reward and punishment."¹

As a rule, the Sadducees took life much less seriously than the Pharisees did, and were content to observe the principal rites of Judaism without disturbing themselves about every detail. The future world—if such existed—was quite a distinct realm from the present, far less interesting in itself, and worthy of only a secondary place in human estimation. Many were rich, and in their riches found considerable "consolation" for the ills of this present life; heaven was too uncertain or too distant to seem worth much anxiety.

The Pharisees had, on their side, learning and numbers; the Sadducees, wealth, culture, and often aristocratic connections. To make use of modern political terms, we may say that the Sadducees considered themselves liberals, and that the Pharisees were, by contrast, decidedly conservative in their aims. The Sadducee, in fact, rather prided himself on his

liberal principles. He would have told you that he cordially admitted every man's right to his opinions, and that he never meddled with other people's observance. Sects often quarrel, and the Pharisees and Sadducees were no exceptions to the general rule; but there can be little doubt that this perpetual contention was in the end better for the Jews than the exclusive dominance of either school of thought. A nation composed entirely of Sadducees would have eventually lost all spiritual religion, and a nation of Pharisees discussing theories and performing endless rites would have drifted into starvation or anarchy.

"The Sadducees, of course, had no religious or theological system of their own. Who would look for one in an aristocratic political party?" It is often asserted that they rejected the whole of the Old Testament, except the Pentateuch. This is incorrect, for in the records of their controversies which have been preserved in the Talmud, no trace can be found of their setting aside either the whole of the Prophets and writings, nor even of the traditions which were so venerated by the Pharisees. They acted as a check on the narrowness and unpractical ways of the Pharisees, and thus did good service; but they were unprogressive, unsympathetic, and did little or nothing to encourage study and aspiration after the highest and noblest things.

The typical Sadducee doubtless cherished a special admiration for the Book of Ecclesiastes, not only because it contained his creed, but also a very interesting and congenial expression of his favorite philosophy of men and things. The high priest who condemned Jesus was a Sadducee, and no doubt he and many of his party had a considerable share in causing his death; but, to be just toward them, we must remember that they were largely influenced by the thought expressed in John xi, 50: "It is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Therefore, to prevent national calamity, they helped to destroy one whose whole life had been spent in doing good, the teacher, friend, and lover of his people.

THE ESSENES. "The most probable explanations of the word Essene point not to a personal leader or founder, but to the moral and social characteristics of the school. It indicates either the 'watchful contemplation,' or the 'affectionate devotion,' or the 'silent thoughtfulness' of those who retired from the strife of parties, and nourished a higher spiritual life in communities of their own."¹ Most nations that have advanced far enough in civilization and the knowledge of religion possess a

¹ Stanley.

¹ Stanley.

"mystic" school. Among the Hebrews this place was first filled by the Nazarites, and there is good reason to believe that the Essenes represent a later development of this school. They have been called the "monks of Judaism," and no doubt they are the nearest approach to monks that ever existed among the Jews.

The Essenes never became so numerous and powerful as the Pharisees and Sadducees, but possibly their influence was quite as valuable to the religious life of the nation as that of either of these great parties. Numbers are not the only gauge of force. Lao-tse, Buddha, Mohammed, and Luther were once lonely, obscure men, brooding over the deep problems of life and religion. In time each of them became the guide and leader of millions. That the New Testament shows clear evidence of the influence of Essenic thought is undoubted by scholars. Thus the contemplative devotion of this little band of mystics has affected the religious thought of the Christian Church for nearly two thousand years and will continue to do so for centuries yet to come. Graetz says that this little sect "became the basis of a movement, which, mixing with new elements, produced a revolution in the history of the world."

The very important phrase "kingdom of heaven" was probably first used by the Essenes, and from them passed into the religious vocabulary of John the Baptist. Whether John was originally an Essene, is uncertain, but we know the Essenes were in the habit of bathing every morning in a fresh spring of water, and from this they were called by some "Morning Baptists." It is thought by some that the name Essene was derived from the Chaldean word "Assai," which means a "bather."

Josephus is the chief authority on the religious and social system of the Essenes. He mentions them as existing in the second century B. C., but there is no doubt they had been living their quiet, retired life for a long time before they became numerous enough to attract attention as a religious sect. As a society they possessed many admirable characteristics. With the practice of severe asceticism they combined a rare benevolence to the poor. Oaths were forbidden and obedience to rulers strictly inculcated. They practiced community of goods, despised riches, abstained from pleasure, and scrupulously regulated their lives even to the smallest details.

Before sunrise the Essenes rose, and with their faces turned to the east said their morning prayers as if they were imploring the sun to appear. There is not sufficient evidence to prove that they actually worshiped the sun, and the clear statement in their regulation, "No one rules but God," indicates that they

were simple monotheists. It may have been their dread of pronouncing the name of the Almighty which led them to refrain from addressing their worship directly to him. Therefore, they approached him through the grandest, brightest symbol of his power, as the Parsees do to this day.

They were a secret and exclusive society, having their own priests, judges, and other officers. Philo says that in his day—30 A. D.—they numbered 4,000; he sums up their teaching as "Love of God, of virtue, and of man." This is admirable, but certainly some of their notions were peculiar. They wore their clothes until they dropped to pieces. White linen was the material they preferred for their garments—possibly that it might remind them of the purity they felt bound to strive after. They rejected animal sacrifices, and lived on fruit and vegetables. Marriage was prohibited, although some among them had permission to marry simply for the sake of perpetuating the order. These less strict Essenes were not allowed to reside in the limits of their settlements, but in all other respects they followed the same mode of life. They were chiefly agriculturalists, cattle-breeders, and bee-keepers. In the winter their common outside dress was a hairy mantle, and in the summer they wore an under-garment without sleeves. A leathern apron was used when at work and their tasks were arranged with all the monotonous regularity of a monastery. On the seventh day, which they kept as a sabbath with even more rigidity than it was by the Pharisees, they attended the synagogues, where the law and the rest of the ancestral books were read and expounded. In respect for Moses they exceeded the most strict of their countrymen; blasphemy against his name, like the profanation of the sacred name of God, was punished with death.

The Essenes required three years to be passed in a novitiate, during which time a candidate was tested as to his fitness for joining the society. If he proved satisfactory, he was admitted; but, before partaking of the initiatory common meal, he must swear, by the most awful oaths, that he would reverence the Deity, do justice to men, hurt no one voluntarily or at the command of another, hate the unjust and assist the just, render fidelity to all men but especially to the rulers—"seeing that no one rules but God." In addition he must vow that if he should ever bear rule himself he would make no violent use of his power, nor outshine by superior display those set under him. He must solemnly promise to make it his aim to cherish the truth and unmask liars, to abstain from theft and unjust gain, to hide nothing from his fellow-members, to divulge none of

their affairs to other men, even at the risk of death. He must transmit their doctrines unchanged, keep secret the books of the society, and the names of the angels.

Graetz says: "The Essenes faithfully handed down in their theosophic system the names as well as the importance and position of the various angels." One is a little puzzled to imagine how they became acquainted with the angels and their ranks and occupations; perhaps their hard work and plain living facilitated high thinking on heavenly things. They professed to be able to fathom the deepest mysteries, to answer the most difficult questions as to the being of God and his relations with the heavenly powers and the lower creatures.

"The chief aim of the Essenes was without doubt the attainment to prophetic ecstasy, so that they might become worthy of the Divine Spirit. They believed that through an ascetic life they might reawaken the long-silent echo of the heavenly voice; and, this end gained, prophecy would be renewed and men and youths would again behold divine visions and once more see the uplifting of the veil which hides the future, and the great Messianic kingdom would be revealed. The kingdom of heaven would commence, and all pain and trouble would at one stroke be ended." The

Essenes were regarded as holy men, miracle-workers, seers of future events, and interpreters of dreams. They professed ability to do all these things, also to cast out demons and to cure diseases with the aid of a book said to have been composed by King Solomon. "Thus the Essenes united the highest and the lowest aims—the endeavor to lead a pious life combined with the most vulgar superstitions."

Yet one cannot but respect men who strove so earnestly to learn and practice high spiritual principles. They regarded their souls as precious when the majority of those around them cared only for the body. Their prayers and their exhortations, their meditations and aspirations, combined with their mistaken faith in immortality, must have done much to purify and ennoble their own lives and the lives of those to whom they ministered.

Underneath all the errors and superstitions of the Essenes must have been an intense thirst for the living God, and earnest, sincere effort to come into his presence and be made like him. Beneath the feeble, imperfect human aspirations, there moved the uplifting, enlightening grace of the Father, who unceasingly works to renovate the hearts of all his children, so that here and hereafter they may be partakers of his perfect bliss.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 323 TO 167 B. C.—THE SYRIAN DYNASTY.

FEW nations have a more interesting history than the Jews, and no chapters in their history are more fascinating and instructive than those which tell us the story of brave old Mattathias and his valiant sons. No nobler family ever occupied the attention of Jewish writers or won a more lasting renown. As it is often darkest before dawn, so the clouds were never blacker, nor the force of the tempest of affliction mightier, than when the aged Mattathias struck the first heroic blow at the mean tyranny which was degrading and defiling his country.

There was never a time when resistance to injustice and oppression seemed more hopeless, and the task of arousing a band of patriots to strike for freedom more difficult. It is absolutely necessary to give here a brief outline of the horrible humiliations which the Jews endured through many long dark years, before the grand old man, Mattathias—white with more than a century's frosts, but brave with the vigor born and sustained by purity and religious enthusiasm—hewed down the perverter of his people.

Alexander the Great died in 323 B. C., and his dominions were divided among his generals. "Egypt and Syria became the rival powers in the East, and for over a century Palestine was 'like a shuttlecock between two battledores.' For a while the Egyptians had the best of the game, and under the first three Ptolemies the Jews were very mildly tossed. They had to pay tribute to Egypt, but their home government was left to their own high priests and their religion was not interfered with." In the year 203 B. C. the king of Syria, Antiochus the Great, took Palestine from Ptolemy of Egypt, but still allowed the Jews to govern themselves. This policy was continued by Seleucus, the son and successor of Antiochus, but as the civilization of the Syrians was Greek, their habits of thought and religious practices were very repugnant to the monotheistic ideas of strict Jews. For a time this antagonism did not become serious, but when, in 175 B. C., Antiochus Epiphanes began to reign, matters grew rapidly worse. Antiochus was as intolerant as the Jews were, and, as the writer of the First Book of Maccabees

tersely expresses it, "evils were multiplied in the earth." The storm burst and beat heavily on a feeble and, alas, often a disunited people.

We need not wonder that, after seeing "wickedness in the place of judgment and iniquity in the place of righteousness," the author of Ecclesiastes (who some think wrote about this time) should declare that since "the crooked could not be made straight," and evil flourished in almost unvarying order, his heart "despaired of all the labor he had taken under the sun," and that all on earth was "vanity and vexation of spirit." From the time of Alexander's suzerainty over Palestine, 333 B. C., Greek influence gradually made itself felt, and it is not to be wondered at that in the course of a century and a half a considerable number of the Jews had grown attached to the freer customs and more vivacious manners of the Greeks. Of this "Greek age" Ewald says: "The first decades of this period passed away amid the continuous wars of Alexander, and the still more devastating campaigns of his successors, which were little favorable to the fusion of the two nationalities. Beneath the tinsel of Greek culture the times were exceedingly disordered, and all the nations of Asia had much to suffer from the craving for new dominions and the perpetual wars of the successors of Alexander, whose own thirst for conquest was only quenched by death." During the whole of this period Palestine was the battle-ground of the rival nations, Syria and Egypt. Their armies were almost continually traversing the land and carrying fire and sword even into its most secluded places.

Amid these overwhelming discouragements a faithful remnant had maintained their faith in God and their zeal for the institutions founded and preserved by their famous prophets, priests, and kings. No people has clung to its religion with more constancy and conscientious tenacity than did these Jews. But doubtless the very attempts of the strict orthodox party to restrain their people had in many cases hastened the apostasy their rigid restrictions and stern denunciations were intended to prevent, just as in later days the severe regulations of the Puritans of Cromwell's time provoked, it is charged, the laxity and excesses of the reign of Charles II.

This stern puritanism of the strict Jews not only repelled many of their own people, but directly cultivated the hatred of their masters, the Syrians. Instead of reflecting that, as they were the subjects of Antiochus who loved things Grecian as much as they loved things Jewish, it would be the part of prudence to avoid occasions of friction, they seemed to be all the more resolved to assert their national and religious peculiarities. They always be-

lieved themselves to be a favored nation and entered into relations with other countries with reluctance, and as if they were conferring a benefit on their inferiors. It is easy to imagine how such a people would resent the introduction of Greek fashions, sports, and religion. Dean Stanley says: "It is startling to think of the sudden influx of Grecian manners into the very center of Palestine. The modesty of the sons and daughters of Abraham was shocked by the establishment of the Greek palestra under the very citadel of David,¹ where, in defiance of some of the most sensitive feelings of their countrymen, the most active of the Jewish youths completely stripped themselves, and ran, wrestled, leaped in the public sports like the Grecian athletes, wearing the broad-brimmed hat, in imitation of the headgear of the god Hermes, guardian of the gymnastic festivals. Even the priests in the Temple caught the infection,² left their sacrificial duties unfinished, and ran down from the Temple court to take part in the spectacle, as soon as they heard the signal for throwing the discus, which was to lead off the games."

The author of the First Book of Maccabees candidly admits that the first steps toward this adoption of Greek customs were taken by "wicked men" from among the people of Israel themselves who courted the changes the Syrian kings strove to bring about. It is also worthy of note that as soon as Antiochus wished to raise money by selling the office of high priest, a Jew — Jason — was found, who showed he was as corrupt as any pagan by promptly agreeing to buy it for the yearly sum of 360 talents. Three years later, his brother Menelaus, sent by him to carry the yearly money to the king, treacherously offered a yet larger bribe on his own account, and for the sum of 660 talents secured the office of high priest. No doubt Antiochus regarded this way of increasing his revenue as very satisfactory, but it led to the heaviest troubles for the Jews, for when Jason found he had been outbid and deprived of the priesthood by his brother, he resolved that on the first favorable occasion he would endeavor to recover his position. His opportunity arrived when a false report reached Palestine that Antiochus had died in Egypt while on a campaign against King Ptolemy. Jason at once set to work. He raised a body of 3,000 men, made an assault upon Jerusalem and entered the city, while his rival, Menelaus, took refuge in the castle which was occupied by the Syrian garrison. Jason mercilessly slew all the citizens who opposed him, but could not drive his brother from the fortress. In due time news of these disturbances

¹ II. Maccabees iv, 12.

² II. Maccabees iv, 14.

reached Antiochus. He may have thought that the whole Jewish nation had revolted, or it may be that his real reason for deciding to march on Jerusalem was simply cupidity. At any rate his treasury was empty, and he knew of the wealth of the Temple, hence he assaulted and captured the city. His attack was not resisted, yet he treated it as a conquered city. The Temple was pillaged and profaned, the city sacked, and about forty thousand people cruelly massacred, while a large number were carried away to be sold for slaves. The value of the precious metals taken at this time was estimated at 1,800 silver talents, or nearly \$1,750,000. This took place in the year 169 B. C.

The historian evidently felt that words were too poor to describe these terrible calamities and their effects upon the minds of his people. Insult was added to injury, for Antiochus went into the Holy of Holies and took up the holy vessels in his own polluted hands with "very proud" words which probably expressed his utter contempt for a religion which required such paraphernalia to carry on its services. It is very probable that in his marchings through Palestine, Antiochus had been impressed with the fertility of its soil, the numerous herds of fine cattle, the abundance of fruit, and the general appearance of wealth and comfort. He saw that the services and sacrifices of the Temple were very costly, and doubtless regarded the whole system as a wastefully extravagant one, which served only to enrich a covetous and vain priesthood. If this expensive cult could be exchanged for a simpler one, the economy effected would enable him to more than double the taxation of the people and thus materially increase his revenue. Hence, when about two years later, after his fourth Egyptian campaign, he was again in need of funds, he despatched Apollonius, his chief collector of tribute, with a force of 22,000 men, to "further punish the Jewish people," but doubtless his principal reason was to strike terror into them and then wring from them all the money possible. He gave orders to kill all the men and sell all the women and children for slaves. The sale of such numbers of captives would help to fill the treasury of the wicked king.

These inhuman orders were relentlessly executed. Apollonius suddenly attacked the people of Jerusalem on the sabbath day without any pretext, for his soldiers had been peaceably received into the town. The hour when the people were assembled at worship was selected, so that none escaped except those who could hide themselves in caves or fly to the mountains. He then gathered the riches of the city together, destroyed the houses, set the city on fire in several places, pulled down the

city walls, and built a strong fortress on Acra, a hill which overlooked the Temple. The Jews were forbidden to enter the holy place, and from this time—167 B. C.—the daily sacrifices in the Temple ceased.

Antiochus then issued a decree from Antioch that the Jews should utterly abandon all their religious practices, their circumcision, sacrifices, and sabbath-keeping. He sent Athenæus, a Greek idolater, to initiate the Jews into the idolatrous rites of the Grecian religion and to punish with the most cruel deaths all who refused to obey his orders. The people were to be forced to eat swine's flesh and the holy Temple itself was to be reconsecrated to Jupiter Olympus—"the father of gods and men." A terrible persecution followed. "The Books of the Law, multiplied and treasured with so much care from the days of Ezra, were burned. Many Jews assisted and bowed before the oppressor. But others dared the worst rather than submit. Some concealed themselves in the huge caverns in the neighboring hills, and were suffocated by fires lighted at the mouth."¹ "Women who had dared to circumcise their children were tortured and paraded with their murdered infants hanging round their necks; aged elders were put to a cruel and lingering death for refusing to eat the flesh of the unclean beast. But the stubborn spirit of the nation could not be broken, though the party of the Hellenizers was so strong in the capital that it was impossible for the few devout Jews left there to do more than meet martyrdom courageously. The noble reply of the aged Eleazar, when under torture, shows the manner in which Jewish elders refused even the semblance of apostasy. "It becometh not our age," he said, "in any wise to dissemble whereby many young men might think that Eleazar, being four-score years old and ten, was now gone to a strange religion."² "His venerable presence touched not his persecutors and their threats failed to move his constancy, for he walked boldly to the rack and on it was scourged to death. 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is One,' was the last utterance of his dying lips."

"There are two psalms at least—the seventy-fourth and the seventy-ninth—which can hardly be the expression of any period but this. They describe with passionate grief the details of the profanation of the Sanctuary, the gates in flames, the savage soldiers hewing down the delicate carved work with axe and hatchet, like woodmen in a forest, the roar of the irreverent multitude, the erection of the heathen emblems; they sigh over the indignity done to the corpses slain in the successive

¹ Stanley. ² Conder.

massacres by their being left outside of the walls of the city to be devoured by vulture and jackal; they look in vain for a prophet to arise; they console themselves with the recollection of the overthrow of the huge monsters of the earlier empires, and with the hope that this crisis will pass in like manner."

Antiochus no doubt formed his judgment of the Jews from the time-serving apostates he had met in Antioch. Of the deep-rooted attachment of the bulk of the nation to their ancient law and religion, and of the stubborn endurance and resolute courage of which they were capable, he was entirely ignorant. With true oriental despotism, he meant to "stamp out the Jewish superstition." It seems probable that once every month each town was visited and a bloody assize held. But oftentimes

excessive severity defeats its own end. There is a limit to human endurance, and when that limit is passed a whirlwind of vengeance is engendered which sweeps away tyrants like chaff. When hard-hearted persecutors enforce conformity under the penalty of death, revolution may be expected. Occasionally men abjectly submit for a time, but oftener a desperate resistance is provoked, which, when once started, is carried on with that reckless courage no prospect of suffering or death can daunt. When life is made unbearable by oppression, men are apt to resolve that it is better to die fighting than to live under a tyrant's heel. Though unknown, heroes lived in Israel yet, and that which crushes ordinary men inspires the hero. The darkest hour brings with it the deliverer.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM 167 TO 135 B. C.—THE MACCABEAN REVOLT.

MATTATHIAS, an aged priest, was living in Jerusalem at the time the city was sacked and the Temple polluted. When the persecution began he retired to his ancestral city Modin, a beautiful place in the mountains, about twenty miles from the capital. Here in deep sorrow he mourned over the sad condition of his countrymen. The grief of the aged is especially touching, and if the writer of the First Book of Maccabees was not mistaken, Mattathias must have been more than one hundred and forty years old when these troubles overtook him. How intensely he felt the desolation of the Holy City and the miseries of his people is shown in his pathetic "Lament over Jerusalem," which is recorded in I. Maccabees ii, 7-13:

"Woe is me! Wherefore was I born to see the misery of my people
And the misery of the Holy City?
And to dwell there when it was delivered into the hand of the enemy
And the sanctuary into the hand of the stranger?
Her Temple has become as a man of no reputation:
Her glorious vessels are carried away captive;
Her young children are slain in the streets,
Her youths with the sword of the enemy.
What nation has not inherited part of her kingdom,
Nor gotten a portion of her spoils?
All her adornment has been taken away from her;
Instead of a free woman she has become a bond-slave.
Behold, our sanctuary, even our beauty and our glory is laid waste;
The nations have profaned it:
Wherefore do we still live?"

Gradually the tide of persecution spread over the country, and even in secluded Modin, where Mattathias and family might have ex-

pected to live unmolested, the officers of King Antiochus appeared and demanded submission to the royal edict. Mattathias was the chief man of the place, and he felt the responsibility of his position. The officers flattered and endeavored to persuade him into compliance with the law which directed that every Jew should offer sacrifice to the Grecian divinities. Had they succeeded in gaining his obedience, the officers would probably have easily induced the poor and ignorant people to follow his example. The king's envoys knew of no religion which appeared to them worth suffering for, and doubtless expected the old man to comply with their demands. This, however, Mattathias was resolved never to do. Standing in the front, surrounded by his valiant sons and his neighbors, he "answered and spake with a loud voice: Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him, and fall away every one from the religion of their fathers, and give consent to his commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers. God forbid that we should forsake the law and the ordinances. We will not harken to the king's words to go from our religion, either on the right hand or the left."

Where shall we find a grander picture of a noble, lion-hearted "nonconformist" than is presented to us in this terse history of the aged priest, standing firm to bear the brunt of the battle for liberty? Whatever may be our estimate of much of the Apocrypha, this record of heroic fidelity to conscience might surely be

sometimes referred to in our churches, and its lessons impressed on an ease-loving, conforming generation.

Mattathias had scarcely uttered his brave speech, when a time-serving and timid Jew approached the altar to sacrifice to the Olympian gods in the sight of all the assembly. "Which thing when Mattathias saw, he was inflamed with zeal and his reins trembled, he poured forth his anger in condemnation [of the apostate] and ran and slew him upon the altar. Also the king's commissioner, who compelled men to sacrifice, he killed and the altar he pulled down." Then he went throughout the city and with a loud voice proclaimed his rallying cry: "Whoever is zealous of the law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me."

Mattathias and his followers knew that they could not resist the force Antiochus had at his command; so he gathered his family and supporters together and dashed into the wildest part of the hill-country of Judea—where David so long and successfully had resisted Saul—to carry on a guerilla warfare against the persecuting king. "Thus the first outbreak of the national revolt was due to the unpremeditated act of a single aged man." Doubtless Mattathias went to meet the king's officer, sad and perplexed in mind. He did not contemplate rebellion, but when he was face to face with idolatry and the apostasy of his people, he entirely cast aside all fear and care for life. His heart was true as steel, and just at the right time his courage rose to the occasion. Like Luther he "could do no other"; so he struck the blow for liberty, and thus commenced the desperate struggle which went bravely on for twenty-seven years and ended in glorious victory for the Jewish people. This end Mattathias did not live to see, but even in his last days he seems to have cherished a strong confidence in his sons—a confidence speedily justified when they fought side by side and swept the Syrian armies before them, like chaff before the wind.

For a time the little band of patriots were not attacked by the forces of Antiochus; but they did not simply hide from persecution, for, joined by the Chasidim—the Puritan party among the Jews—they attacked apostate villages, pulled down idol altars, and compelled the Jews who had submitted to Antiochus to circumcise their children and obey the law.

As soon as the officers of the king in Jerusalem realized the importance of the revolt, they pursued a number of the Jews who had taken refuge in a hold in the mountains at some distance from Mattathias and his party. When the Syrians found them, they did not at once begin the attack. Possibly they had learned by experience that Jews, when desperate, were

ferce fighters; so they offered them much better terms than could have been expected. The past should be overlooked if they would only return to their homes and in future "do according to the king's commandments." This offer was promptly rejected and then the Syrians began the slaughter. They had arranged to parley with the Jews on the sabbath, because they knew this was a holy day on which the Jewish people would not fight. Hence, though the Jews remonstrated, the cowardly Syrians fell upon them and ruthlessly killed men, women, and children "to the number of a thousand souls." So perished a heroic band who preferred barren mountains with a good conscience to home comforts without it, and death to transgression of their law.

When Mattathias and his friends heard of this, they "mourned right sore." A council was held which decided not to permit attack on the sabbath, but to allow defense to the utmost on that day if attacked by others. Success followed this wise decision; their assailants were repelled and soon other bands of fugitives joined them until they became strong enough not only to defend themselves but to attack and vanquish their oppressors.

In about a year from the time he made his noble stand Mattathias passed away. He advised his sons to make Simon, the "man of counsel," their adviser, and Judas, the "mighty and strong," their captain. Once more he urged them to be "men in behalf of the law," then he gave them his blessing, was "gathered to his fathers, and all Israel made great lamentation for him."

From 167 to 161 B. C.—Few families have received more honorable mention in history than the brave and united household of Mattathias. Ewald well says: "If it was a stroke of rare fortune that the insurrection broke out undesignedly and was set on foot by a blameless character, it was no less fortunate that he left behind him a heroic band of five sons who were ready to carry on the contest without an instant's delay. Seldom has the world seen an instance of five brothers, animated by the same spirit and without mutual jealousy, sacrificing themselves for the same cause, of whom any one only survived another to carry it on, if possible, with more zeal and success." One by one the noble five fell for the cause, and each in turn became the leader of his people.

Judas Maccabæus deserved his surname "the Hammerer," for his blows fell with heavy, victorious stroke on those who strove to corrupt and oppress his fatherland. He was a born leader, brave, kind, prudent, ready, and magnanimous. Dean Stanley pictures him as "the Jewish ideal of the Happy Warrior." "There was a 'cheerfulness' diffused through the

whole army when he appeared. His countrymen delighted to remember the stately appearance, as of an ancient giant, when he fastened on his breastplate, or tightened his military sash about him, or waved his protecting sword over the camp of his faithful followers. They listened with delight for the loud cheer, the roar as of a young lion—the race not yet extinct in the Jordan valley—with which he snuffed out the Israelite renegades, chasing them into their recesses, and smoking or burning them out.” They rejoiced still more when he routed the armies of heathen kings. We think it would have been better if Judas and his followers had been less active in “smoking and burning out” heretical Jews. But we must not judge him by our nineteenth-century standards; according to our ideas the Maccabean leaders were not “saints,” and if they had been it is doubtful whether they would have done as good service in their day and generation as they did. Rough times need vigorous rulers, and in certain circumstances severity is mercy. It is true, Mattathias in his dying exhortation reminded his sons of the mercifulness of King David; but, remembering the temper of those times, we are not surprised at the omission.

When Judas undertook to lead his small but resolute band of enthusiasts he had no light task. His aim was to resist the tyranny of Antiochus, to purge his own people from all corrupting Grecian practices, and to reestablish the independence of his country. His first signal victory was gained over the “great host” of Syrians and Samaritans under the command of Apollonius. With characteristic promptitude the heroic Judas boldly met his attack half-way, completely routed his forces, slew Apollonius and took his sword, “and therewith he fought all his life long.”

Victory was no sooner won than fresh dangers and greater difficulties presented themselves. When the governor of Cœle-Syria heard of the defeat and death of the king’s general, he hastened to avenge him and stamp out the Jewish rebellion. This was no easy matter, for the army of Judas was composed of desperate men fighting for their lives, and homes, and religion. Moreover, they had acquired an unbounded confidence in their captain. “His zeal and fearlessness, his military instinct and prudence were alike evinced in his first battle, and his choice of position, guarding the top of the dangerous pass of Beth-horon, showed qualities beyond those of a mere bandit chief.”

“The scenery was full of inspiring memories, for the rugged pass had more than once before been the scene of a Jewish victory. Beneath him, near the line of the Greek advance,

Judas looked toward Modin, his home, where even then his aged father lay buried—the scene of the memorable episode which had opened his career. Behind him, on its strong knoll, amid open cornlands, was Gibeon, and to the southwest was the broad, flat plain, skirted by low hills, and running down to the little village of Ajalon.” Thus it was almost on the very spot where Joshua stood when he fought against the Canaanite kings that Judas Maccabæus now awaited the foes of his country. “In imagination, he might already see them rolled back from the steep, steel-gray slope of barren rock, crowned by a few straggling olive trees, down to the white hills and corn-plains beneath, even as the host of the five kings had been discomfited when overtaken by the great hailstorm on that bleak hillside.”

That little company with Judas would have a clear view of the great host of Seron as it wound its way along up to the foot of Beth-horon, and as they were “faint with fasting” they may be excused for having doubted their ability to resist such a great multitude. How it was that they were not better provided with food we cannot tell. Judas may have expected to fall upon Seron’s troops earlier, and naturally he would carry only what was necessary over a rugged mountain track.

The fears of his men Judas dispelled by a brave speech which infused into them a fortitude like that felt by their victorious ancestors on the same spot so long before. The rousing addresses of great generals to their men are models of effective speech. Short, incisive, earnest, they have often been one of the chief causes of the victory they predict and promise. “It is no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hand of a few; with heaven it is all one, to deliver with a great multitude or a small company.” He then reminded them that while their foes came against them “in much pride and iniquity to destroy,” they were fighting only for their lives and their laws. With a last animating word Judas finished his address and then “he leaped suddenly” upon the Syrians. Nothing could resist the well-timed and furious onset of the brave little company; and Seron and his host were speedily overthrown and driven into the land of the Philistines.

Early in the year 165 B. C., Antiochus sent three new generals, Ptolemy, Nicanor, and Gorgias to “destroy and root out the strength of Israel.” They had a force of 40,000 foot and 7,000 cavalry, which made them so confident of success that the camp was crowded with merchants who were attracted by the prospect of a large sale of Jewish captives at low prices. Undaunted by the vast host, Judas

led his men to the ridge of Mizpeh, whence they could see the deserted streets of Jerusalem, with its walls and gates closed, the silent, deserted Temple, and the Greek garrison in the fortress overlooking the desolated city. With these sights before them, Judas reminded his brave followers of their ancient and recent deliverances, and stirred them to a high pitch of enthusiasm. Then they started on their long night-march of about twenty miles, and in the early morning flung themselves on the Syrian host with such force as to win another brilliant victory. Great spoil fell into the hands of the Jews, and they returned to Jerusalem joyful and triumphant. Among the battles fought between 166 and 164 B. C., this of Emmaus was considered to have accomplished most for the deliverance of the nation.

Antiochus had left Lysias in charge of his affairs when he started on his expedition to Persia, and as soon as Lysias heard of the defeat of Gorgias he set out to crush the band of Jewish patriots. Again Judas was victorious, and while Lysias fled to Antioch to gather fresh forces, he set to work to reestablish the national religion and to purify the Temple. "Once more the solemn service of the Temple, described in the Mishna, was restored. In the darkness of the early morning, the master of Temple came at an uncertain hour to summon the priests who watched round the fire in the gatehouse of Moked. In the dusk they went out and fetched the lamb which had been pronounced spotless on the previous day. Standing without the altar court, they watched the first streak of day spreading behind the black outline of Olivet, and over the steel-gray ridges of Moab, until the brightness had crept round southwards as far as the direction of Hebron. Then the appointed priest went in first, and in the dim light he bathed at the great laver, and his figure could be discerned mounting the long slope of the altar, until from the heavy, gray ashes the red glow of the never-extinguished fire was stirred up and the column of smoke was thickened by the new fuel. Then, and not till then, the other priests ventured into the sacred court, and as daylight brightened and the city awoke, the early sacrifice was offered, and the daily service of the Temple proceeded in its appointed order."¹

Having established the temple worship, Judas turned his attention to another very important work and brought together copies of the Hebrew religious books which had been preserved by devout Jews from the wanton burnings of the "frantic" Antiochus. Then it was necessary to carry deliverance to the people who suffered from their marauding neighbors.

¹ Conder.

The Edomites, the cave-dwelling Horites, who dwelt in the caverns at Petra, the sons of Bean from the flint-castles in the deserts of Rehoboth, and all the nomadic Arab tribes, had banded together for a raid upon the cornfields and vineyards of the thrifty Jewish farmers. Judas marched rapidly and fell upon them, routed them, and drove them back into their fastnesses.

Next he attacked and defeated the Ammonites, assaulted and took several hostile border cities, and then marched back to Jerusalem with songs and rejoicings.

About this time Antiochus died, and Lysias, the guardian of his son, proclaimed him king. Soon after, in the spring of 163 B. C., Lysias, advanced with a force of 100,000 foot and 20,000 cavalry to punish the rebellious Jews and bring them back into subjection to Syria. Possibly he selected this time because it was a sabbatic year, and offensive warfare and tillage were alike unlawful to the Jews. Judas met the enemy at Beth-Zacharias with his usual readiness and courage; but he had to contend with a more powerful force than any he had encountered before. One new feature in this battle was the thirty-two elephants, with their towers on their backs full of archers. The Jews were surprised and in addition altogether overestimated the fighting value of these huge strange beasts. Judas did his best to encourage his men, and his heroic brother Eleazar sacrificed his life in order to teach his comrades not to be afraid of elephants. "Choosing out the leader, whose rich trappings suggested that some person of importance might be concealed in the tower, Eleazar transfixed it with his weapon, and perished beneath the huge animal as it fell." He had won for himself a "perpetual name," but the Jewish army was discomfited and Judas retired to Jerusalem.

As it was a sabbatic year, the city was ill-prepared to stand a siege, for no corn had been sown, and their granaries were about exhausted. Just at this time Lysias had to return to Antioch to fight against the foster-brother of the late king; so he patched up a peace with the Jews and left Jerusalem. But for this piece of good fortune, it would have been difficult for the Jews and their valiant leaders to escape destruction.

Soon after, in the year 162 B. C., the nephew of Antiochus Epiphanes led a revolution, slew his cousin the king, and Lysias his general, and ascended the throne of Syria.

If the Jews were more favored with intrepid and wise leaders than most nations, it is equally certain that they were more cursed with factions and traitors. When unity was the indispensable thing, the party favoring the Greeks, headed by the High Priest Alcimus, went to

the new monarch and invited him to make war on Judas and his band as enemies to the sovereignty of the Syrians. The king appointed Bacchides, one of his best generals, to go to Jerusalem to collect the tribute. At first Judas and his men were successful in resisting the traitors among his own people, and for a time Bacchides did not force him to a regular battle. He preferred to endeavor to seize Judas by treachery, but in this he failed, as did also his captain, Nicanor. Failing to destroy Judas by fraud, Nicanor endeavored to take him by force. They went into battle on the plains below Modin, and once again Judas led his men to victory.

Nicanor retreated to Jerusalem full of rage, and swore he would burn the Temple if he did not vanquish Judas. After preparation he went out to fight again, and this time with "the curses of the whole nation on his head." "Once more Judas Maccabæus appears on the scene as the savior of his distracted country. Suddenly he appeared in the rear of Nicanor, and established himself at Adasa in a strong position." Here with only 1,000 men he waited his opportunity, and then burst on Nicanor's army of 9,000. The Syrians were routed at his first onslaught and Nicanor was slain. "The head of the defeated general, and his hand, which he had raised with a blasphemous oath against the holy house, were brought to Jerusalem and hung up opposite the Temple. Thus for a while the patriotic party triumphed, but the victory of Adasa is the last bright gleam in the story of Judas' life."

In spite of his victory, Judas seems to have arrived at the conclusion that he and his people could not maintain their ground against the overwhelming forces of Syria; so, immediately after he had defeated Nicanor, he sent ambassadors to negotiate with the Romans. He did not live to see the treaty concluded, but his policy was a wise one, and if his countrymen had possessed a little more of his prudence, the alliance might have averted many evils and secured peace and prosperity.

Soon after the envoys of Judas had set out on their long journey to Rome, Bacchides advanced with 20,000 footmen and 2,000 horsemen, down the Jordan valley, to avenge the defeat and death of Nicanor. The saddest element in this last contest of Judas must have been the fact that the High Priest Alcimus had led a number of Jews to fight on the side of the Syrians. Schism has ever been the ruin of the Jews. Judas was able to muster only 3,000 men, and when the morning of the battle came, he found that all but 800 had deserted him. It must have been a noble 800 that Judas led at Eleasa against the 22,000 Syrians and the renegade Jews. Some of them thought defeat was

inevitable and tried to dissuade their brave leader from uselessly throwing his life away. But he was not the man to retreat, and his heroic reply was afterward cherished as his latest utterance, "God forbid that I should do this thing and flee away from them; if our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and not leave behind a stain on our honor." At these stirring words—his shortest and grandest battle-speech—he and his heroes charged the right wing of Bacchides' army and drove it to the mountains. So well did the Jews fight that they were able to make head against the entire host of Syria "from morning till night." "So prolonged resistance of a mere handful of men to overwhelming numbers is scarcely on record." Still, though his last onset was successful in breaking the Syrian ranks, his men were too few, and when the left wing of Bacchides' army attacked the Jews in the rear, they were shut in between their enemies, and after a desperate fight the little band of Judas was surrounded and almost annihilated. "Judas also was killed and the remnant fled." His body was afterward found by his two worthiest brothers, and carried to its rest in the ancestral sepulcher at Modin. The lament of the whole nation for him was like that of David over Saul and Jonathan: "How is the valiant man fallen, the deliverer of Israel?"

Thus perished, 161 B. C.—when it seemed as if he could least be spared—the bravest, noblest, and most famous of the Maccabean heroes. Milman well says: "Among those lofty spirits who have asserted the liberty of their native land against wanton and cruel oppression, none have surpassed the most able of the Maccabees in accomplishing a great end with inadequate means; none ever united more generous valor with a better cause."

It has been said that "the greatest gift a hero leaves his race is to have been a hero." That gift Judas Maccabæus left his people, and it has remained an inestimable possession to this very day. "My Jewish soldiers are veritable Maccabees," said Czar Nicholas I. to Sir Moses Montefiore, when in 1846 he went to plead for his poor down-trodden Jewish brethren in Russia. The name of Maccabees was used by the Russian emperor as a testimonial to character. Here was a legacy left to his race, and presented 2,000 years after date.¹

From 161 to 135 B. C.—We have seen that Eleazar, the fourth son of Mattathias, whose characteristic seems to have been an impetuous courage, gave his life for his country at the battle of Beth-Zacharias in 163 B. C., and that two years later his heroic brother Judas passed

¹Lady Magnus.

on, by the same path of valiant self-sacrifice, to his fathers. Three brothers remained: John, the eldest; Simon, the second, the "man of counsel," so confidently commended by his dying father; and the fifth brother, Jonathan the Wary. He, although the youngest, appeared to be specially fitted by his peculiar dexterity and extreme caution for the post of leader. He had no sooner taken his position than the Syrian general Bacchides heard of it and "sought for to slay him." Jonathan showed his prudence by flying into the wilderness when it was impossible for him to take the field against the enemy.

In this time of uncertainty and danger (160 B. C.), John, his elder brother, was sent to take the family baggage and the defenseless women and children to be under the protection of the friendly tribe of Nabothites. On the way he was surprised and slain by a hostile band of the Amorites, "the children of Jambri." Thus perished another brother of the devoted band; and though, apparently, John's death was not so glorious as that of his brethren, who fell in battle, yet he was as truly serving his country as they in their fighting, and his life was doubtless lost in the attempt to defend the helpless and innocent. Mattathias must have been very faithful and remarkably successful in teaching his children always to put duty before life. Such home teaching furnishes a nation with its heroes and deliverers, and makes history glow with the thrilling records of the faithful in life and death.

John's death was speedily avenged, for when, soon afterward, the children of Jambri "made a great marriage," Jonathan and his men fell upon them, slew many, dispersed the rest and took all their spoils. To us this seems a blood-thirsty affair; but doubtless it was regarded as the right way of doing things in those days, and the writer of the First Book of Maccabees appears to exult as he tells how "fully they avenged the blood of their brother," and "turned the marriage into mourning, and the melody [*i. e.*, of the musicians accompanying the procession] into lamentation." Revenge is senseless, for it not only destroys all peace, but if it were consistently carried out it would almost annihilate the human race. As soon as Bacchides heard of Jonathan's vengeance on his foes, he started at once to take vengeance on him. Jonathan was very soon in a most perilous position: the host of the Syrians was in front; the children of Jambri, thirsting for revenge, were behind; while the bend of the Jordan shut him in on the right and left. Behind them lay marsh and jungle, so that escape seemed impossible. Forced to fight against overwhelming odds, he and his men attacked

Bacchides with such impetuosity that the latter retreated with the loss of 1,000 men. Jonathan seized the opportunity and with his men swam across the river, and none of the Syrians attempted to follow and renew the battle.

In spite of this slight success obtained by Jonathan, the condition of the patriotic party was now very low. Bacchides held Jerusalem and most of the large cities, which he fortified and garrisoned. In addition, he adopted the policy of the Romans, and "took the chief men's sons in the country for hostages," put them into the tower at Jerusalem and then returned to Antioch.

For two years the land had rest, and then, in 157 B. C., at the instigation of the "ungodly" section of the Jews, Bacchides came again and fought against the Maccabees. But he only met failure and defeat, which so enraged him that he turned against the Jews who had invited him to come, "slew many of them and purposed to return into his own country." Jonathan heard of this, and with his usual policy sent to Bacchides and proposed to make a treaty of peace. This he gladly accepted, and having concluded arrangements with Jonathan he returned to Syria and never again attacked the Jews.

The wicked High Priest Alcimus died in 159 B. C., and for nearly seven years the functions of the sacred office were suspended. In 153 B. C., Alexander Balas claimed the throne of Syria and offered to acknowledge Jonathan as the Prince of Judah and the high priest of the nation if he would join with him against the reigning king, Demetrius. After some very "wary" negotiations Jonathan at last pronounced in favor of Alexander and became the high priest of his people. For eight years Jonathan did the work of high priest, general, and statesman, and the Jews enjoyed peace and prosperity.

Then another usurper, Tryphon, claimed the Syrian throne, and Jonathan, true to his cautious, politic disposition, went on for some time balancing the rivals against each other, till at last Tryphon outwitted him. Jonathan was caught by treachery, carried off and put to death in an obscure village beyond the Jordan. Jonathan was a much less attractive character than Judas his brother, yet he was loyal to the cause of his people. By persistent warfare, and by negotiation when diplomacy seemed to promise most, he exerted all his native shrewdness to obtain advantages for his nation. Under his seventeen-years' rule the power of the Jews increased rapidly, for the time was more favorable to the practice of well-calculated policy than to bold resistance and resolute assertion of independence.

The "wise" Simon now became leader, in 143 B. C., and though he was advanced in years, he led and ruled his people with such vigor that he "witnessed the constant growth of freedom and prosperity for which the five brethren, of whom he was now the last survivor, had fought so stoutly for twenty-five years." True to the spirit of unity which always animated the Maccabean family, Simon seized the first opportunity to recover his brother Jonathan's body and bury it with great state in the family burying place at Modin. He built a sepulcher, with seven pillars, for his father and mother, four brothers and himself. "But Simon was to raise a nobler monument to the memory of his brethren than the sepulcher at Modin. Far advanced as he was in years, three crowning achievements fell to his lot, which neither of his more stirring brothers had been able to accomplish. There were three strongholds of the Syrian party which after all the successes of Judas and Jonathan had remained in their hands. One was Gezer, the ancient Canaanite fortress in the southwestern plain, which after long vicissitudes had passed into the hands of the Israelites, and now again in these later days had become the chief garrison of the Syrians in the thoroughfare of Philistia. This was attacked with the newly invented Macedonian engine of war, and the terrified inhabitants surrendered at discretion; the images in the temples were cleared out, and a colony of the Jews was established there under Simon's son John, now for the first time winning his renown."¹

Next he recovered the famous fortress of Beth-Zur and put in it a strong garrison. Then he starved out the Syrian force in the citadel of Acra, which had for so long been a thorn in the side of the Jewish people. Jerusalem was now freed from the constant menace of a foreign garrison overlooking the very Sanctuary itself, and the memory of the day of deliverance was long and gratefully cherished. "Nothing succeeds like success." The new king of Syria, Demetrius II. (surnamed Nicator), gladly made a treaty of peace with Simon and professed great friendship. Soon after this, feeling that his strength was decreasing, Simon gave the command of the army to his son John, who afterward succeeded him as head of the nation.

The author of the First Book of Maccabees dilates with great satisfaction on the beneficent results of the wise and kind rule of Simon. "He sought the good of his nation, was honorable in all his acts, liberated captives, took away all uncleanness, enabled the people to till their ground in peace. The ancient men sat in

the streets communing together of the wealth of the land; every man sat under his vine and fig tree, and none affrighted them. He strengthened his people who were brought low. The law he searched out and the contemners of the law he rooted out. He beautified the Sanctuary and multiplied the vessels of the Temple,"¹ etc.

This description gives us a picture of what the Jews of those days regarded as an ideal state of national prosperity, and it certainly is one very beautiful to contemplate. In acknowledgment of his great services to his nation, the people wrote his noble deeds on tables of brass and mounted them on pillars in Mount Sion, to be a perpetual memorial to all generations.

Later, when Antiochus Sidetes, successor of Demetrius, passed through Judea on an expedition, he first asked Simon's permission to do so, and in acknowledgment of it granted many immunities, among others the right "to coin money for thy country with thine own stamp," which in the ancient world was regarded as one of the essential elements of sovereignty. Some of the coins issued by Simon still exist with peaceful emblems on them, as a lily, a wheat sheaf, a palm tree; also short legends in the old Hebrew characters, such as "Jerusalem the Holy" and "Year 4 of the Redemption of Israel."

The treaty made with Rome by Judas and renewed by Jonathan was confirmed by Simon, and the tribes on the frontiers of Judea entered into friendly relations with the wise and powerful Judean prince. In seeking a closer alliance with Rome, Simon adopted the usual course of sending costly presents. Among them was "a great shield of gold of a thousand pounds weight," and it provokes a smile as one reads the Roman acknowledgment of the gift in the condescending language of a powerful State: "It seemed also good to us to receive the shield," etc. And surely it ought to have "seemed" exceedingly "good" to obtain so much gold for the little they ever intended to do for Simon and his people.

After his long life, in which he displayed so much wisdom and won such remarkable success and glory, it is saddening to read of Simon's inglorious end, 135 B. C. "He and his two sons were entrapped by his son-in-law into a drunken supper at the fortress of Dok, near Jericho, and there treacherously murdered." Thus passed away under a dark shadow the last of the five gallant brothers who had suffered so much, fought so bravely, and toiled so nobly for their nation."

"The brightest day may close in fiercest storm,
The noblest life ignobly."

¹ Stanley.

¹ I. Maccabees xiv, 7-15 (condensed).

CHAPTER V. THE SEPTUAGINT.

THE most remarkable literary monument which united Israel with the western world was the translation of the sacred books of the Jews into the Greek language. This translation is now generally known as "The Septuagint." *Septuaginta* is the Latin for seventy, and a very early tradition, perhaps well-founded, declared that seventy or seventy-two translators were engaged on the work. One version of this tradition went so far as to say that there were six translators from each of the twelve tribes; that the seventy-two were shut up, each with a Hebrew Bible and sufficient writing material; and that when their work was done, it proved that all had been miraculously inspired, so that the seventy-two versions were identical in every letter. The dislike of the Samaritans, the suspicion of the Hebrew Jews, and the admiration of the Jews who were scattered throughout the world, led to three different sets of these traditions regarding the Septuagint.

The general impression has been that the second King Ptolemy, known as Ptolemy Philadelphus, directed this translation. The period was nearly three centuries before Christ, about the year 285 B. C. Ptolemy was an intelligent and humane sovereign, and it is even said that he sent a distinguished embassy to the high priest in Jerusalem to ask for a trustworthy copy of the Law. The embassy was cordially received, and returned with the sacred book. It must be remembered that at this time the Jewish Canon of the Old Testament had been formed and was not very unlike the Canon of our Old Testament of to-day.

The five books of the Pentateuch were those first translated. The Egyptian character of the enterprise is shown from the acquaintance, which is evident, of the translators with Egyptian customs, language, and history. This translation is more faithful, more intelligible and uniform than that of the later books. The legends which have been spoken of say that the whole Bible was finished in seventy-two days. But in truth, it seems probable that only the Law was translated at first, and that the whole Septuagint was not finished for nearly a hundred and fifty years. It probably existed much as we have it now a century and a half before the Christian era.

From the very first it engaged the attention of philosophers and students through the western world. If Israel were well disposed to study the Greek customs and literature, Greece and Rome, on their side, were taking more and more interest in the faith and philosophy of

the East. If it were only in the synagogues or places of prayer established by Jewish bankers or merchants in every commercial city, a copy of their Scriptures in Greek would be received with interest.

It must be remembered that books did not circulate in manuscript as books circulate now. Still it happened that, from the period when the translation of the Pentateuch was finished, step by step, a knowledge of the Old Testament worked its way into the world of African, Roman, and Greek thought. As the Greek philosophers acquainted themselves with the Hebrew Scripture, there grew a tendency, which has existed among theological writers from that day to this, to explain difficult passages as allegories. The tendency was very strong in Alexandria, where the habit of making allegories had long existed among the Egyptian priests. In the work of Aristobulus, a Jew of a priestly family who lived in Egypt about one hundred and fifty years before Christ, there may be found what have been called the "earliest and tenderest attempts at connected allegorical explanation." After Aristobulus, Philo, generally called Philo Judæus, lived and wrote in Egypt. His death is later than that of the Savior. His works carry the spirit of allegory, perhaps, as far as it has ever been carried.

The scholarship of Greece and Rome attempted at least a superficial knowledge of the religious writings of the nations who were subdued by Rome. The activity of the literary and poetical habit in Alexandria was such that there grew up a habit of writing Sibylline books, which should bring to the world the religious truth which had been unfolded by the Hebrew prophets. Reference has already been made to the influence of such writings in Rome. Ewald gives to the oldest Sibylline book now preserved the date of 124 B. C., but there are older poems in the same fashion, which do not take this name. The writers of these so-called oracles engaged in open contest with heathenism, hardly hiding their boldness, and the Sibylline books, so-called, became more and more Christian.

Our own interest in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is greatly increased, because this was the version which seems to have been used by the Savior and his apostles. It would seem as if, in reading in the synagogue, he must have read from Hebrew texts; but in our New Testament the citations made from the Old Testament are always in the language of the Septuagint version.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOOK OF ENOCH.

ALL careful students of the New Testament have read with curiosity the words in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the Epistle of Jude, the last of the epistles of the New Testament. The language is this: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

As no such language is to be found in either of the books of our Old Testament, it was always clear that the writer of the epistle had in hand some Book of Enoch which had been lost. After him, almost all the earlier Church Fathers knew of the book, and some of them made quotations from it. By the diligence of critical students, a considerable number of such quotations were brought together, and in the seventeenth century a manuscript from Ethiopia was produced, which it was hoped would prove to be the real Book of Enoch.

These hopes were disappointed. It was only a miserable production of someone known as Abba Haila Michael. But the famous traveler Bruce, who gave such entertaining accounts of his visits to Egypt and Abyssinia, was more fortunate. Among other prizes which he brought to Europe in 1773 he had three manuscripts in the Ethiopic language, which proved to be so many copies of a translation into that language of the genuine Book of Enoch.¹

There were not many students in Europe who could read the language of these manuscripts. One and another unsuccessful version was published as years went by, but it was not until 1853 that any edition of practical use to general readers appeared. Since that time, the Book of Enoch has been open to intelligent students of the literature to which it belongs. It has been translated into English by Doctor Schodde, of Columbus, Ohio.

¹ The traveler Bruce was the Scotch gentleman who should be remembered by the anecdote told of him by Sir Walter Scott. After his return from Africa, he was a guest at a large dinner party in Scotland. One of the other guests was rash enough to ridicule his statement that the Abyssinians ate raw beef, and said that it was impossible; that this was a "traveler's story." Bruce soon after left the table, but he returned with a slice of raw beef, which he had brought on a plate from the kitchen. He gave this to the careless critic, saying, "You will eat this beef or you will fight me." The critic ate it, accordingly.

It is interesting to us because it is a good type of the Jewish literature of the latter part of the period between Malachai and Matthew. It is generally acknowledged that it was written either in Hebrew or in Aramaic, the language of Palestine at that time. From internal evidence, it is determined that it was written before the year 160 B. C.

It may be said that the central object of the author is to express his horror at the gradual falling away of the aristocratic class among his countrymen. He bewails their neglect of the God of Israel and of the old religious observances of Israel under the temptations which beset courtiers in all times, especially those which surrounded them, as princes of Greek training and merchants with Greek ideas became more and more powerful in Israel. The denunciation which is copied in the Epistle of Jude is one of the expressions of indignation.

In expressing this indignation, he brings together a series of parables which definitely express the hope of the Messiah, as it was entertained by the conservative Jews of his time. Doctor Schodde condenses the writer's remarks concerning the person of the Messiah in these words: "It is stated that before the sun, and the signs, and the stars were made, his name had been called before the Lord of the spirits: and that he was chosen and hidden before the world was created, but preserved and revealed to the just. It is further stated that he had arisen and appeared or was revealed." Doctor Schodde supposes that the author does not mean to teach simply a predestination of the Messiah, but his existence before the world was made. It is clear that Enoch's description of the Messiah is largely based on the words of Isaiah and Micah. He is regarded as superhuman, but he is far from being equal to God. The author regards him as a servant of God, chosen by God for his special work and as his deputy. Divine honor is never bestowed on him, but in him the old Jewish idea of royalty is made real, namely, that the earthly king reigns as the viceroy of God to carry out his law. It ought to be said, once for all, that though the author takes the name of the patriarch Enoch, and in one and another place in his book connects what he writes with mysterious references to the patriarch Enoch in the Old Testament, yet there is scarcely any pretense that the patriarch is really the author. The writer and the reader alike understand that here is a series of visions, applicable to

the conditions of the time and place when the poem is written.

For us, the chief interest of the book which was so long hidden is in its conception of the Messiah, as a devout Jew hoped for him, a century and a half before the time of our Savior, and in the fanciful but poetical notions with regard to natural phenomena which appear in it. After the introduction, there is a long and involved account of that rebellion of the angels which plays so important a part in Milton's poem of "Paradise Lost." In the second part, which the critics suppose to have an author different from him who wrote the first, in the second of two elaborate parables comes the prophetic description of the Son of Man:

"This is the Son of Man, who has justice, and justice dwells with him.

"And he reveals all secret treasures, because the Lord of spirits chose him, and by the eternal law he has the right to overcome all things before the Lord of spirits.

"And this Son of Man will rouse from their couches the kings and the rulers, and will throw down the strong from their thrones, and will loosen the bands of the strong, and will break the teeth of the sinners.

"And he will drive the kings from their thrones and from their kingdoms, because they do not exalt him, and do not give him the praise, they do not own that he gave to them the kingdom."

In another passage he says of the Son of Man:

"He will be a staff to the just and the holy, on which they will stay themselves so that they shall not fall: he will be the light of the nations and the hope of those who are sick at heart.

"All who live upon the earth will fall down before him, and to him will they bow the knee: they will bless him and praise him, and sing psalms to the name of the Lord of the spirits."

The description of the various powers of nature is evidently one of the passages in which the author most delighted. It is a revelation in which different angels explain the hidden origin of the movements of nature. It is all somewhat as in "Paradise Lost," where the angel Raphael explains to Adam and Eve some kindred secrets of the physical world. Thus the courses of the sun and moon, the laws of thunder and lightning, the movement of the sea, the wonders of hoarfrost, of snow, of fog, of dew, and of rain are referred to the spirit which rules over each phenomenon. And the reader is reminded that the waters "are for those who live on the earth; for they are the nourishment for the earth from the Most High, who is in heaven; therefore, rain has its measure, and the angels receive it."

Some extracts from chapter lx of Doctor Schodde's translation will give to our readers an idea of the manner in which the supposed revelations to Enoch were made.

It was "in the year 500, and in the seventh month, on the fourteenth day of the month, of the life of Enoch.

"In that parable I saw that the heaven of heavens shook tremendously, and the host of the Most High and

the angels, a thousand times a thousand and ten thousand times ten thousand, were disturbed exceedingly. And then I saw the Head of Days sitting upon the throne of his glory, and the angels and the just ones stood around him, and a great trembling took hold of me, and fear seized me; my loins were bent and were loosened and my whole being melted together, and I fell down on my face."

With this beginning we have a revelation made to him by the Holy Michael, who is the Archangel Michael often referred to in the mythology of the Jews after they returned from Babylon. The reader will remember that Milton has adopted the name as the name of one of the archangels who appear in "Paradise Lost."

The first revelation made to him is that to which allusion has been made, as to the powers of nature:

"Then the other angel, who went with me, spoke to me, and showed me that which was secret, the first and the last, what is in the heavens on high, and in the earth in the deep, and in the ends of the heavens, and on the foundation of heaven, and in the repositories of the winds; and how the spirits are divided, and how weighing is done, and how the fountains and the winds are counted according to the power of the spirit, and the power of the lights of the moon, and that it is a power of justice, and the divisions of the stars according to their names, and how each division is divided; and peals of thunder according to the places where they fall, and all the divisions that are made among the flashes of lightning, that lightning may take place, and their hosts obey. For the thunder has places of rest for the awaiting of its peal, and thunder and lightning are inseparable, and although not one, both go together through the spirit and are not separated. For when the lightning flashes, the thunder utters its voice, and the spirit causes a rest during the flash, and divides equally between them, for the treasury of their flashes is like the sand; and each one of them, in its flash, is held with a bridle, and turned back by the power of the spirit, and is pushed forward, according to the number of the directions of the earth. And the spirit of the sea is masculine and strong, and according to the strength of his power he draws it [*i. e.*, the sea] back with a bridle, and in like manner it is pushed forward, and scattered in all the mountains of the earth. And the spirit of the hoarfrost is his *own* angel, and the spirit of hail is a good angel. And he has let go the spirit of the snow on account of its strength, and it has a special spirit, and that which ascends from it is like smoke, and its name is frost. And the spirit of the fog is not joined with them in their repository, but it has a special repository, for its course is in clearness and in light and in darkness, and in winter and in summer, and its repository is the light, and it [*i. e.*, the spirit] is its angel. And the spirit of the dew has its dwelling-place at the ends of the heaven, and is connected with the repository of the rain, and its course is in winter and in summer; and its clouds and the clouds of the fog are connected, and one gives to the other. And when the spirit of rain moves out of its repository the angels come and open the repository, and lead it out, and when it is scattered over all the earth, and also as often as it is joined to the waters of the earth. For the waters are for those who live on the earth; for they are the nourishment for the earth from the Most High, who is in heaven; therefore, rain has its measure, and the angels receive it."

The various revelations go on, in detail which it is not necessary to follow. In the

sixty-ninth chapter is a sort of history of the twenty-one disobedient angels, whose fall fills an important place in the records which have been alluded to. In addition to these twenty-one angels, there are the names of their centurions and captains of fifty and captains of ten. Perhaps the most interesting to us of these is the fourth. He is called Pēnēmū.

"He taught the sons of men the bitter and the sweet, and taught them all the secrets of their wisdom. He taught men writing with ink and paper, and thereby many sinned from eternity to eternity and up to this day. For men were not born to the purpose that they should thus strengthen their fidelity with a pen and with ink; for man was not created otherwise than the angels, to remain just and pure. And death, which destroys all things, would not have touched him. But through this knowledge men are devoured, and through this power it devours me."

From these histories of the angels and their officers, the book passes to a certain astronomical treatise, and there is a curious account given of the course of the year and of the reason why days are shorter in winter and longer in summer. The division of the year into months is made, and we have such statements of the gradual lengthening of the days as this:

"When the sun arises from the heaven, he comes out of that fourth portal for thirty mornings, and descends directly into the fourth western portal of heaven; and in those days the day is daily lengthened and the night nightly shortened till the thirtieth morning; and the day is two parts longer than the night, and the day is exactly ten parts and the night eight parts."

The next book of the astronomical treatise refers to the moon, and a somewhat similar account is given of the moon, with a curious astronomical discussion, quite accurate in its character of the way by which the lunar calendar and the solar calendar of months and years may be wrought in with each other.

These somewhat mysterious astronomical statements are intermingled or concluded with definite moral instruction. The fifteenth section of Doctor Schodde's book ends with a chapter in which Enoch gives this instruction to his son Methusaleh:

"Wisdom have I given thee and thy children and those who will be thy children, that they give it to their children the generations to eternity, this wisdom which is above their thoughts. Those who understand it will not sleep, but will hear with their ears, that they may learn this wisdom; and it will please those who eat of it more than good food.

"Happy are all the just, happy are all those who walk in the paths of justice and have no sin like the sinners in the counting of all their days in which the sun goes through the heavens, entering and departing from the gates, each time thirty times, together with the heads of the thousands of this order of the stars, together with the four that are added and separate between the four portions of the year, which they lead and enter with them four days."

In one of the subsequent divisions, a history of the world is given, from the beginning to

its conversion in Messianic times. The men of Israel are symbolized as tame animals; the patriarchs are bullocks and the faithful are the sheep. Those who are not the people of God and who are the enemies of Israel are spoken of as wild beasts and vultures. The nations are herds, and their leaders are prominent members of such herds. The account itself is based chiefly on the Old Testament records. In the very end of this history, as in the somewhat similar passages in the Book of Daniel, the greater leaders are referred to as so many horns. The book, having thus foretold the condition of things which surrounds the author, closes by an exhortation to those who read it as to the way in which they shall prepare to meet these contingencies. Here, indeed, is the object with which the whole book has been written. Enoch has given his children an account of the events to come, and instructs them in their conduct in preparation for those events. What he has told is applied in the way of admonition, warning, and instruction.

As what may be called a briefer introduction to the warnings, he reviews the history of the world in ten world-weeks, which are each of seven days, so that the history of the world is divided into seventy heads. Of these, forty-nine belong to history and twenty-one to prophecy. The seventh is the week in which the author lived—a rebellious age; rebellious, that is, against God and God's laws.

The exhortations which follow are intended principally for the faithful. He warns the Israelites against the perversions which come upon them from Greek language, ideas, and manners. Those who have given way to these foreign temptations will be punished. They must not rely upon wealth; they must rely on God.

But even in their persecutions they are to hope, for a change is sure to come.

"Oh that my eyes were clouds of water, and I could weep over you and pour out my tears like a cloud of water, and I could rest from the sorrow of my heart!

"But ye who are just, hope ye, for the sinner will be destroyed suddenly before you, and the power over them will be to you, as ye desire.

"In the day of the trouble of the sinners, your children will mount and rise like eagles, and your nest will be higher than the hawk, and you will ascend and go like the squirrels into the recesses of the earth and into the clefts of the rock to eternity before the unjust. But they will lament over you and cry as the satyrs cry

"Woe to you who practice injustice, and destruction, and reviling; you will be remembered for your evil. Woe to you who are strong, who throw down the just by your power, for the day of your destruction will come. In those times many and good days will come to the just, but it shall be on the day of your judgment."

The book closes with what the critics consider to be an addition by the later hand, describing the birth of the son of the prophet, to whom these instructions had been given.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM 135 TO 63 B. C. — THE LAST YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE.

ONE of Simon's sons, John Hyrcanus, was not with his father when he was entrapped and slain, though the assassins did all in their power to destroy him. This was in vain, however, for a faithful messenger ran to Gezer to warn him of his danger, and Hyrcanus prepared to defend himself to the last. He was successful not only in preserving his own life, but also in seizing those who came to kill him and putting them to death. Immediately afterward he went to Jerusalem and was proclaimed high priest and ruler of the country.

John inherited the ability and vigor characteristic of his family, and he needed it, for he was no sooner accepted leader than he had to devise means to withstand another Syrian invasion. He and his people were besieged in Jerusalem and speedily reduced to great extremity by famine. At last he was compelled by sheer necessity to expel from the city the young and old of both sexes who could do nothing to defend the city. It was greatly to the credit of the Syrian king, Antiochus Sidetes, that, in the extreme distress of the Jews, he conceded a week's truce, and not only so, but "furnished the besieged with victims for sacrifice, and gold and silver vessels for the temple service during the Feast of Tabernacles." He was gratefully compared with his impious ancestor, Antiochus Epiphanes, and called Antiochus the Pious. Finally he concluded a peace, of which the terms, though hard, were better than Hyrcanus, in the low condition to which he was reduced, could fairly expect. John agreed to pay tribute for Joppa, Gezer, and other border towns held by grants from the previous Syrian kings; but he stoutly refused to admit a garrison into Jerusalem, and succeeded in carrying his point, though he had to give 500 talents instead and to furnish hostages as security for his fidelity to the agreement.

For the next twenty-five years Hyrcanus gradually grew stronger, and his people more prosperous. The friendly king of Syria, Antiochus Sidetes, died in battle in 129 B. C., and in three years three kings succeeded to the throne. They were not powerful monarchs, and as Syria grew weaker, Judea became more independent. "In the double and divided duties which devolved upon him, John Hyrcanus was perhaps more knight than priest, more just than merciful. He made short work with his foes, whether native or foreign." True to the puritan instincts of his ancestors, he abomi-

nated mongrel Judaism, and being at peace with all foreign powers he turned his attention to the unorthodox Samaritans. He told them plainly that they must either be one thing or the other, and finding them obstinate he razed to the ground their rival temple on Gerizim and totally destroyed the Greek city of Samaria. This was harsh dealing, but Hyrcanus was prompted by religious zeal, and we know that his subjects enthusiastically approved his actions.

Hyrcanus then proceeded to "convert" the Edomites. They had often been hostile to the Jews, and doubtless the memory of this stirred Hyrcanus to devise thorough measures. He subjugated the country and forced the Edomites to adopt circumcision and the whole system of the Jewish religion. So it is "even until this day." Those who denounce as tyranny all interference with their own religious convictions are often the first and fiercest in thrusting their notions on others. As Luther said, "Every man is at heart a pope," though he may never even have heard of Rome.

In the twenty-sixth year of his reign Hyrcanus annexed all Samaria and Galilee, and inflicted two severe defeats on the Syrians when they interfered with his operations. Thus he became practically an independent sovereign; and so when fifty years had passed after the death of Judas Maccabæus, the summit of Jewish prosperity was gained under the strong and wise rule of his nephew. The borders of the land had been gradually extended until the Jewish possessions were five times as great as in the days of Judas. The neighboring tribes had been conquered and the valuable port of Joppa won for purposes of trade. The alliance with the Romans had been carefully maintained, and eventually a new treaty, offensive and defensive, was made against their common enemies.

So far all had gone well with John Hyrcanus; but the special talent of the Jews for raising dissensions had not been altogether neglected. When united they had prospered, and though it was by long and hard fighting they had at last won the liberty they craved so much. When they lost it, it was not because of foreign foes, but because of their own quarrelsome dispositions and their incapacity for freedom.

Notwithstanding his zeal for the purity of the national religion, Hyrcanus did not maintain the observance of the innumerable regulations which the rigid Pharisees had imposed on the nation. This laxity was unpardonable, and

so they managed to make his last years very unhappy. This quarrel of the Pharisees with the ruling family—the Maccabees—ended in the overthrow of that noble house, and eventually in the destruction of the Jewish nation. For thirty-one years Hyrcanus carried on the government with great vigor and ability. In the year 106 B. C. he died, and his name was cherished with reverent affection as the last great ruler of his people.

From 106 to 63 B. C.—The story of the decline of the Jewish nation is a melancholy record of ruinous infatuation and wasted energy.

It appears that John Hyrcanus knew of the incapacity of his sons and of the feud between them. He did his best to prevent dissension by appointing his son, Aristobulus I., to the office of high priest, and leaving the civil supremacy to his wife, the mother of his five sons.

This arrangement did not suit the ambitious nature of Aristobulus; so he imprisoned his mother and three of his brothers and proclaimed himself king. Soon afterward he made a successful expedition and subdued Iturea. His favorite brother, Antigonus, was associated with him in this campaign, but on his return to Jerusalem Aristobulus wrongfully suspected Antigonus of treachery and put him to death. Subsequently he made the discovery that his brother was really innocent, which caused him to be "seized with such agony and remorse that he expired." He was a degenerate son of a noble house, and no doubt it was a fortunate thing for his people that he died in less than a year after he had usurped the throne.

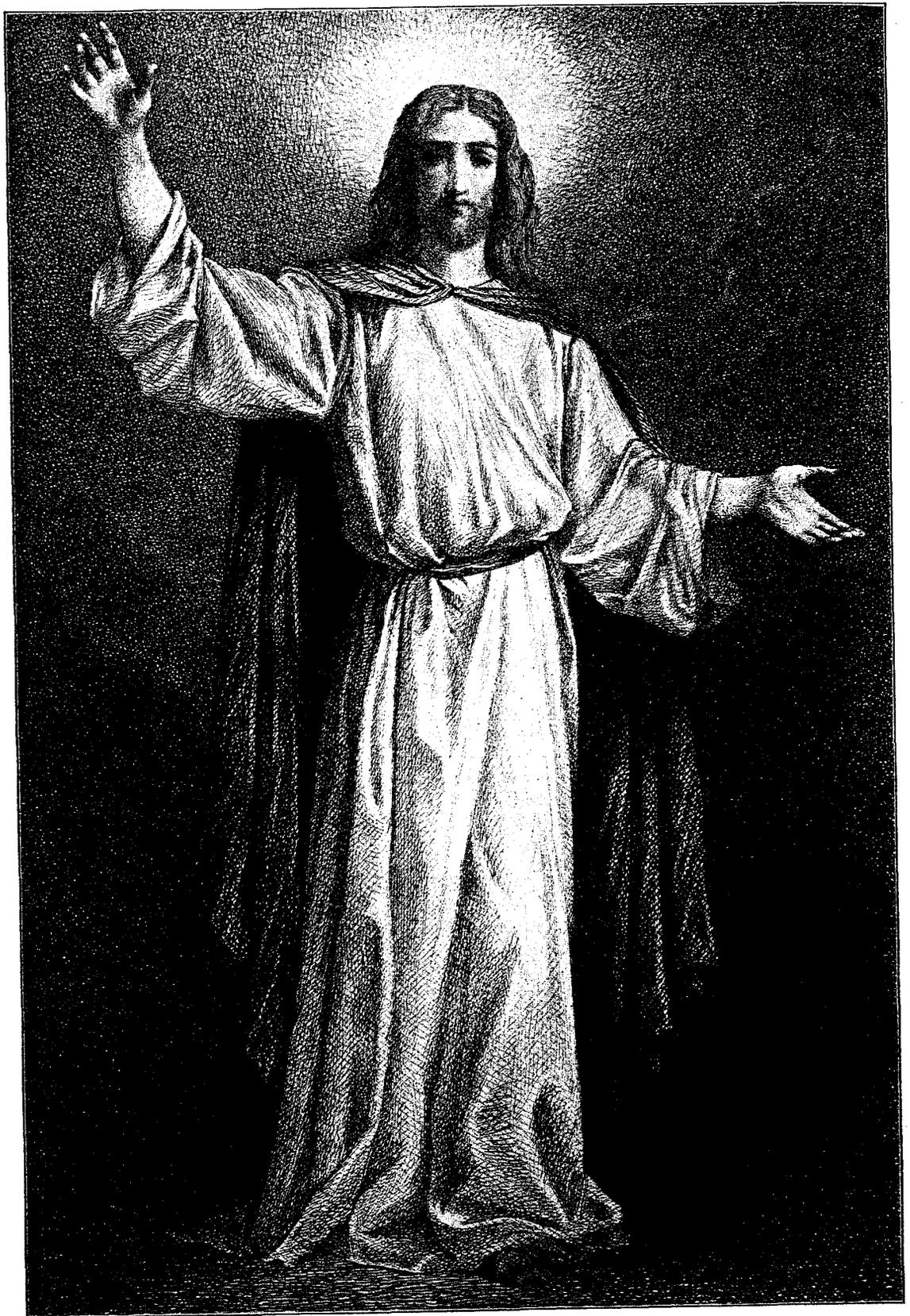
Alexander Jannæus, his brother, succeeded him and reigned twenty-seven years. The hostility sown between his father and the Pharisees continued all through his reign. In addition to wars on his frontier, there was much rioting between the factions in Jerusalem, so that although he was brave and energetic, he was not a successful ruler.

Alexander belonged to the party of the Sadducees; and the Pharisees seemed determined to do all they could to keep up the contention between themselves and their prince. Once they insulted him in the Temple while he was officiating, and denied his right to the priesthood. This was more than Alexander could bear: he at once commanded his troops to fall on the Pharisees and their supporters, an order which resulted in the death of 6,000 persons. This crushed the opposition only for a time, for

soon afterward, while he was gone on an expedition to the east of the Jordan, the Jews rose in rebellion, and for six years the country was involved in a bitter civil war. Finally Alexander was successful, but he felt sure there would be trouble in the future. On his deathbed he admitted that he had been mistaken in alienating the Pharisees from him, and urged his wife to conciliate them.

Alexander died in 79 B. C., and his widow Alexandra took charge of the national affairs. She immediately adopted the policy her husband had advised, which was rendered more easy by the fact that her brother Simon, a man of great influence, was a Pharisee. To the credit of the Pharisees it must be acknowledged that they proved wise counselors and stanch friends to the widowed queen, and for the nine years of her reign the country was prosperous and at peace. Her two sons, Hyrcanus II. and Aristobulus II., assisted in the business of the nation; the quiet Hyrcanus was made high priest, and the active Aristobulus occupied himself with civil and military affairs.

Alexandra died in 70 B. C., and her two sons began at once to quarrel. The Pharisees supported Hyrcanus, and the priestly section of the Sadducees took the side of Aristobulus. The army, too, chose to follow the vigorous and enterprising Aristobulus. This action enabled him to defeat his brother's forces and occupy Jerusalem. At length Hyrcanus consented to give up the sovereignty and for a short period he retired into private life. After a while the contest broke out again, chiefly through the ambition and craft of Antipater, the son of the governor of Idumea, who wished to play off one brother against the other until he could find the opportunity to seize their country for himself. The feud raged fiercely for several years, and then, in an evil hour, they asked Pompey, the Roman general who at that time was in Syria, to arbitrate the case and decide who should be the ruler of Judea. Pompey consented to do so, but he took so long time to make up his mind that Aristobulus grew tired of waiting, and went off and prepared to maintain his own cause. This induced Pompey to take the matter entirely into his own hands. He advanced against Jerusalem, captured it after a three-months' siege, declared all the possessions of Aristobulus to be forfeit to Rome, and established Hyrcanus as high priest and ethnarch of Judea.



BIDA.

JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PREPARATION FOR CHRIST.

IT was sixty-three years before the Christian era, when the Jewish nation thus yielded to the imperial power of Rome. Pompey, already called the Great, arrived in Palestine under circumstances which give to the Roman conquest of the stubborn provinces the most dramatic aspect. Pompey is himself a person whose character especially interests modern readers among the rough fighters of his time. He attained power and popularity in Rome at a very early period of his life. At the time when he entered Jerusalem he was but forty-three years old. He had then twice enjoyed the unusual honor of a triumph, entering Rome in solemn and grand processions, after signal victories over the enemies of the republic.

Three years before his appearance in Palestine he had been intrusted with the management of the very difficult campaigns against Mithridates. All the land and naval forces of Rome, in the eastern part of the Roman dominion, had been placed under his command, with the summary authority of a proconsul in all Asia, as far as Armenia—which was quite as far, indeed, as Rome pretended to hold sway, or, in fact, knew either the names of rulers or of people. Pompey crushed Mithridates—and, with him, the power of the East—in the next four years. It is in the last of these that he appears in the Holy Land, having left the Roman legions, at the extreme East, under the care of Scaurus. It has been supposed that Pompey was attracted to Palestine and Jerusalem by a sort of religious interest in this mysterious nation, which alone, of all people, worshiped a God of whom no image could be made.

The contending factions among the Jews knew he was irresistible, as indeed he was. When, therefore, the two brothers, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus II., appealed to him, they made every effort to conciliate him. Aristobulus brought a magnificent offering wrought from gold, at the cost of 500 talents.¹ It was called "The Delight," and is sometimes described as a golden vine, sometimes as a golden garden. For at least one hundred years it was preserved in the temple of Jupiter of the Capitol at Rome, having been borne there among the various offerings of Pompey's third and most wonderful triumph. It was seen there by Strabo and Josephus. Hyrcanus, who was the competitor of Aristobulus for the rule of the land, represented the rival party. Brother appeared

¹ The Greek talent may be roughly estimated at \$1,000 of our money.

against brother—Hyrcanus, the high priest, against Aristobulus, the king. Pompey heard the complaints of each party, condemned Aristobulus for his violence, but sent both away until he could come to their country again. He advised them, first of all, to keep the peace with each other. For himself, he had a campaign at hand against the Nabatheans, and he bade Aristobulus and Hyrcanus wait his return from it.

Aristobulus obeyed neither the letter nor the spirit of this command. Pompey found that he was disposed to be rebellious, abandoned his movement against the Nabatheans and moved his army into Palestine itself. Encamping at Jericho, then still beautiful with its palm trees, he and his army there received with joy the great news of the death of Mithridates. Pompey's conquest of Asia, as they called the west of Africa, was, therefore, complete. And now he moved upon Jerusalem.

Now began another of those terrible sieges which have recurred so often in the history of the Holy City. The party of Hyrcanus surrendered their part of the city to the Romans. The party of Aristobulus obstinately defended theirs. The whole power of the Roman army was needed to storm the walls. And when the Roman army took possession it was only after the most terrible slaughter of the Jews. The Jewish historian says that 12,000 of them were killed.

The same observance of the sabbath by the besieged marked this contest as was noticed in other sieges. The Romans observed this, and, on the sabbath days, while "they came to no pitched battle with the Jews," they did raise the banks of earth from which their engines were to work, and perfected their batteries by which they made the attack which opened the breach for their assault.

When the Temple was captured Pompey entered it. He came to the Holy of Holies, of which he knew the sacredness, that no one but the high priest of the whole nation could enter there, and he only once a year.¹ Roman-like, with the whole strength of Rome behind him, the great commander passed through the Temple courts to the sacred shrine. He lifted the sacred veil. He entered the Holy of Holies. There was nothing there. Pompey learned his lesson, if he needed it, that he who made the world and all that is therein, dwells not in temples made with hands.

¹ Leviticus xvi.

With justice, dignity, and firmness, such as distinguished Pompey often, if not always, he adjusted for the time, at least, the dissensions among the Jews. Aristobulus, the elder brother, had, of course, lost all hope of Roman favor by mad resistance to the Roman arms. Hyrcanus received the honor and danger of the priesthood, for which the two had contended. It was remembered and recorded, that, the day after Pompey entered the Temple, he gave orders that it should be purified, for he knew that his presence in the shrine had contaminated it to Jewish eyes. He took none of the golden ornaments of the Temple from their sacred uses.

He gave orders that the chiefs of the insurrection should be beheaded. He tried to bring back to the limits of Judah all of Jewish blood; and, from that time, the south of Palestine takes the name of Judea. The province included the region formerly held by the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin. He restored the independence of the towns on the coast and those beyond Jordan. He undid, in short, all that the courage and statesmanship of the Maccabean princes had done for their people. Josephus, the Jewish historian of these events, says sadly, that in consequence of the feud between Aristobulus and Hyrcanus "we lost our liberty, and became subject to the Romans, and were deprived of that country which we had gained by our arms from the Syrians, and were compelled to restore it to the Syrians."

Pompey returned to Rome, and, in a pageant of two days, received the honor of his third triumph. Among the magnificent spoils exhibited was the golden vine which Aristobulus had given to him. Large numbers of Jewish captives were in the train of prisoners. These men, with their wives and children, made up the colony of Jews in the city of Rome, which was now known there for the first time. It was planted where the Jewish settlement called the "Ghetto," a name derived from the name of Egypt, still exists, and has been inhabited by Jews from that day to this. Aristobulus II., the king of the Jews, was among the prisoners. Cicero, in writing to Atticus at that time, calls Pompey "our hero of Jerusalem."

Rome had touched Jerusalem, and now the literature and religion of the Holy Land, from this time forward, begin to show themselves in Roman life and literature, as they had not appeared before. Whatever sparks of imagination or of faith were smothered beneath the hard organization of Roman life were quickened by the new breath from the East until they burned. The poet Virgil was six years old when the great triumph brought the Jews into the notice of the city of Rome. When he went to Rome as a young man, the literary

men of Rome had already tasted at the Jewish fountain. We have cited the passage in the eclogue addressed to Pollio, which is so curious a parallel to the well-known lines of Isaiah.

The poet Horace was a baby two years old at the time of the triumph. But, by the time he was a man, in Rome, notions of the sabbath and of the order of the Jewish calendar were so well understood that he introduces them in one of his joking satires. He is trying to free himself from an importunate bore in the street: "I know, but I will speak another time. This is the thirtieth sabbath—would you wish to affront these Jews?" The week of the Passover is the thirtieth week of the Jewish year, and in that week no secular business could be transacted. Horace already knew as nice a detail as this of Hebrew customs.

The Sibylline books, in the oriental forms, were beginning to appear in Rome. They are full of suggestions of the Old Testament Scripture. Thus is it that, as Dean Stanley says, "Pompey was, although he knew it not, the founder of the Roman Church."

The aged Simeon, who was in the Temple when Jesus Christ was presented there, and Anna the prophetess, were old enough to have seen and remembered Pompey in Jerusalem. At the time when he met Aristobulus and Hyrcanus at Damascus, Herod, afterward called the Great, was seven years old. He was the King Herod referred to in the first chapter of Matthew. The history of his eventful life connects the story of the Jews, after their dependence upon Rome, with the story of newborn Christianity.

The father of Herod was Antipater of Edom—that Edom which was so often spoken of with hatred by the Old Testament writers—the Edom of Ishmael and of a hundred roving tribes, against which Israel had to give her children for battle. In the Roman language Edom was called Idumæa, and Antipater is spoken of in the histories as Antipater the Idumean. He married Cypros, a princess of Arabia,—so that from his father and from his mother Herod the Great inherited the genius of Ishmael and the Ishmaelite tribes.

John Hyrcanus had brought these wild Edomites into subjection, and had appointed as their governor Herod's grandfather. This grandfather was named Antipas, according to Josephus; according to Eusebius, Herod. After the Edomites had been subdued by John Hyrcanus he appointed this man to be governor of the conquered country. His influence with Pompey was one of the causes which favored Hyrcanus II. in Pompey's decision between him and Aristobulus II.

Herod showed, when he was a boy, the beauty of person, the strength of will, and the

extraordinary ability for command, which gave him such power through his life. He was only fifteen years old when his father appointed him to the command of Galilee. Galilee was then a home of robbers, and the boy-governor—himself a bold hunter and afraid of nothing—used all the power at his command in repressing them. His fame outran the limits of the province.

The first mention made in history of the council of the Sanhedrim, spoken of as "the Seventy" in the New Testament,¹ is of the occasion when it met for the trial of the young Herod, who had been summoned to answer for charges of cruelty in suppressing this rebellion. He had provided himself with letters of commendation from Sextus Cæsar, who was the Roman governor of all Syria. Josephus tells us that the Sanhedrim was ready to sentence Herod to death, and to defy Cæsar. Hyrcanus saw that their decision was made, and counselled the young Herod to escape from the city. Herod took the advice, and in the night retired and retreated to Damascus. The Seventy thus lost their last opportunity. He probably afterward regarded this moment as the most critical of his life.

He had escaped imprisonment and death at the hands of the Sanhedrim. But, year by year, the clouds gathered darker and darker around him. Aristobulus sought the alliance of the king of Parthia, the name of the great Eastern empire. We retain its name in our word, "Persia." By false or fair means Aristobulus induced Herod's friends Hyrcanus and Chasad to trust themselves to him. Herod, with his household and his nearest friend, retired to the palace fortress of Masada, which had been prepared for such a purpose in the wilderness of the Dead Sea.

The ruins of Masada still astonish the traveler. It was rediscovered in our time by Messrs. Robinson and Smith, who saw the ruins from a distance in 1842. Mr. Wolcott, an American missionary, with Mr. Tipping, an English painter, afterward scaled the plateau of Masada and verified the exactness of the conjecture of Messrs. Robinson and Smith. In 1848 Captain Lynch, in the American expedition, visited the ruins. The foundations of Herod's palace can still be made out. At each corner was a tower 100 feet in height. The apartments, porticos, and baths were various and sumptuous. Great cisterns had been cut in the rock to keep water, so as to furnish a constant supply. A covered road led from the palace to the highest point of the fortress.

The critical period of the history of Masada is nearly a hundred years after Herod retired

here. It was then that the last wreck of the Jewish nation, besieged by the Romans, destroyed the palace by fire, and to the number of 960 died in the flames. They chose by lot ten of their number, on whom devolved the terrible duty of killing all the rest. These men accomplished their work without flinching, and when it was over, in their turn designated by lot him who should kill the nine others, and destroy himself by his own hand. The last survivor examined all the bodies stretched about him, then set fire to the palace and ran his sword through his own body. This story, well authenticated, is the terrible close of the history of this fortress.

To return to Herod. He still had competitors for the rule of Judea. All the teaching body was against him; they followed Antigonus. Herod found that even Masada was not secure. He was obliged to take the great risk of all, and to appeal to Rome. He passed through Petra and Alexandria to Rome, and placed his cause in the hands of his old friend Antony.

"Personal presence moves the world," it is said. Certainly it was so then. Antony introduced him to the Roman senate, the proud assembly which made and unmade kings. He had come as the advocate of Aristobulus II. He left the senate chamber with the title by which the world of our time knows him, "King of the Jews"—the first king to bear that title since the downfall of the ill-fated Zedekiah. Antony, and Octavianus, the Augustus of the Book of Luke, concurred in giving to him his title and the iniquity it proclaimed. With the assistance of Sosius, the Roman general, he stormed Jerusalem. He entered it on the same day of the year in which Pompey had entered it twenty-five years before. And on this occasion he won the regard, which afterward he never seemed to merit or even to care for. He bought off the Roman soldiers from the luxury of ravage. "The whole world would not pay me for the destruction of my subjects."

But while he could affect mercy for his subjects, he was pitiless toward his enemies. He pursued them to death with terrible vengeance. Of the Sanhedrim, which has been referred to, it is said that Abtalion, Shemaiah, and the son of Babas were the only three who escaped. Antigonus was seized and executed, and with him the dynasty of the Maccabees, which is called the Asmonean dynasty in history, ends. But the family was not extinct. Hyrcanus, Herod's friend, and the two children of Aristobulus survived. Herod recalled Hyrcanus from Babylon, where he was in an honorable retreat, and gave to him every dignity, excepting that of the high-priesthood.

¹ Luke x, 1, 17.

From this he was debarred because Antigonus had bitten his ear with the express purpose of giving him a physical blemish, which should make him unable to hold the highest place in the priesthood.

Herod married Mariamne. This princess, celebrated in literature and history, was one of the most attractive women who ever lived. It is her name, more than the name of Miriam, the sister of Moses, which made Mary to be a name so frequent and so fond in the Palestine of our Savior's time.

For Aristobulus III., Herod had another fate. He pretended courtesy to him, and at last affected to give him the priesthood, which he had given to Hananel. Alexandra, the mother of Aristobulus III., distrusted such favor, and proposed to flee to Egypt with him. This plot of hers determined Herod to kill the young man. He received him at Jericho, which has been called the fashionable watering-place of Palestine, and welcomed him with sportive regard. The young man, with his companions, plunged into the bath in the sultry noonday, and then, at Herod's command, the soldiers from Gaul who were his body-guard, seized Aristobulus, held him under water, and killed him. Such a murder, so terrible, was but an illustration of Herod's jealousy, and his method of rule. Not long after, he tried and convicted Hyrcanus II., who was executed at the age of eighty.

Such were the horrors of the court that the members of Herod's family and of his wife's family had to be kept asunder. Herod's mother and sister lived in his magnificent Masada, his wife and her mother lived in Alexandrium, the ancient residence of his race. It may well be understood that Mariamne could not look with much favor upon a husband who had murdered her father and her brother. Her turn came next. "She went to her execution with unmoved countenance, with unchanged color, and died, as she had lived, a true Maccabee." Herod, after he had killed her, pretended terrible remorse. His servants were instructed to address her as if she were still alive. Attacked by fever, it seemed as if he must die; but he recovered to work new terrors his life long.

It is from such a life that the bitter comment of the emperor Augustus derives its sting. Augustus, who was his patron, said, "I had rather be Herod's hog than his son." He meant that, while the Jewish rule prevented Herod from killing a hog for food, it did not hold him back from the murder of his own children. In his passionate regret for Mariamne, Herod sent Alexander and Aristobulus, her sons, to Rome. Here they were educated in the household of Pollio, the friend of Virgil,

to whom he addressed his Fourth Eclogue. They came back to Palestine with the graces of Roman education, and with that dignity which belonged to their ancestors. Herod proposed for Alexander a marriage with the daughter of the king of Cappadocia; for his brother a marriage with the daughter of Salome. Here the feuds of the rival families would perhaps have been brought to an end; but the young men remembered their mother. They lost no occasion of showing their regard for her, and their hatred of their father. It was easy to call up testimony of their treasonable utterances, and when Antipater, Herod's son by his first marriage, saw it well to destroy his father's interest in them, he and Salome succeeded, and the young men were executed in Sebaste, where their mother was married. Herod Agrippa and Herodias, whom we know in the Gospels, were their children. With them ends the history of the Asmonean dynasty. Stanley remarks that the four names which seem to have been favorite names in Judea at the time of our Gospels—John, Judas, Simon, and Matthias—are all names in the Maccabean family.

The years of Herod's reign cover nearly half a century—the half-century, roughly speaking, which precedes the birth of the Savior. It would be safe to say that, but for the birth of Christ, Herod's name would not be known to modern readers except as the name of Mithridates is known, or of Antiochus, or any other successful ruler of the East, who came under the sway of the Roman empire. But in truth, the Judea of the Savior's time is Judea as this great ruler had fashioned it, and though we pass by his name almost indifferently in history till we come to the beginning of the Book of Matthew, in his time, for the southwest of Asia, Herod was a ruler who may be compared to the first Napoleon in the first fifteen years of this nineteenth century. The physical mark which Herod made upon Syria was greater than any physical memories which Napoleon left in France. Not simply temples and palaces, but whole cities, were the monuments of his wealth and his determination. The pages of Josephus are red with the accounts of his murders—murders, in many instances, of those nearest to him in his family. But the traveler in Syria to-day finds an unwritten history in the ruins and in the edifices not in ruin, which show how vast were the resources, and how bold the enterprise, of this remarkable man. As it happens, we have fuller record of his history in the two books of Josephus—one called the "Wars of the Jews" and the other "The Antiquities of the Jews"—than we have of any other of the great sovereigns whose kingdoms were absorbed by the growing empire of Rome.

It is thus that the life of Herod has won for itself a place in modern literature. More than two centuries ago, an English lady, with that dramatic power which seems to have belonged to the era of Shakespeare, wrote a tragedy called "Mariam, the Faire Queen of Jewry," which was published in the year 1613. This was the Lady Elizabeth Carew. Voltaire's play of "Mariamne" is perhaps as good an illustration of his dramatic genius as survives.

Of the marvelous works of architecture which are connected with this history, the new Temple at Jerusalem was, for every reason, the most important. It was Herod's first affair to conciliate, as best he might, the passionate reverence of the Jews for their ancient religion, for the law, the ritual, and the history which had made them great, and of which, now for more than a thousand years, the center had been at Jerusalem. The Temple where this ritual was carried out was still the simple Temple which Zerubbabel had built, on the return of the scattered fragments of the tribes from exile. The history of that Temple covers the period between the Book of Malachi and the Book of Matthew, which we have been trying to illustrate, and which seem so mysterious to young readers of the Bible. As soon as Herod was well seated on his throne, he made it his pleasure and his duty to rebuild the ancient Temple with such wealth and grandeur as should make it what, indeed, it became—one of the wonders of the world.

It is said that the emperor Augustus advised him against such an undertaking. The policy of Augustus, perhaps, had less regard for the past than for the future. He is said to have remarked to Herod, "If the old building is not destroyed, do not destroy it. If it is destroyed, do not rebuild it. If you both destroy and rebuild, you are a foolish servant."

This is the statement of the Talmud, never to be relied upon for literal accuracy. But it is "well imagined," even if it be not literally true. Herod availed himself, however, of that fiction which is so easy—he pretended to repair a breach in the old building; and as he built, the worship of the old Temple was never interrupted. In the narrative in the second chapter of John, the priests in the Temple are said to have exclaimed that it required forty-six years to build it. Stanley estimates these forty-six years as running between the year 17 B. C. of our calendar and the year 28 A. D., a little before the Passion Week, when the words were spoken.¹

¹The principal work on Herod's Temple seems to have covered a period of ten years, and the completion to have been resumed long afterward. It has been supposed, therefore, that the forty-six years belong to the date of the original Temple of Zerubbabel.

The execution of the two young princes took place at Sebaste, the city which we know as Sychar, in the year marked in the calendar as the sixth before Christ. The Herod who killed John the Baptist, and the Herod before whom Paul appears, represent the same family, but the Herod called the Great was the last king of the Jews. It has been well suggested that when the Savior said "A house divided against itself cannot stand," he had in mind the divisions and fall of the noble family of the Maccabean heroes. It is important for us to remember how much that great family did for the Jewish people.

When Mattathias lifted his aged hand to resist the perversion of his people from the pure religion of his ancestors, the condition of the Jews was as degraded as it was possible for any despot to make it. The modern Turk—"the unspeakable Turk"—is regarded by most people as exhibiting the climax of iniquitous government, but Conder assures us: "The Jews under Antiochus were probably worse governed than even the Syrians of the present day under the Turks; for whilst the Koran is the standard, religious and civil, both of the Turk and the Moslem Syrian, the law of Moses was not recognized by Antiochus and his officers at all." Probably no people were ever in a more pitiable state, and their superior knowledge of morality must have only intensified their sufferings and sorrows. The law was burned wherever found, the Temple stripped of everything of value, its services prohibited, its whole interior profaned and polluted, and its priests scattered. The people were driven by torture and threats of death to renounce the faith of their fathers and embrace debasing idolatry. Nearly every office in the land was filled by a foreigner who despised Judaism and hated and abused the Jews. Vile and avaricious men wrung taxes out of the people on almost every imaginable thing. Tribute, crown taxes, customs of salt, the third part of the seed, half of the fruit of the trees, 5,000 shekels of silver per year on the Temple, a certain number of men compelled to go wherever they were wanted as soldiers, not only taxes on animals but liability to furnish them for the use of their oppressors whenever they chose to demand them—such were the burdens crushing down the Jews before the time of Judas Maccabæus.

To say that at least four-fifths of all this was remedied by the long and arduous labors and fightings of the Maccabees is to say a great deal, but it only represents a part of the benefits they conferred on their country. They arrested the degradation of their people, renewed their failing hope and trust in God, and their destiny as his witnesses for true religion

and a pure family life. From the curse and incessant calamities of factious strife, with all its bloodshed and horrors, the Maccabees strove to deliver them, and to a very great extent they succeeded.

They taught them how to fight more successfully against their foes and how to manage their relations with other nations. Religion was elevated, the sacred writings collected and preserved, patriotism was revived, and a willful, quarrelsome race firmly and patiently led on in the path of prosperity and progress. The people were stimulated to courage and to steadfast endurance. By example, the best of teachers, the Jews were taught to regard religion as worth living, laboring, suffering, and dying for. Liberty to serve God in their own way was put before them as their inalienable right, as men and children of their living God and Father of mankind. From the most abject subjection the Maccabees lifted their country higher and higher until, in the days of the brave and wise Simon, they enjoyed practical independence with the religious and civil liberty for which they had longed so ardently.

The benefits so hardly won were preserved for the nation just as long as the nation was worthy of them. Time, however, and the temptations always accompanying prosperity, gradually lowered that high conception of duty which animated and ennobled the self-renouncing Judas. The common ambitions for place, and wealth, and power took precedence of nobler motives and dragged down those who should have been examples for their people, until they acted as basely as their unworthiest subjects. The genius for discord which seems always to have been specially developed in the Jewish character completely undid the heroic work of the brave and single-hearted early Maccabees, and brought their house and nation to miserable dependence and finally to the blankest desolation.

Dissension and ambition were not the sole causes of the Jewish downfall. They had too many priests, scribes, etc., with too little to do. These long-robed favorites led the whole nation into the most lamentable waste of time and force over hair-splitting disputes concerning the least important things. While they magnified their position, they depraved the religious instincts of their people. The slavish attention to externalities left little time or energy for the cultivation of that fear of God and longing to do his commandments which their most gifted and spiritual prophets had so unweariedly impressed upon them. While they quarrelled over the petty details of a ridiculously cumbrous ceremonial, and multiplied the duties and observances until they were "too grievous to be borne," the weightier

matters—"judgment, mercy, and faith"—were often neglected if not forgotten.

So easy is it for us to discern the causes of the ruin of the Jewish nation. "If we had lived in their days we would not have been partakers with them." This is very doubtful, for we often see indications that our many advantages over the Jews of 2,000 years ago have not yet brought us to the summit of virtue.

Above all, let us remember that the good work done by the Maccabean patriots, the really pious Pharisees, scribes, and priests, was not in vain. Their sufferings and martyrdoms were not fruitless. It may be true that "the evil that men do lives after them," but it does not live with that vital moving force which is often ascribed to it. Good is stronger than evil, and it is never "interred with men's bones." The whole Jewish people to-day are wiser and better for the toils, and griefs, and errors of their ancestors. The follies and sins of the Maccabees, Pharisees, and Sadducees are scanned gently and then put in the background among the things to be forgiven if not entirely forgotten; while their zeal and labor, patience, courage, and self-denying devotion to the few grand religious principles they knew, loved, and died for, are placed high in front to guide and stimulate all races of mankind to press toward that mark which our high vocation constrains us and binds us always to strive to attain.

Herod's Temple has been said to have been "a building which has perhaps never been surpassed in ancient or in modern times." There has been a certain fascination about it, which has produced almost endless studies of its plan and its proportions. It is certain that he spared no cost in building it. It seems certain that he doubled the space formerly occupied by the Temple and its courts. The dimensions were therefore one stadium—about a quarter of a mile—each way. The Temple itself was not larger than that of Solomon, but it was surrounded by an inner inclosure of great magnificence, and the outer inclosure was adorned with porticos of greater splendor than any of which we know in the ancient world. The cloisters of this larger court were double rows of Corinthian columns, thirty-seven feet high, with flat roofs which rested against the outer wall of the Temple itself. The royal porch which overhung the southern wall may be said to have consisted of a nave and two aisles; that on the Temple side was open, that toward the country was closed by a wall. The breadth of the center aisle was 40 feet and its height 100 feet. The side aisles were 30 feet from center to center of the pillars. There were 162 Corinthian columns, arranged in four rows of

40 in each row, the two odd columns making a screen at the end of the bridge which led to the palace.

Not far from the front of the cloisters was a marble screen, beautifully ornamented and bearing inscriptions forbidding any Gentile to pass within. But the Jew who passed ascended a flight of steps to the platform on which the Temple stood. The court of the Temple itself was nearly square. The great ornament of the inner temple seems to have been in the gateways of the inner court, and the pride of the Temple was the great eastern gate, leading from the court of the women to the upper court. It is probably that which was called the "beautiful gate" in the New Testament. It was covered with carving, richly gilt, "more like the gopura of an Indian temple," says Mr. Fergusson, "than anything else with which we are acquainted." Directly within the gateway was the altar of burnt offerings, 50 cubits square and 15 cubits high.

It is curious that so little is known as to the style of architecture of the Temple itself. But it ought to be said that some of the architects of our own time have shown good reason for their belief that the Saracenic or oriental architecture, known to us from the triumphs of Islam, had its origin in the oriental architecture of the Temple at Jerusalem.

The Jews of the later years of Herod's time were not satisfied with the Roman rule. When our Savior came to manhood, the tetrarch Herod was engaged in war with his father-in-law, Aretas, the king of Arabia. With such local wars, and one and another insurrection against Roman authority, the Jews of Herod's time were familiar; but it would seem that the external prosperity of the Holy Land was, on the whole, increasing, up till the time when our Gospels begin. Such magnificence as this of the Temple shows great wealth which, from one source or another, Herod accumulated. His enterprises in other cities were only second to these in Jerusalem. Meanwhile, Jewish colonies, which we might almost call Jewish nations, were establishing themselves in Babylon and in Alexandria, and Jewish settlements on a smaller scale in other parts of the world. The old indignation of early prophets against Jews who left the Holy Land to "go down into Egypt" was renewed in like indignation in Herod's time. There grew up in Egypt a

body of learned Jews whose studies of the ancient history were greatly modified by Greek philosophy and by the habits of Roman organization. Among these is to be named Philo, who has been spoken of. The success of the Jewish bankers gave to them, although they belonged to a despised race, something of the power which Jewish bankers have to-day. Such names as the names of Hillel and Schammai gave distinction to the studies of the wise men of Jerusalem. The religious parties known as the Pharisees and Sadducees, were perhaps at the acme of such success as can wait on such speculation. The very curious community of ascetics, known as the Essenes, who preserved with great strictness the requisitions of the Jewish law, and united with them the requisitions of the most severe personal purity, had formed itself among men who retired from courts and politics. Such were the preparations, all-important, as history has shown, for the rapid propagation and extent of the gospel planting. The providential course of history for the 400 years in which we have traced its annals, was a long preparation for the proclamation of the Gospel. "The chariot wheels of Alexander smoothed the highways over which the apostles of the Cross were to travel."

At such a moment, in such a place, rightly regarded as the center of the ancient world, Jesus Christ was born. We call this moment the Fullness of Time. At this moment, in this place, "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light."

"The plowing of the Lord is deep,
On ocean or on land;
His furrows cross the mountain steep,
They cross the sea-washed sand.

"Wise men and prophets know not how,
But work their Maker's will;
The kings and nations drag the plow,
His purpose to fulfill.

"They work his will because they must,
On hillside or on plain,
The clods are broken into dust
And ready for the grain.

"Then comes the planting of the Lord;
His kingdom cometh now;
The seas in deepest depths are stirred
And all their secrets show.

"The heralds of his march are heard,
And monarchs drag the plow.
Behold the seedtime of his word,
The sower comes to sow!"

Edward E. Hale

BOOK XI.

LITERATURE AND MANUSCRIPTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

LITERATURE, BY PROF. JOSEPH AGAR BEET, D.D.

THE New Testament contains the earliest accounts of the teaching and work of Christ. Upon his teaching, and claims, and resurrection from the dead, rests the Christian hope. Consequently, as the documentary evidence for all these, the New Testament holds a place of unique importance in the literature of the world. Moreover, since the value of evidence depends upon the trustworthiness of its source and upon its nearness to the events attested, it is all-important to determine, as far as we can, the authorship and date of the various documents therein preserved. In other words, the inquiry before us is an important and necessary element of the historic defense of the Christian Faith.

In Chapters I to VII of this study we shall discuss the authorship, and time and place of writing, of the various books of the New Testament. In Chapter VIII we shall consider the correctness of our copies. This involves the correctness of the original manuscripts from which our versions were made, and their faithfulness in reproducing the original text. In Chapter IX we shall discuss in brief outline the historical trustworthiness of the various documents contained in the New Testament, and especially the historic reality of the picture of Christ there given; and the place of the New Testament in the great purpose of salvation for which God sent his Son into the world, and in the religious thought and life of the present day.

The New Testament contains four short

memoirs of the life and teaching of Christ. Of these, the first three, commonly known as the Synoptic Gospels, though marked by very definite individuality, are closely related and stand together far removed in thought and language from the Fourth Gospel. Closely related to, and claiming common origin with, the Third Gospel, is a most interesting and valuable narrative of the founding of the early Christian Churches. Still more important is a group of thirteen letters written to various Churches or persons, and bearing the name of the most conspicuous of the Apostles of Christ. With these are other letters by various writers, one of them very closely, and two others less closely, related to the Fourth Gospel. Also related to the same in authorship, according to the tradition of the early Church, is a remarkable prophecy commonly known as the Book of Revelation. As the documentary evidence for the historic reality of Jesus Christ, the authorship and date of these writings demand now our best attention.

The evidence for the authorship and date of the Epistles attributed to Paul we shall find to be much more abundant and decisive than that for any other part of the New Testament. We shall, therefore, consider it first, and then make the proved genuineness of these Epistles a secure platform of approach to the authorship and value of the rest of the Christian Scriptures. We shall thus advance from those matters about which we know more to others about which our evidence is less abundant.

CHAPTER I.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL.

SINCE thirteen letters bear, in their text and not merely as a superimposed title, the name of Paul, the question of authorship is with them reduced to one of genuineness. We ask only: Are these letters what they profess to be? Were they actually written by the man whose name they bear? To answer this question, we must collect the evidence at our command.

These letters fall, in order of time, as we shall see, into four groups. Those to the Thessalonians were written during Paul's second missionary journey, and in them we find the freshness of the springtime of his apostolic course. The Epistles to the Corinthians, Romans, and Galatians were written on his third journey, and in them we find the burning heat of summer and of noonday. The Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon were written in prison, apparently during Paul's long imprisonment at Rome. In them we find the ripeness of a serene autumn. Later than these, and standing together, are the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, written during the last years of his life, and especially II. Timothy, in view of approaching death. We shall consider first, as the most important and as best attested, the second group, containing the three longer epistles, those to the Corinthians and the Romans, and one most closely related to this last, the Epistle to the Galatians.

The evidence for the authorship of an ancient work is to be found partly in the work itself and partly in other ancient documents in which mention is made of it. The proof of the genuineness of the epistles before us is to be found in a combination of testimony from each of these sources. We speak of them as internal and external evidence.

We turn first to Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine in the early part of the fourth century, from whose pen we have a "Church History" from the days of Christ to those of Constantine. In Book III, iii, 5, he writes: "The epistles of Paul are fourteen, all well known and beyond doubt. It should not, however, be concealed that some have set aside the Epistle to the Hebrews, saying that it was disputed, as not being Paul's." Evidently Eusebius accepted all thirteen epistles, without a shadow of doubt, as genuine. The same may be said of Origen, the earliest Biblical scholar, who lived in Egypt and Palestine, 186-253 A. D.

We have several works from the pen of Tertullian, the earliest Latin Christian writer, who lived at the close of the second century at Carthage, in North Africa. He accepts as genuine, with perfect confidence, all thirteen epistles. He appeals to the churches to which Paul wrote as the present guardians of his letters. So "Prescriptions Against Heretics," chapter 36: "With whom the authentic letters of the apostles are read, uttering the voice and representing the face of each one. Is Achaia near to thee? Thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi; thou hast Thessalonica. If thou art able to go to Asia, thou hast Ephesus. If thou art near to Italy, thou hast Rome." We need not wonder that in this passage we have no mention of letters to private persons, namely, those to Philemon, Timothy, and Titus; or of those to Galatia and Colossæ, both of which cities were far inland, and therefore, less accessible. Moreover, Tertullian's abundant quotations prove that he not only accepted the epistles as genuine, but had them in a form practically the same as we now possess. Similar testimony is found in the voluminous writings of Clement of Alexandria, a somewhat earlier contemporary of Tertullian.

From the pen of Irenæus, who in 180 A. D. became bishop of Lyons, in Gaul, we have an important work, "Against Heresies." He tells us, in Book III, iii, 4, that in his youth he sat at the feet of Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John. He quotes as written by Paul all the epistles attributed to him, except the short letter to Philemon; and the more important epistles very frequently. He speaks, in Book I, xxvi, 2, of the Ebionites as rejecting the writings of Paul on the ground that he was an apostate from the Law. From this we learn that some admitted the genuineness, while they denied the authority, of the letters which bore the name of Paul.

We have one more witness of a still earlier date. A torn part of an ancient manuscript was found in the last century in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, which, from the discoverer, is called the "Fragment of Muratori." Its date is fixed by a reference to Pius I., who is said to have been "very lately bishop of Rome." From Irenæus, Book III, iii, 3, iv, 3, we infer that Pius was bishop in the middle of the second century. Consequently, the fragment must have been written by an earlier contemporary of Irenæus. It mentions by

name each of the thirteen epistles attributed to Paul, with a short reference to the contents of each agreeing with the copies we now possess.

These witnesses prove, beyond possibility of doubt, that in the latter half of the second century, in places so far apart as Carthage, and Egypt, and Gaul—we may add by sure inference, in Greece and Rome—no one, friend or foe, doubted that these epistles were actually written by Paul. For the second and third groups, which include by far the most important letters attributed to Paul, the proof is overwhelming. These writings bear evidence to theological controversy even in the second century. But the controversy only makes more conspicuous the unanimity with which those who accept and those who reject the teaching of Paul agree that these letters are from his pen.

Christian literature earlier than Irenæus is scanty. But it contains a few references or apparent allusions to the Epistles of Paul. One of these is of the highest importance.

The earliest extant Christian document, after the books of the New Testament, is a letter from the church of Rome to that at Corinth, written probably about the close of the first century, and commonly known as the Epistle of Clement of Rome. It was written in order to heal a dissension which had broken out in the church at Corinth. The writer says, in chapter xlvii, "Take up the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle. What at first did he write to you in the beginning of the Gospel? In truth, in a spiritual way he wrote a letter to you about both himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because of your having even then made parties." This is an indisputable reference to the chief matter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. And it is complete proof that both at Rome and Corinth that epistle was accepted without a shadow of doubt, at the close of the first century, as written by the great apostle.

This evidence, strong as it is, is by no means the whole. The earliest witnesses to the authorship of the group of epistles now specially before us are the epistles themselves. As we read them, we find ourselves at once in the presence of a writer of great mental power and moral worth. We notice everywhere his well-balanced judgment, his broad grasp of principles, his unselfish devotion to the highest interests of his readers. Everything in us bows down with respect in the presence of one far greater and better than ourselves. The writer claims to be Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. The name and fame of Paul prove his existence, ability, and influence. These letters, proved by their contents to have been written by a man of worth and power, profess

to have been written by Paul while he was engaged in active apostolic labor. The letters to Corinth imply that Paul had already been there, and was hoping soon to go again; the letter to Rome tells us that Paul had not yet been there, but expected shortly to visit that city.

An examination of these four letters, especially as compared with other contemporary documents not attributed to Paul, proves conclusively that all are from the same pen. Amid great differences, easily explained by different circumstances, both phraseology and modes of thought, each differing widely from all else in human literature, reveal a common origin. This is admitted by all students of these epistles.

The facts noted above demand explanation. If the letters before us were actually written by Paul, during his active apostolic labor, all is explained. In him we have an author worthy of the epistles, and in the epistles we have writings worthy of the great apostle. If he did not write them, we are compelled to believe that the actual and unknown writer passed them off as a work of the great apostle. This last suggestion is disproved by the epistles themselves. For a man who could write them would not try to palm them off as the work of another. This is specially evident in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians. For they deal with matters personal to Paul and his readers. To write such letters in his name would be utter fraud, and has no parallel in the honest pseudonymous literature of the ancient world. Nor would this suggestion account for the unanimous and early reception of these letters in the churches to which they were sent. For the forgeries could scarcely have been read in the churches before the death of the apostle. And, whenever read, people would ask at once, Why have we never before heard of these letters which profess to have been written to us so many years ago? The various personal details given in the epistles would at once detect the fraud. These details, at first sight so unimportant, are thus in some measure a guarantee of the genuineness of these valuable epistles.

That we have four letters professing to be from one pen, greatly increases the unlikelihood of fraud, or even of mistake about their authorship. For it is in the last degree unlikely that four letters not written by the apostle should come to be unanimously accepted as his. Moreover, the individuality and worth of each epistle negatives the suggestion that one or more are imitations of others which are genuine.

For the genuineness of the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians we have other evidence peculiar and irresistible. The contents

are such as no forger would dare to write, and such as would certainly prevent their acceptance by the churches addressed except on evidence which forbade all doubt. Each letter abounds in severest condemnation. From I. Corinthians iv, 18, v, 2, we learn that self-conceited men resisted the apostle, and that the whole Church, inflated with pride, tolerated a crime not found even among the heathen. Church members insulted the Church, as we read in I. Corinthians vi, 1, by going to law one against another. In verse 18 we have a serious warning against intercourse with harlots. The Lord's Supper was shamefully desecrated, and some church members denied the general resurrection of the dead. In II. Corinthians xi, 13-20, we find that bad men, doing Satan's work and bitterly hostile to the apostle, were tolerated by the Church. In spite of reproof, as we read in chapters xii, 21, xiii, 2, some church members persisted in gross sensuality. The Epistle to the Galatians begins with a rebuke charging the readers with turning away from God to a perversion of the Gospel of Christ. And this tone is maintained throughout. Paul fears that in Galatia he has labored in vain.

Even if these descriptions of the persons addressed were true, no forger in the first century would dare to insert them in a letter for which he sought acceptance as written by Paul; nor would any church accept, without careful scrutiny, so terrible an indictment. The scrutiny could not fail to detect the imposture.

The profound impression which the Epistle to the Romans has made on the thought of all subsequent ages is complete proof of its genuineness. For the man who could write it would not hide himself under the name even of an apostle.

The above evidence is confirmed by a comparison of these epistles with the Book of the Acts. Innumerable coincidences leave no room to doubt that in the former we have the actual words of the great apostle, and in the latter, a true picture of real life.

To sum up: We have found that each of these four epistles was accepted with perfect confidence in the latter part of the second century as actually written by Paul, in places so far apart as Gaul, and Carthage, and Egypt, and, by sure inference, in Rome and Greece. One of them was accepted as genuine during the lifetime of many who were born before Paul died at Rome. The contents of each letter were such as no forger could write or would dare to write. Had any one of these four letters stood alone, we should have accepted it with complete confidence as genuine. But the four epistles are evidently from the same pen; and the quadruple fraud involved in the suppo-

sition that they are spurious is utterly impossible. Moreover, their genuineness is confirmed by a variety of minute, and evidently undesignated, coincidences with an independent narrative of the founding of the earliest Christian Churches.

The decisiveness of this evidence has been universally felt. The genuineness of these letters has been accepted, in ancient and modern times, by all who have studied the subject. The famous rationalist, F. C. Baur, who rejects as mistaken the distinctive teaching of Paul, and denies the resurrection of Christ, which Paul so loudly asserts, says, in his work on "The Apostle Paul," Volume I, page 276: "Against these four epistles not even the slightest suspicion of spuriousness has ever been raised." Renan, in his "Saint Paul," Introduction, page 5, says that they are "incontestable and uncontested."

We now ask, When were these letters written? Our question may be answered in reference either to other known events in the writer's life, or to some common era, such as the year of our Lord. We shall endeavor to answer it in each reference.

Our evidence must be gathered from references to time in the epistles themselves, in the Book of Acts, and in other ancient documents.

From I. Corinthians xvi, 8, we infer that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus; and this inference will be confirmed as we proceed. In verses 1 to 7, Paul speaks about a "collection for the saints," says that he intends to come through Macedonia to Corinth and that he hopes to find the collection ready, and that he will send or take it to Jerusalem. In II. Corinthians ii, 12, 13, we find that Paul has left Ephesus and come through Troas to Macedonia. From chapters viii, 1-4, ix, 1-6, xii, 20, xiii, 1, we learn that when Paul wrote the Second Epistle the collection in Macedonia was made, but not that in Achaia; and that Paul was on his way to Corinth, the capital of Achaia. In Romans xv, 25, 26, Paul tells his readers that the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia have made a contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem, and that he is on the way to Jerusalem with it. These references bind together the three epistles. Evidently the letter to Rome was written shortly after those to Corinth, and while Paul was engaged on the same business. From Romans i, 8-15, we learn that he has not yet been to Rome. But from I. Corinthians i, 14-16, iv, 15, we infer that Paul himself founded the church at Corinth; and from II. Corinthians xii, 14, xiii, 1, 2, that he had already paid two visits to that city.

We now turn to the Book of Acts, which gives an account of Paul's travels. It makes

no mention of these epistles, nor directly of the collection for the saints, and may, therefore, be looked upon as an independent witness. Without assuming its trustworthiness, we will compare the account it gives with the facts just gathered from Paul's epistles. The proposed visit to Jerusalem cannot be later than that recorded in Acts xxi, 15. For on that visit he was arrested, and, as we learn from chapters xxiv, 27, xxviii, 30, remained in prison more than four years. And after this long imprisonment no room can be found for the apostolic activity referred to in the epistles now before us, which are followed by two groups of epistles that, as we shall find, must have been written much later than they. Unquestionably, these epistles were written earlier than Paul's arrest at Jerusalem.

This being so, we will trace, as recorded in the Book of Acts, Paul's steps prior to this visit to Jerusalem. In Acts xix, 21, we find him at Ephesus, intending to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and then to Rome. From chapters xx, 1-10, 15, 16, xxi, 15, we learn that he actually went through Macedonia to Greece, which formed the Roman province of Achaia; and that after spending three months there he went through Macedonia, Troas, and Miletus to Jerusalem. This circuitous route was occasioned by a plot of the Jews. He tells us in Acts xx, 23, that he has been warned of danger at Jerusalem: and, by a remarkable coincidence, fear of danger there finds expression in Romans xv, 30-31. In the Book of Acts we have no direct mention of the collection; but, by another equally remarkable coincidence, in chapter xxiv, 17, Paul tells Felix that he came to Jerusalem bringing alms for his nation. Here, then, we have, in a connected narrative of Paul's third missionary journey, the various details of travel gathered from the epistles before us.

On the other hand, these letters cannot have been written during the second missionary journey in which Paul paid his first visits to Ephesus and Corinth, and which also led him apparently to Jerusalem. For the Epistles to the Corinthians could not possibly have been written, as this suggestion would imply, immediately after Paul's departure from that church.

The complete agreement between the notices in these epistles of Paul's movements and the narrative in the Book of Acts of his third missionary journey, and the impossibility of harmonizing these documents in any other way, leave no room for doubt that the letters before us were actually written on that journey.

If the above identification be correct, the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus, near the close of Paul's three years' (Acts vix, 10, xx, 31) sojourn there; and

before the tumult which, as we learn from chapter xx, 1, hastened his departure. From I. Corinthians xvi, 8, we infer that it was written shortly before Pentecost. By a singular coincidence, a slab found at Ephesus tells us that the month of May was sacred to the goddess Artemis, whose splendid temple at Ephesus was one of the greatest attractions of the city. At no time of the year was an uproar against the preachers of a gospel antagonistic to all idolatry more likely than during the sacred month. Moreover, the reference in I. Corinthians v, 7, to "Christ, our Passover," suggests that the letter was written about Easter. We, therefore, infer that the letter was written about Easter, from Ephesus, near to the close of Paul's long sojourn there.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written, as we learn from II. Corinthians ii, 13, vii, 5, 6, after Paul's arrival in Macedonia, and after his meeting with Titus, who brought good news about the church at Corinth. By another remarkable coincidence, Paul tells us in II. Corinthians i, 8-11, that he has lately escaped from deadly peril in Asia, of which province Ephesus was the capital. We cannot doubt that this peril was connected with the tumult recorded in the Book of Acts. These notes of time and place suggest that the Second Epistle was written from Macedonia a few months after the first.

After spending some time in Macedonia, Paul went on, as we read in Acts xx, 2, to Greece, and remained there three months. He then started through Macedonia on his way to Jerusalem. From verse 6 we learn that he spent Easter at Philippi. This being so, the three months spent in Greece must have been in the preceding winter, when traveling was difficult. This is in remarkable agreement with I. Corinthians xvi, 6, where Paul expresses a hope to spend the winter at Corinth.

The collection at Corinth, which, as we learn from II. Corinthians ix, 3-5, was not made when Paul wrote the Second Epistle to that church, he speaks of in Romans xv, 25, 26 as ready, and of himself as going with it to Jerusalem. This implies that the Epistle to the Romans was not written till after Paul's arrival at Corinth. And that Paul remained there three months suggests that this profound epistle was written at that time from that city. This suggestion is confirmed by the fact that communication with Rome was much easier from Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, than from any other point in Paul's third missionary journey. Possibly Gaius, Paul's host while writing to the Romans, was the Gaius whom he mentions in I. Corinthians i, 14 as an exception to his rule not to baptize his own converts. From the

above we infer, with reasonable certainty, that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus about Easter, shortly before the tumult raised by Demetrius; that the Second Epistle was written from Macedonia a few months later; and the Epistle to the Romans from Corinth, shortly before Paul started on his journey to Jerusalem, which was followed by his arrest in that city.

The date of these events in the Christian era will be discussed when we come to consider the Book of Acts. We shall find reason to believe that the Epistles to the Corinthians were written in 58 A. D., and that to the Romans during the winter following.

The coincidences noted above, and others which space forbids me to mention, are additional evidence of the genuineness of the epistles and of the truthfulness of the Book of Acts. For they bear witness to the historic reality which finds expression in these documents. For the Epistle to the Galatians, indications of time and place are much less definite.

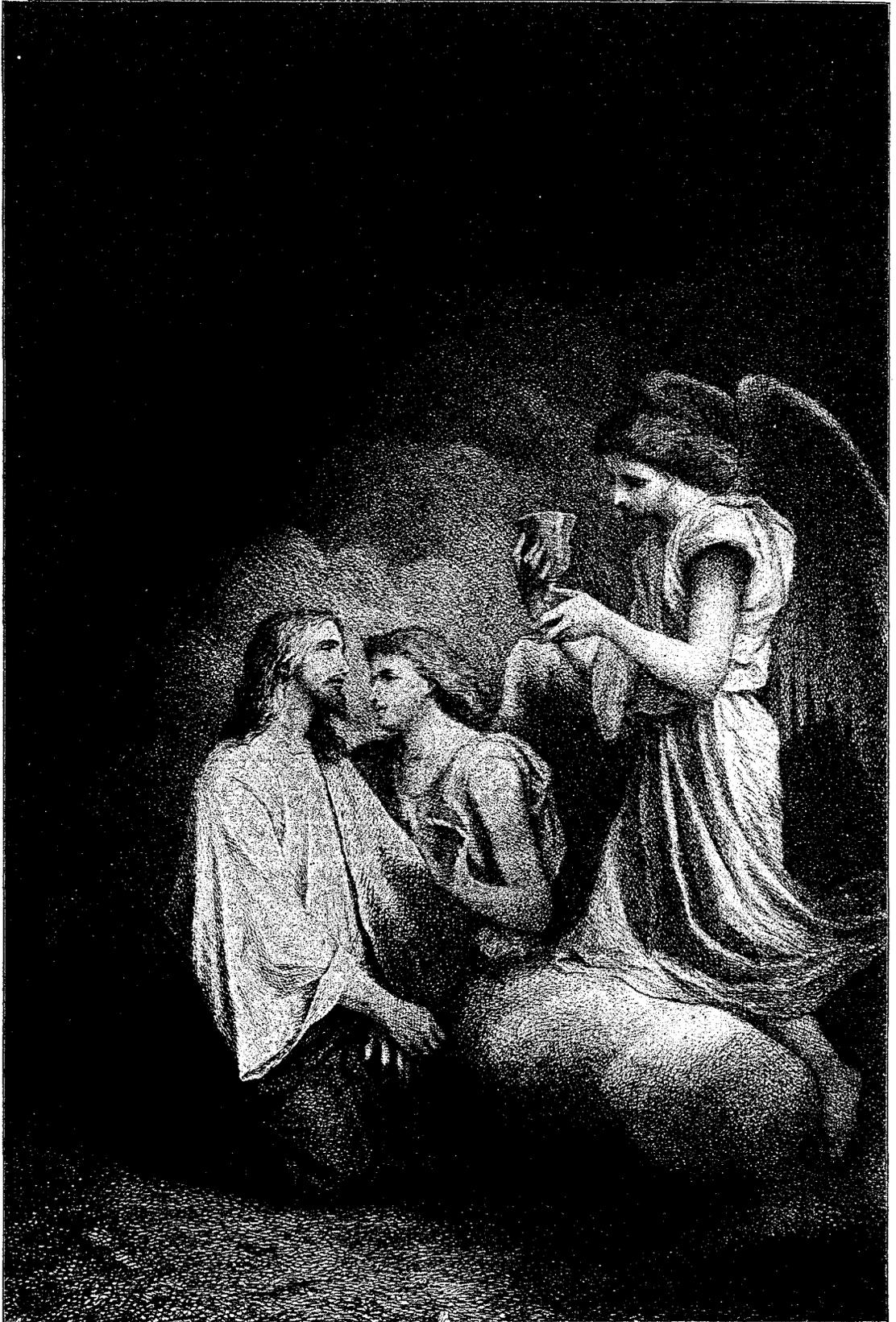
From a casual reference in Galatians iv, 13, to a "former" visit, we infer that Paul had twice visited Galatia. And two visits are mentioned in Acts xvi, 6, and xviii, 23. If this identification be correct, the Epistle to the Galatians was written not earlier than Paul's third missionary journey. From Galatia he went, as we read in Acts xix, 1, to Ephesus, where he spent three years. Now, the Epistle to the Galatians was evidently prompted, as we learn from the sharp rebuke in Galatians i, 6, by bad news about the Galatian Christians, and was written in order to stop the incipient apostasy. And Paul's long sojourn at Ephesus, which was within 300 miles of Galatia by a direct route, suggests at once that this letter was written during his sojourn in that city. This is somewhat confirmed by the word "quickly" in Galatians i, 6. Moreover, this suggestion would allow us to account for Paul's silence, when writing to the Galatians, about the collection for Jerusalem, by supposing that this letter was written before he took it in hand, and gave, as we read in I. Corinthians xvi, 1, directions about it to the churches of Galatia. For these reasons many writers suppose that the Epistle to the Galatians was written from Ephesus. If so, it was written probably before the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and a year or more before that to the Romans.

Internal and much more reliable evidence points to a later date. The Epistle to the Galatians reveals a remarkable similarity, in doctrine, and argument, and phraseology, to the Epistle to the Romans. Compare Galatians ii, 16, iii, 8, 24, with Romans iii, 24, 26, 28, 30, v, 1. This is the more remarkable because the phrase *justified through faith* is found else-

where in the New Testament only in Acts xiii, 39, where we have recorded words of Paul. Compare also the argument in Galatians iii with that in Romans iv; the contrast of *flesh* and *spirit* in Galatians v, 16, 25, with Romans viii, 4; Galatians v, 18, with Romans viii, 14; and other coincidences innumerable. In both epistles, the moral teaching of the Mosaic Law is summed up in the words of Leviticus xix, 18. Now, the mental versatility of Paul makes it somewhat unlikely that these topics would occupy the prominent place in his thought which we find them holding in these epistles, for more than a year. And it is almost inconceivable that, during such period of sustained and concentrated thought, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, in neither of which we find similar thoughts or words, could have been written. The analogy of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians (see below) suggests that also the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians were written about the same time.

To this suggestion there is no serious objection. For the word "quickly" in Galatians i, 6, is a relative term. The apostasy, apparently, of whole churches, even after some years, might seem to Paul a wonderfully early desertion of the faith so eagerly embraced. Moreover, news which reached Ephesus might soon travel to Corinth. Our ignorance of details forbids us to base a confident argument on Paul's silence about the collection for Jerusalem. Certainly these difficulties are less than the great difficulty of supposing that the Epistles to the Corinthians were written between those to the Galatians and the Romans. On the other hand, if when Paul wrote this letter he had been lately engaged with a collection for poor Christians at Jerusalem, this may have called to his mind a promise made at Jerusalem many years before, and have prompted the somewhat unexpected reference to it in Galatians ii, 10.

We now ask, Which epistle was written earlier, that to the Romans or that to the Galatians? The chief argument of this latter epistle was prompted by an emergency, the defection of the Galatian Christians; and the great doctrine of Justification through Faith, thus forced by circumstances upon Paul's most serious attention, becomes in the Epistle to the Romans the foundation-stone of a complete and compact exposition of the Gospel. This suggests that the Epistle to the Galatians was earlier than that to the Romans. In the former epistle, Justification through Faith is the one doctrine discussed and defended at length; in the latter, it is the first of several doctrines fully expounded and set forth in their mutual relations. We may, therefore, in the absence of definite notes of time, such as enabled us to fix with approximate exactness the time and



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place of the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, accept as probable that Paul wrote to the Galatians shortly after he arrived at Corinth, in the autumn following the tumult at Ephesus.

These doubts about the time and place of writing of the Epistle to the Galatians cast no doubt whatever on its authorship. This is placed beyond doubt by the abundant marks of common authorship with the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, and by the impossibility of a letter containing rebukes so severe being accepted, apart from irresistible evidence, as genuine, taken in connection with its universal reception in the second century.

For these and similar reasons, which can be appreciated only by a personal study of the epistles and of early Christian literature, the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians have in all ages been confidently accepted by all students of the Holy Scriptures, with exceptions too few to mention, as genuine works of the great apostle. This we may welcome as an assured result of Biblical research.

This result is of the highest importance. For it at once spans over eighteen centuries, places us by the side of the ablest of the apostles, and enables us to look at Christ and the Gospel from this point of view. It thus forms a secure platform, in the midst of the first century, from which we can survey and estimate other documents, by Paul and others, claiming to have been written in the same century. This justifies both the space we have given to this group of epistles, and its place at the beginning of this Introduction to the Books of the New Testament.

The two Epistles to the Thessalonians were accepted as genuine, without a shadow of doubt, by Tertullian in his work "Against Marcion" and elsewhere, by Clement of Alexandria, by Irenæus, and in the "Fragment of Muratori." Consequently, as with those discussed above, either these epistles also are genuine, or we must suppose that forgeries were, in the second century, accepted all round the Mediterranean as works of the great apostle.

A comparison of these epistles with those discussed above and with other early Christian documents not claiming to have been written by Paul, *e. g.*, with the Epistle to the Hebrews, reveals a close similarity, in modes of thought and in phraseology, with his undoubted epistles. This similarity, which cannot be further expounded here, will be clearly apparent to every careful student, even of the English Bible. Yet the epistles contain marks of independence, both in thought and diction, which forbid the suggestion that they were imitations of other letters of Paul.

A note of the early date of the epistle is found in I. Thessalonians iv, 15, "We who are

living, who are being left [while some others had been taken away] for the coming of the Lord," etc.; words which could scarcely have been written later than the days of the apostles. For, although it is unfair to infer from these words that Paul confidently expected to survive the Coming of Christ, he could not have written thus had he known that all the men then living would die before that event. Nor, different as they are, can we accept these words as an imitation of I. Corinthians xv, 51. They are, therefore, an indication of the very early date of the epistle, and thus increase the difficulty of supposing that it was not written by the apostle.

Against the genuineness of these epistles there is nothing to set. The prominence of the Second Coming of Christ, a feature distinguishing this group from the other epistles of Paul, was prompted, as we may infer from I. Thessalonians iv, 13, by the death of some Christians at Thessalonica, and in the Second Epistle, by a misunderstanding, as we infer from II. Thessalonians ii, 2, of some words in the First Epistle. Consequently, this element in these epistles is no proof or presumption that they are not genuine, and I do not know of any other objections worthy of mention. The genuineness of these epistles is further confirmed by comparison of certain internal indications of time and place of writing with the narrative of the Book of Acts.

In I. Thessalonians i, 1, Paul associates with himself, in sending this letter, Silvanus and Timothy. He refers in verses 6 and 9 to his readers' conversion as recent; and in chapter ii, 1, 2, 9, 10, to his own labors in their midst, after ill treatment at Philippi. He tells us in chapters ii, 17, iii, 8, that he had been torn from them, and longed to return, but was unable to do so; that he sent Timothy to strengthen them, and that this last had returned with good news about their faith and stability. In II. Thessalonians i, 1, Silvanus and Timothy are again associated with Paul; and in verse 3 he again thanks God for his readers' faith. In chapter iii, 1, 2, he begs for their prayers that he may be delivered from bad men: a remarkable coincidence with Romans xv, 30, 31, and II. Corinthians i, 11. From II. Thessalonians iii, 17, we infer that the letter was not written with Paul's own hand, in close agreement with Romans xvi, 22.

Turning now to Acts xv, 40, xvi, 1, we find that on his second missionary journey Paul was accompanied by Silas, and that he was joined at Lystra by Timothy. That in the Book of Acts we several times read of Silas, never of Silvanus, and in the epistles only of Silvanus, leaves no room for doubt that there are two forms of the same name. From chapters xvi,

12, xvii, 1, we learn that the travelers went to Philippi, where Paul and Silas were put in prison, and then to Thessalonica; and from chapter xvii, 10, that Paul and Silas hastily left Thessalonica and went by night to Berea. In this city, as we read in verse 14, Paul left Silas and Timothy and went to Athens, and then to Corinth, where, as we learn from chapter xviii, 5, Silas and Timothy rejoined him. The close agreement between this record of travel, and peril, and work, and the references quoted above from the epistles before us—an agreement the more remarkable because the narrative says nothing about the letters—is a very strong confirmation of the truth of the narrative and of the genuineness of the letters. Taken in connection with the confident reception of the letters in the second century, and their close agreement in thought and style with the letters already discussed, it is complete proof that they were actually written by the great apostle.

Since the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians were written, as we have just seen above, on Paul's third missionary journey, and those to the Thessalonians, as we have just learned, on his second journey, these last must be the earlier of the two groups of letters.

Much more important than the Epistles to the Thessalonians are those to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon. These stand together as a definite group, and with characteristics in common which distinguish them from the other letters of Paul.

Abundant quotations prove that the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians were accepted with perfect confidence by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenæus, as written by Paul. That the short Epistle to Philemon is not quoted by Clement and Irenæus, need not surprise us. It is referred to, as Paul's, by Tertullian, who tells us that it was accepted in its entirety, in the middle of the second century, by the heretic, Marcion, who mutilated or rejected other Epistles of Paul. It is three times quoted, word for word, by Origen, and its genuineness is defended by Jerome, in the latter part of the fourth century. All four epistles are mentioned in the "Fragment of Muratori."

This unanimous consent is a strong presumption of the genuineness of these four epistles. We ask whether it is confirmed or contradicted by their contents. Unfortunately, we cannot, as before, compare them with the Book of Acts, for apparently they were written after its narrative closes. Our only standards of comparison are the epistles already traced to the pen of Paul.

We consider first the Epistle to the Philippians. In Acts xxviii, 31, we leave Paul in

prison at Rome, after an appeal to Cæsar; and in Philippians i, 13, 20-23, iv, 22, we find him in bonds, weighing the possibilities of life and death, and sending greetings from members of Cæsar's household. In Philippians i, 1, as in II. Corinthians i, 1, Timothy (who is said in Acts xvii, 14, xviii, 5, to have been with Paul at the founding of the churches at Philippi and Corinth) is associated with him as joint author of the epistle. The description of Timothy in Philippians ii, 19-22, and his hoped-for mission to Philippi, are in close agreement with I. Corinthians iv, 17. The gift of money from Philippi to Paul at Rome accords completely with the statement in II. Corinthians xi, 8, 9, that when he was in want at Corinth his needs were supplied by money sent from Macedonia, in which province was Philippi; and with the great liberality of another kind of which Paul boasts in II. Corinthians viii, 2. His deep anxiety about the church at Corinth, in II. Corinthians ii, 13, and vii, 5, has its counterpart in the loving care for the Christians at Philippi which breathes in Philippians i, 7, 8, 27, ii, 19, iv, 1. Paul's reference in Philippians iii, 6, to his past life recalls Galatians i, 13. In a somewhat changed tone, easily explained by changed surroundings and prospects, the careful student will find innumerable coincidences in theological thought and expression revealing the hand and mind of Paul. As examples I may quote the word *righteousness* in Philippians iii, 9, as compared with Romans x, 3, iii, 21, 22; Philippians ii, 7, compared with II. Corinthians viii, 9; and Philippians iii, 18, with Galatians vi, 14. This far-reaching coincidence of thought and expression becomes the more significant if this epistle be compared with any which do not bear the name of Paul.

The above evidence, which might be extended indefinitely, is confirmed by the tender affection which breathes in every line of the epistle, and which cannot be the offspring of deception. This combined evidence is complete proof that the beautiful Epistle to the Philippians was actually written by Paul.

In the Epistle to the Colossians, we meet everywhere words, phrases, thought, and arrangement already familiar to us in the earlier epistles, and in great part peculiar to Paul. Compare Colossians i, 20, 22, with Romans v, 10, II. Corinthians v, 18, 20; Colossians i, 26, ii, 2, iv, 3, with Romans xvi, 25, 26, I. Corinthians ii, 7; Colossians ii, 8, with Galatians iv, 3; Colossians ii, 11, 12, with Romans vi, 4, 5; and everywhere the distinctively Pauline phrases "in Christ" and "in the Lord." The metaphor, peculiar in New Testament to Paul, of the Church as the "body" of Christ, found already in I. Corinthians xii, 12-27, Romans xii, 4, 5, meets us in Colossians i, 18, 24, ii, 19,

with a new development, namely, Christ the "Head." In Colossians iv, 7, Tychicus is said to have been sent to Colossæ; in Acts xx, 4, he is a companion of Paul in travel, and is called a native of the province of Asia in which Colossæ was situated. That in Colossians iv, 10, Mark is called a cousin of Barnabas, helps to explain Acts xv, 37—an important coincidence. The autograph in Colossians iv, 18, recalls Galatians vi, 11.

The real significance of the above coincidences can be fairly estimated only by careful and consecutive study of the epistle itself, and by comparison of it with the earlier and undisputed epistles of Paul, and with other documents not from his pen. For some of these words and phrases are used by other writers. Their value as proofs of common authorship lies in their accumulation in this one short epistle and in their relation to the surrounding train of thought.

It is right to say that some scholars deny that the Epistle to the Colossians is from Paul, on the ground that the errors therein combated were not prevalent till long after his death; and that it contains teaching not found in his earlier epistles, and words and phrases not used there. The issue thus raised must be decided by judging whether it is easier, accepting the epistle as genuine, to explain these three grounds of objection, or, rejecting it as spurious, to account for the coincidences noted above and for the universal and confident reception of the epistle in the latter part, and probably in the middle, of the second century. This alternative we will now consider.

The words and phrases peculiar to this epistle need cause little surprise. Indeed, the new topics now dealt with suggest and require words not used before. And, in spite of differences, the style is closely akin to that of the Epistle to the Philippians and not far removed from that of the earlier epistles. The new elements of teaching are legitimate and most valuable developments of the principles underlying the acknowledged epistles. Is it not more likely that such developments would take place in the mind and thought of Paul than among disciples removed from him by more than a generation? Indeed, the change from active evangelistic labor to the solitude of a prison would naturally prompt, in a man like Paul, a profound investigation of the foundations of his faith. The wonder would be if such investigation were barren of results. On the other hand, the entire extant literature of the second century presents nothing comparable for a moment to the solid advance in Christian thought embodied in this epistle. To place it fifty years after the death of Paul is an utter anachronism. Lastly, any argument based on

the supposed later date of the errors here combated is most uncertain, for they were an outgrowth of influences at work before the birth of Christ. And, so far as they can be traced in this epistle, the errors at Colossæ were very rudimentary. Much more developed is the Gnosticism of Cerinthus, who is said to have been a contemporary of the Apostle John. These objections have little weight as proofs that the epistle is not from its professed writer.

The profound thought embodied in this epistle cannot be the offspring of a forger or imitator. Nor could a spurious epistle have made its way to distant Carthage and Gaul, and have gained acceptance everywhere as a genuine work of Paul. Certainly these suggestions involve improbabilities infinitely greater than any difficulty in supposing that the Gnosticism of the second century existed in germ in the days of Paul, and that the teaching of this epistle is from the pen of the great thinker who expounded so grandly, in the Epistle to the Romans, the principles of which it is a logical development. We may, therefore, accept the Epistle to the Colossians with perfect confidence as actually written by the great apostle whose name it bears.

The beautiful Epistle to Philemon contains nothing inconsistent with genuineness, and bears everywhere marks of the hand and character of Paul. Among these must be reckoned the absence of any request for the manumission of Onesimus. Tact so delicate belongs not to a forger. The names sending greeting to Philemon are a valuable coincidence with the same names in the Epistle to the Colossians.

The Epistle to the Ephesians bears nearly all the marks of genuineness adduced for that to the Colossians, and some others. One of these is the reappearance and careful treatment of the distinction of Jew and Gentile so conspicuous in the second group, as compared with the works of all other New Testament writers. This reveals a mind long and deeply occupied with the different relations of Jew and Gentile to the kingdom of God. And indisputably it is a mark of early date. For it is inconceivable that, after Jerusalem had been taken and the race scattered, and after Gentile Christianity had gained a secure and independent position, any writer would lay so much stress on the equality in spiritual privilege of the Gentiles to the Jews. Jewish Christians who still clung to their ancient prerogatives would not place the Gentiles on their own level. A Gentile writer who had witnessed the dispersal of the Jewish race would consider it but small honor that God had placed the Gentiles on a level with the nation which had murdered the Son of God. Now, early date is a strong presumption of genuineness, for it is

most unlikely, while men were living who had known Paul, that the work of some unknown author would have been widely and confidently accepted as his.

Another sure mark of early date is the enumeration, in Ephesians iv, 11, of church officers as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers. For, as one learns from letters attributed with much probability to Ignatius, and as we infer from later writers, monarchical episcopacy was firmly established early in the second century. Had there been, when this letter was written, an order of bishops distinct from, and above, the elders, which we may here identify with the pastors and teachers, these could not have been passed over in silence. On the other hand, this enumeration is in complete accord with I. Corinthians xii, 28.

The style of the Epistle to the Ephesians is no more unlike that of the acknowledged letters of Paul than is that of the Epistle to the Colossians. One special objection, however, is brought against the former epistle by some who accept the latter as genuine. The many indisputable and close coincidences in thought and expression are appealed to in proof that one epistle is a later imitation of the other. And since the Epistle to the Colossians has a specific occasion in the definite errors therein refuted, nearly all who reject either of the epistles reject that to the Ephesians. Indisputably, either one epistle is a servile imitation of the other or they are twin offspring of one mind.

Our choice between these suppositions depends upon our estimate of the Epistle to the Ephesians as compared with that to the Colossians. Space forbids me to make the comparison here. My own judgment is that in grandeur and worth the Epistle to the Ephesians is unsurpassed by any human composition. And its worth proves its genuineness, for we cannot conceive a man capable of the profound thought which breathes throughout this epistle becoming so servile an imitator even of an apostle. Independent thought always clothes itself in fitting language of its own.

On the other hand, if our judgment be that the epistle is an imitation, we are met by an inexplicable difficulty, namely, the early and unanimous and confident reception of it as written by Paul. If the work were by a later hand, would every trace of its origin have vanished utterly from the memory of the early Church? This difficulty is increased by the widespread and uncontradicted tradition which connects with Ephesus the last years of the Apostle John. For he would know whether the Church in which he lived had a letter from the hand of Paul. Consequently, if not written by him, the epistle must be a work of the sec-

ond century. Yet, as we infer from Tertullian, in the middle of the century it was accepted as genuine even by Marcion, an enemy of the Gospel.

Some have suggested that the name of Paul was prefixed by some unknown but good man to a work of his own, not to deceive, but in order to call attention to sentiments similar to those of the great apostle. Others have suggested that the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians have, one or both, been interpolated; that on the basis of a shorter work actually written by Paul have been erected, perhaps by one hand, the two documents we now possess. But it is inconceivable that the original epistles should pass utterly out of view, and that one single corrupted recension should alone survive. Nor could the sort of man suggested possibly have written the epistle we now have.

It is worthy of note that these wild suggestions come only from those who have already persuaded themselves that Christ did not rise from the dead, and that Christianity, with its mighty effect upon the world, is a result of the preaching of men who were in most serious error touching the nature and teaching of their Master.

In view, then, of their universal reception throughout the Roman empire, by friends and enemies, in the latter part of the second century, of their deep, and broad, and minute agreement with the thought and phraseology of Paul, and of their matchless and independent worth, we may accept, without a shadow of doubt, each of the epistles of this third group as a genuine work of the Apostle Paul.

When were these epistles written? For the first time, Paul now writes as a prisoner: Ephesians iii, 1, iv, 1, vi, 20; Philippians i, 7, 13; Colossians iv, 3, 18; Philemon, 10, 13, 22, 23. These frequent references to his bondage reveal the deep mark it had made in his thought and heart, and thus prove that his imprisonment had lasted for some time. Now, in the Book of Acts no long imprisonment of Paul is recorded earlier than his arrest at Jerusalem. This is a very strong presumption that these epistles were later than that event. After his arrest, Paul remained for more than two years a prisoner at Cæsarea, was then taken to Rome, and remained there in prison for not less than two years: Acts xxiv, 27, xxviii, 30. Whether he was then set free, we have no positive information. This long imprisonment, affording abundant leisure for writing letters, suggests itself at once as the time when these epistles of captivity were written. An early and unanimous tradition asserts that they were written during Paul's imprisonment at Rome. With such scanty indications as we have, we will now test this tradition.

"Cæsar's household," in Philippians iv, 22, points very clearly to the imperial palace at Rome. And "the whole prætorian" or "prætorian guard," in chapter i, 13, suggests much more forcibly the prætorian guard at Rome than the narrow limits of the governor's palace at Cæsarea. Against these indications there is nothing to set."

That the Epistle to the Colossians was written at the same time as that to the Ephesians, is made almost certain by the reference, in Ephesians vi, 21, and Colossians iv, 7, to "Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord," as evidently the bearer of both epistles, taken in connection with the very close similarity of the epistles in thought, order, and phraseology—a similarity without parallel in the New Testament, and with the proof just given that both epistles were written by Paul.

The letter to Philemon was apparently (see verse 12) taken by Onesimus, who is said in Colossians iv, 9, to be accompanying Tychicus to Colossæ. Moreover, of six men with Paul who sent greeting to the Church at Colossæ, we notice that five send greeting to Philemon. These remarkable coincidences prove conclusively that the short letter to Philemon was written and sent at the same time as those to Ephesus and Colossæ.

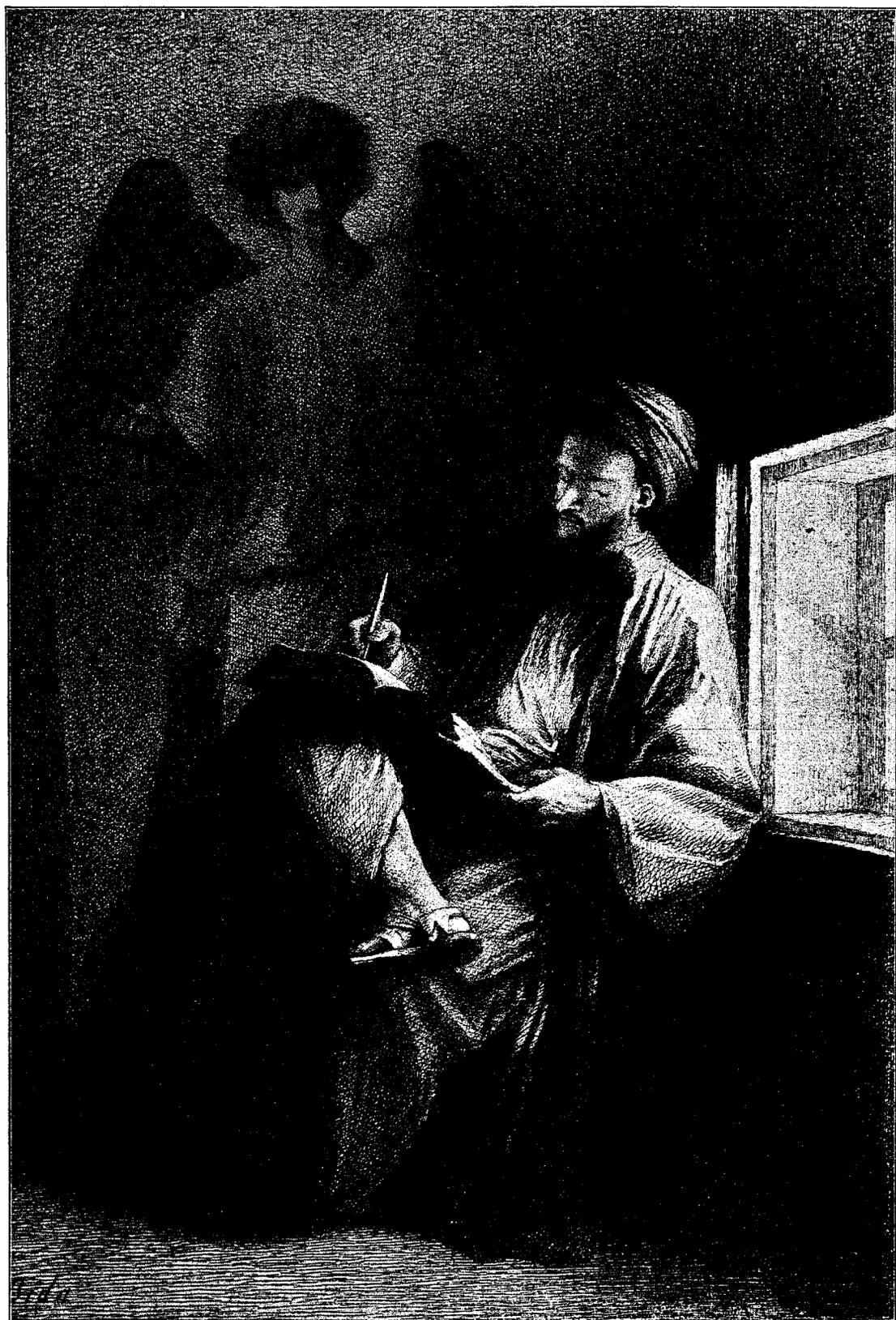
Whether these letters were written from Cæsarea or from Rome, we have no evidence of much weight except the unanimous tradition of the early Church and certain similarities of thought and diction between the Epistle to the Philippians and those to Rome and Corinth. Compare Philippians iii, 9, with Romans i, 17, iii, 21, 22, x, 3; also Philippians iii, 4-6, with II. Corinthians xi, 21-30; and other phrases found only in the earlier epistles. These similarities, together with others which link the Epistle to the Philippians with those to Ephesus and Colossæ, suggest very strongly that of the three letters that to Philippi was written first. And if so, since this last was apparently written from Rome, the two others cannot have been written during Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea. We may, therefore, accept as probably correct the ancient tradition that all four letters were written from Rome. And if so, perhaps the letter to Philippi was written during the first year of Paul's imprisonment at Rome. This would allow time for the news of Paul's imprisonment to reach Philippi, and for the journey of Epaphroditus to Rome: see Philippians ii, 25-30, iv, 10-18. The different style of the other epistles suggests that they were written near to the close of Paul's two years' imprisonment at Rome.

The beautiful Epistle to the Philippians was Paul's acknowledgment of the gift brought by

Epaphroditus. The letter to Philemon was a request to receive back a runaway slave, Onesimus, by whom evidently it was carried. The letter to Colossæ was written to correct errors in the church there of which Paul had heard from Epaphras, the founder (see Colossians i, 7) of that church. The words "in Ephesus" in Ephesians i, 1, are, in the two oldest and best copies, which very seldom agree in error, inserted only by a later hand. But all early writers quote the epistle as written to the Ephesians. Of all this, the easiest explanation is that copies of the epistle were sent to other churches in Asia, and that in each copy was inserted the name of the church to which it was sent. Such a copy, perhaps, was "the epistle from Laodicea," a town near to Colossæ, mentioned in Colossians iv, 16. This suggestion would account for a letter so general being written to a church so well known to Paul.

The Epistles to Timothy and Titus were accepted by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenæus, with complete confidence as genuine, and as such they are enumerated in the "Fragment of Muratori." Their vocabulary and diction differ from the other epistles attributed to Paul. But with these last they agree, in phraseology, modes of thought, and theological teaching, much more closely than with any other early documents. And their independent worth proves that they are not mere imitations of the genuine letters of Paul. The close harmony between the picture of Timothy reflected in these letters and the various references to him in the other epistles attributed to Paul is a strong confirmation of their genuineness. So lifelike a picture can have been taken only from life.

The pastoral epistles contain, moreover, two clear indications of very early date. The first is that we find in them only two orders of church officers—bishops or elders, and deacons. So I. Timothy iii, 1-13, v, 17; Titus i, 5-9. We have the same titles, "bishops and deacons" in Philippians i, 1. And throughout the New Testament we have no order higher than that of elders or bishops, these titles being evidently equivalent. The same two orders, and of ordinary church officers these only, are mentioned in the Epistle of Clement of Rome and in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles—a document probably from the close of the first century. In marked contrast to all these, the letters attributed to Ignatius, written probably early in the second century, reserve the title *bishop* for one man exercising supreme authority in his own church, with whom are associated a lower order of elders. So in the Ignatian Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter iv, we read, "the presbyter is joined to the bishop as



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the strings to the harp." This use of the word *bishop* reveals the firm establishment of a higher order of church officers not mentioned in the New Testament. And this order soon became universal. The absence of all reference, in the pastoral epistles, to this higher order is clear proof that they are not later than the beginning of the second century. Another indication of the same is the rudimentary nature of the errors, prevalent in and around the church, to which reference is made in these epistles. For these contain germs of errors which early in the second century assumed definite concrete forms and which could hardly fail to appear in pseudonymous epistles. These marks of early date increase the difficulty of supposing that the epistles were not written by Paul. For while men were living who knew the apostle, detection would be almost certain.

The indications of date contained in these epistles cannot be fitted into the narrative in the Book of Acts. In I. Timothy i, 3, Paul, while himself going to Macedonia, urges Timothy to remain at Ephesus in order to correct errors there. But, when going from Ephesus to Macedonia on his third missionary journey, Paul sent Timothy before him, as we read in Acts xix, 22; I. Corinthians iv, 17, xvi, 10. Of the visit to Crete mentioned in Titus i, 5, we have no mention elsewhere in the New Testament, although possibly Paul visited that island during his residence at Corinth or at Ephesus. The references to persons in II. Timothy does not help us much. A surer indication of date is to be found in the style and contents of the epistles, for the three letters are closely related, even as compared with all other epistles of Paul. Evidently they are products of the same period of his life, and their references to church organization reflect the same stage of church development.

The approaching footsteps of the angel of death, we hear unmistakably in the pathetic yet hopeful words of II. Timothy iv, 6-8, "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness." Notice the contrast between these words and the uncertainty expressed in Philippians i, 21-26. The rescue for which the apostle hopes in II. Timothy iv, 18, is salvation "into the heavenly kingdom." The tone of the entire epistle leaves no room for doubt that, if genuine, it is the latest extant letter of Paul. From chapters i, 8, ii, 9, we infer that it was written in prison.

From I. Timothy iii, 14; Titus iii, 12, and from the absence of any reference to imprisonment, we infer that when these letters were

written Paul was free, and engaged in active apostolic work. If, then, as we have seen, we have strong reasons for believing they are not written before Paul's arrest at Jerusalem, he must have been liberated after his two years' imprisonment at Rome. And, if so, we infer from I. Timothy i, 3; Titus i, 5, iii, 12, that after his release he visited Ephesus, Macedonia, Crete, and, perhaps, Nicopolis. If these references be correct, the First Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus were written on this, Paul's last missionary journey; and he was again imprisoned, and in prison wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy.

That Paul was released from his first imprisonment at Rome, and made another evangelistic journey, and was put to death at Rome, is the unanimous opinion of early Christian writers. The "Fragment of Muratori" speaks of him as going from Rome to Spain. This implies his liberation. In his "Church History," Book II, xxii, 2, Eusebius says that Paul, "after pleading his cause, is said to have been sent again upon the ministry of preaching, and that after a second visit to the city, he finished his life with martyrdom. Whilst he was a prisoner, he wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy, in which he mentions both his first defense and his impending death." Eusebius then quotes chapter iv, 16-18, and verse 6.

This ancient and unanimous opinion seems to me to be the only explanation, and a satisfactory explanation, of all the facts of the case. It accounts for the many points of contact, both in thought and phrase, between these epistles and the others proved to have been written by Paul. It accounts for certain differences in vocabulary and style, by placing an interval of time between these epistles and the earlier groups. It accounts for the rudimentary forms of church organization and of heresy portrayed here; and for the immense superiority of these letters to all Christian literature of the second century. And it saves us from the impossible task of explaining the confident and unanimous reception, from the middle of the second century onward, throughout the Roman empire, of spurious writings as genuine letters of Paul. We infer, therefore, with reasonable certainty that the First Epistle to Timothy was written after Paul's release, and while on a last missionary journey. The place is unknown. The mention of Macedonia in I. Timothy i, 3, and Paul's apparent sojourn at Philippi suggested in Acts xx, 6, together with his great love for the church in that city, suggest that possibly it was written there. On the same journey, we may suppose that he wrote to Titus. That he died at Rome suggests that from that city he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy.

At this point we will sum up the results of our researches so far. We have found complete proof that the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians were written by Paul on his third missionary journey, recorded in Acts xix, 23, xxi, 17; that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus near to the close of his long sojourn there, and probably about Easter; that the second epistle was written from Macedonia a few months later, and that the Epistle to the Galatians, probably, and that to the Romans almost certainly, were written from Corinth during the winter following. We have also found proof sufficient for reasonable certainty that the letters to Thessalonica were written by Paul, apparently from Corinth during his long sojourn there on his second missionary journey. We have also found evidence sufficient to banish all doubt that the third group was written by Paul, the Epistle to the Philippians almost certainly, and those to the Ephesians, Colossians, and to Philemon with great probability, from Rome during his two years' imprisonment there. Lastly, we have found good reasons for belief that the letters to Timothy and Titus were written by the same great apostle, two of them after his release and during an apostolic journey, and the Second Epistle to Timothy at Rome shortly before his death.

These four groups of epistles correspond severally to the circumstances of the writer, and reveal a progressive development of his thought. Those to the Thessalonians contain words to young converts from their father in Christ who had been suddenly torn from them, and deal with a doctrinal difficulty. The First Epistle to the Corinthians deals with various practical matters which had arisen in the life of the church. The second epistle is a supplement to the first, and deals also with practical matters, while at the same time Paul vindicates, against certain detractors, his apostolic authority. To the Galatians he discusses a vital doctrinal matter; and to the Romans gives an orderly account of the Gospel as he

was accustomed to preach it. The third group gives us matured thought, nurtured in the solitude of Paul's imprisonment at Rome. In the letter to Philippi we have an outburst of Christian affection to the purest of the churches founded by Paul, revealing his inmost spiritual life. That to Colossæ embodies his loftiest thought about the nature and work of his Master. The letter to Ephesus depicts the Church as in the eternal past it presented itself to the loving thought and purpose of Christ; and as it will stand when the toil, and conflict, and sorrow of the present life are but a fading dream of the past, in glorious reality before the satisfied eye of him who loved it and gave himself for it, the spotless bride of the Eternal Son. In the Epistle to Philemon we have a charming letter to a friend. The First Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus give us a picture of the churches at the close of Paul's career. And in the Second Epistle to Timothy we have his dying counsels to a beloved fellow-helper. The great and independent worth of each of these epistles is a complete confirmation of the confident belief of all churches throughout the world in the second century, that they are all from the pen of the greatest of the apostles.

The researches embodied above are of the utmost importance, for they enable us to trace to the pen and thought of the illustrious apostle who founded the churches of Europe a very definite conception of Christ and the Gospel set forth in documents which lie open to our inspection; and even to trace the development of this conception during the lifetime and in the thought of Paul. We now ask, To what extent does this conception agree with the historic reality, and the actual teaching and claims of Christ? This question, the New Testament enables us to answer by placing before us other very early Christian documents altogether independent of, and differing widely from, those which we have traced to the pen of Paul. The authorship, date, and trustworthiness of these other documents demand our best attention.

CHAPTER II.

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

THE Second Gospel gives us an account of the life and teaching of Christ, beginning with the appearance of John the Baptist. The First Gospel gives a similar account, beginning with the announcement of the birth of Jesus, and prefixes to this his genealogy from Abraham. The Third Gospel begins with the announcement of the birth of John, and contains a genealogy of Jesus from Adam. The first two chapters in the First and

Third Gospels, which recount events earlier than the appearance of the Baptist, differ generally, and are evidently independent. But after his appearance all three narratives flow on in parallel lines, recounting to a large extent the same events, usually in the same order, and not unfrequently in similar language. For this reason they are called the Synoptic (or seeing-together) Gospels. Their similarity proves that they have, to some extent, a common

origin. Very different is the Fourth Gospel, which, both in the events and discourses recorded, and in tone of thought and phraseology, differs widely from the Synoptic Gospels. All four Gospels are anonymous. The titles given to them are only labels, attached by later hands, although by hands as old as our earliest manuscripts. Consequently about the Gospels there is no question of genuineness, for they make no claim to any definite authorship. The only questions are touching their writers, dates, and trustworthiness. Answers to these questions must be sought in the Gospels themselves and in ancient Christian literature.

Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxiv, and all later writers up to recent times, speak with complete confidence of the four Gospels as written by the apostles Matthew and John, and by Mark and Luke, friends of the apostles. The same confidence pervades the writings of Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenæus. This last says, in his work on "Heresies," Book III, i, "Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundation of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke, also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterward, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon his breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia." Abundant quotations prove decisively that Irenæus had before him the four Gospels in a form practically the same as that which we now possess; and prove that these stood alone, even in his day, above any similar works, as authentic and in some sense official records of the life and teaching of Christ. The beginning of the "Fragment of Muratori" is torn off. But we read that "Luke, the physician, whom Paul took with him, composed the Third Book of the Gospel according to Luke"; and that the Fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle John.

We have a still earlier witness, whose works unfortunately have perished, except in important quotations. Irenæus, in Book V, xxxiii, 4, of his work on "Heresies," speaks of a writer named Papias, whom he calls "the hearer of John and a companion of Polycarp." Even if this description be not correct, it compels us to believe that Papias lived early in the second century. Eusebius, in Book III, xxxix, of his "Church History," quotes Papias as saying that "Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and each interpreted them as he could"; and "Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately all that he re-

membered; though he did not record in order that which was either said or done by Christ."

From the pen of Justin, who was born in the early years of the second century, and died as a martyr about 166 A. D., we have a First and Second Apology addressed to the emperor Antoninus Pius, and a "Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew." He does not mention the Evangelists by name, but quotes frequently from the "Memoirs of the Apostles." These quotations give us a full picture of the life and teaching of Christ, corresponding substantially and often verbally with the account given in the Synoptic Gospels. They prove decisively that before the middle of the second century the account of Christ current among Christians was practically identical with that which we now possess in the Synoptic Gospels.

As an example, I may quote "Dialogue," chapter c: "It was written in the Gospel thus: 'All things have been committed to me by the Father, and no one knoweth the Father except the Son, neither the Son except the Father, and they to whomsoever the Son may reveal him.' He revealed then to us all those things which we have learnt from the Scriptures by his grace, who know that he is the firstbegotten of God, and was before all the creatures; and the son of the Patriarchs, since he took flesh of a virgin who was of their race, and condescended to be made a man without comeliness, dishonored, and liable to suffering. Hence it was that he said in his discourses when he spoke of his impending passion, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the Pharisees and the scribes, and be crucified, and rise again the third day.' He called himself the Son of Man then, either from his birth by a virgin, who was, as I have said, of the race of David, and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham; or because Adam was the father of him and of those here recounted, from whom Mary derives her descent. . . . And one of his disciples, who was before called Simon, he surnamed Peter, because he recognized him to be Christ the Son of God, according to the revelation of his Father. And we, seeing him to be described in the memoirs of his apostles as the Son of God, and calling him the Son, have perceived that he is even before all creatures, having proceeded from the Father by his power and will."

We have now found decisive documentary evidence that in the latter half of the second century accounts of the life and teaching of Christ, substantially identical with the four Gospels we now possess, were accepted throughout the Roman empire by all Christians with perfect confidence as written by two apostles and two companions of apostles. The quotations from Papias, though not equal in value to

those from works still extant, prove that the opinion of Irenæus about the authorship of the Gospels was much older than his own day. That these anonymous documents were everywhere accepted as written by four definite men, and that no other authors were ever suggested, affords a strong presumption that this universal belief was correct. For the absence of any suggestion of other authors' names cannot otherwise be accounted for. Moreover, whatever may be said about authorship, the abundant quotations in Justin afford a very strong presumption that the picture of Christ given in the Synoptic Gospels is historically correct.

This last presumption is raised to complete certainty by examination of the contents of the Synoptic Gospels. We soon find that they present, compared one with another, an identical picture of Christ. They represent him as claiming frequently and solemnly to be "the Son of God": *e. g.*, Matthew iii, 17; Mark i, 11; Luke iii, 22, and elsewhere. The significance of this title is attested by a parable recorded in Matthew xxi, 33-41; Mark xii, 1-11; Luke xx, 9-18, where Christ contrasts himself as the Son with the prophets who were only servants. By this contrast he claims a relation to God infinitely higher than that of the greatest of his predecessors. A young Syrian artisan claims, as recorded in Matthew xi, 27-30, that he only, and those taught by him, know God; and calls to himself all the weary and heavily laden, and promises to give them rest; and he announces that in the day of days, when the best of men will stand at the bar of God and be judged, he will sit upon his throne and pronounce judgment on all. Such claims are never found, in the whole literature of the world, as made by man or for man, except by and for Jesus of Nazareth. The evidence we have been considering proves that this conception of Christ was accepted everywhere with complete confidence in the middle of the second century.

The same conception of Christ is embodied also in the epistles which we have already traced to the pen of Paul in the middle of the first century. He also speaks of him as the "own Son" of God, and the future Judge of the World; and goes beyond the synoptists in calling him the Creator of the World. Moreover, the Synoptic Gospels are manifestly independent of the Epistles of Paul. For the distinctive phraseology and modes of thought these last, *e. g.*, the phrase "in Christ," the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ, Justification through Faith, Adoption, are conspicuously absent from the first three Gospels. Unquestionably, in them we have a company of independent witnesses concerning Christ. Their independence of Paul, viewed in connection with the deep, underlying har-

mony between him and them, is complete proof that they are a correct reflection of the impression made by Christ on his immediate followers. And, unless we are prepared to believe that the men who gained for Christ the homage of the world were utterly deluded about the dignity of their Master and his relation to God, we must accept the Synoptic Gospels as substantially correct delineations of the historic reality of the Founder of Christianity.

If we accept the Synoptic Gospels as true accounts of the life and teaching of Christ, we need not hesitate to accept, in the absence of valid contrary evidence, the unanimous testimony of the early Christian writers about their authorship. It will, however, be noticed that the proof of their trustworthiness just given in outline, renders comparatively unimportant the question of their authorship. It is sufficient for us to know that they are correct portraits of Christ.

Touching the traditional authors of the Synoptic Gospels, not much is known. Irenæus speaks, *e. g.*, "Heresies," Book III, ix, 1, of the First Gospel as written by "Matthew the Apostle." In each of the lists given in Mark iii, 16-19; Luke vi, 14-16; Acts i, 13, we find the name of Matthew: and in Matthew x, 3, we read of Matthew the publican or tax-gatherer. In Matthew ix, 9-13, we read of his call, and a feast he gave to Christ. In Mark ii, 13-17; Luke v, 27-32, we have accounts of the calling of a publican named Levi, and of a feast given by him. The very close similarity leaves no room to doubt that he was identical with the Apostle Matthew. In Mark ii, 14, we read that he was a son of Alphæus. No further information about him can be gleaned from the New Testament, and all later traditions are worthless. The whole tone of the First Gospel, as compared with the rest of the New Testament, reveals a writer in whom the moral teaching of Christ occupied a larger place than the distinctive features of the Gospel. The spirit of the whole finds utterance in Matthew vii, 21: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

An early and apparently unanimous tradition asserts that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, *i. e.*, not in the language of David and Isaiah but in the Aramaic current in our Lord's day, of which we have specimens in Matthew xxvii, 46; Mark v, 41, vii, 34, xv, 34. But this tradition involves questions which cannot be discussed here. No Aramaic copy can now claim to be the original Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

In Acts xii, 12, we read that, when Peter was liberated from prison, he went to the house of

Mary the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, and, in verse 25, that, when Barnabas and Paul returned from Jerusalem to Antioch, they took with them this same Mark. He went with Paul and Barnabas, as an attendant, on their missionary journey; but left them at Perga in Pamphilia: so Acts xiii, 6, 13. Barnabas, as we learn from chapter xv, 37, wished to take him on another missionary journey; but Paul refused. Barnabas and Mark, as we read in verse 39, then sailed together to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas on his second missionary journey. By a remarkable coincidence, Mark, a cousin of Barnabas, sends greetings in Colossians iv, 10. This not only accounts for the partiality of Barnabas for Mark, but is pleasant evidence that the latter was restored to the favor of Paul. In Philemon, 24, the apostle speaks of Mark and others as "fellow-workers." Still more definitely he says in II. Timothy iv, 11, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is useful to me for ministering," *i. e.*, for such friendly service as he rendered on the first missionary journey. In I. Peter v, 13, referring probably to the same man, the writer speaks of "Mark, my son." From all this we learn that in the apostolic circle was one known by the name of Mark, whose mother had at one time a house in Jerusalem. And, in the absence of any other name, we may infer with much probability that he was the Mark to whom a unanimous tradition referred the writing of the Second Gospel. This inference is confirmed by unanimous tradition which connects both the Second Gospel and Mark with Peter. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxxix, quotes Papias and John the presbyter as calling Mark the "interpreter of Peter" when writing down the words and works of Christ. So say Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. The Third Gospel is indisputably by the author of the Book of Acts.

Its authorship will, therefore, be discussed in Chapter III.

Touching the time and place of writing of the Synoptic Gospels, we know nothing definite. But the hope of our Lord's early return which finds expression in Matthew xvi, 28, and less clearly in chapter xxiv, Mark xiii, Luke xxi, proves decisively that these Gospels were not written after the generation which had heard Christ had passed entirely away. A later writer would certainly have guarded the words of God against misapprehension. An example of such guarding, we have in John xxi, 23. This sure indication of the very early date of the first three Gospels is of utmost value.

More important than their precise date is the mutual relation of these Gospels. For their close similarity in contents, order, and even in phraseology proves that they are not independent. Either some two of the evangelists have followed to some extent the guidance of a third, modifying here and there and adding other matter, or all three have drawn from a common source. Perhaps the latter suggestion is more likely; and if it be correct there seems reason to believe that this common source is reproduced most fully in the Second Gospel. Probably the traditions of the words and works of Christ, which must have been of infinite value in the infant Church, crystallized early into definite literary form; and out of these grew, in the hands of careful writers, and by the method described in Luke i, 1-4, the Gospels we now possess. These survived, while some other similar works passed away, and obtained unanimous acceptance in the Church as authoritative records of the life and teaching of Christ. And their deep, underlying harmony with the epistles which we have traced by indisputable evidence to the pen of Paul, and with the rest of the New Testament, is complete proof that these records are historically true.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOOK OF ACTS.

THE writer of the Book of Acts claims to have written an earlier work "about all things which Jesus began both to do and to teach." That both works are addressed to someone named Theophilus, suggests at once that the writer refers to the Third Gospel. And that both works were written by Luke, whom Paul speaks of in Colossians iv, 14, as "the beloved physician" and refers to again in Philemon, 24, II. Timothy iv, 11, is the unanimous and confident testimony of the early writers already quoted in this Introduction.

As an example of this I may quote Eusebius, "Church History," Book III, iv, 6: "Luke, who was born at Antioch, and by profession a physician, being for the most part connected with Paul and familiarly acquainted with the rest of the apostles, has left us proofs of the art of healing souls which he obtained from these men, in two God-inspired [same word as in II. Timothy iii, 16] books; the Gospel which he professes to have written as it was handed over to him by 'those who from the beginning became eyewitnesses and servants of the Word,'

all whom he declares that from the beginning he has followed; and the Acts of the Apostles which he 'composed, not from hearing, but having observed with his own eyes.'" Abundant similar references are found in the works of Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria.

Irenæus, who frequently quotes both works as written by Luke, calls attention, in Book III, xiv, 1, to the remarkable fact that, in the account of Paul's first journey from Troas to Philippi, and again in that of his journeys from Philippi to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Rome, we have the first person plural, *we* and *us*, implying that the writer was with Paul. This is complete proof that Irenæus had before him the narrative of Paul's journeys in a form practically the same as we now possess in the Book of Acts. Irenæus also identifies the writer with Luke who is mentioned in II. Timothy iv, 11; Colossians iv, 14, and calls him a fellow-laborer of Paul, as in Philemon, 24. In the "Fragment of Muratori" both these works are attributed to Luke, who is called a physician.

That these anonymous writings were thus universally accepted before the close of the second century as by Luke, and that so far as we know no other author was ever suggested, is clear proof that they were current early in the century, and affords strong presumption that they came actually from the pen of Luke. For it is not easy otherwise to account for his universal tradition. This argument is not weakened by the fact that many centuries later, as we learn from the questions of Photius, who, however, himself accepted Luke as the author, the Book of Acts was by some attributed to Clement, by others to Barnabas, and by others to Luke. For, when the lapse of time had weakened the force of early tradition, the mere absence of the author's name sufficiently accounts for diversity of opinion.

That the Book of Acts was written by a companion of Paul, is strongly confirmed by the use of the first person plural in Acts xvi, 10-17, xx, 5-15, xxi, 1-18, xxvii, 1, 2, xxviii, 11-16, already mentioned as noticed by Irenæus. For it proves that the work was written either by an eyewitness or by a deceiver. And it is in the last degree unlikely that a deceiver would contrive this unobtrusive indication of the writer's presence. So slight an indication has the ring of truth. Moreover, that the Epistles of Paul are not mentioned in the Book of Acts is absolute proof of its early date. For, after Paul's death, his letters became too famous to be omitted in a narrative of his life; whereas, while he was living, they would seem less important.

The Book of Acts renders us immense service by giving a consecutive narrative of very

important events which are referred to casually in the letters of Paul. These casual references enable us to test its truthfulness. A portion of this evidence has been already adduced in our discussion, in Chapter I, of the genuineness of the Epistles to the Corinthians, Romans, and Thessalonians, and, to this, much more might be added. The letters of Paul abound in references to matters of fact in subtle agreement with the Book of Acts, an agreement which bears indisputable marks of truth. This confirmatory proof would not be invalidated by small contradictions, even were such detected; for errors about matters of fact, and especially about small details which do not come under their own observation, are easily accounted for even in reliable witnesses by the imperfection of all human observation and research. But frequently the concurrence of witnesses who singly are utterly unreliable, produces complete conviction of the truth of that which they narrate; because not otherwise can their concurrence be explained. Of this, our courts of law afford daily examples. Consequently, in weighing up coincidences and apparent contradictions, we cannot set one against the other. We must accept the hypothesis which best accounts for the whole case. And, when only one explanation of the facts is conceivable, we are compelled to accept this as true. Of the evidence before us, the only satisfactory explanation is that the letters were actually written by Paul, and that in the Book of Acts we have a trustworthy account of his work.

The force of the above argument can be felt only by careful personal study of the New Testament. But I may call attention to the harmonious picture of Paul himself as given in his own letters and in the Book of Acts, and to the picture of the Galilean Apostles as given there and in the Gospels, this latter being made the more remarkable by the new inspiration which fell upon them after the death of Christ. Compare also the prominence given to the resurrection of Christ in Acts i, 22, ii, 31, 32, iii, 15, iv, 10, etc., and in I. Corinthians xv, 13-21; also the doctrine of Justification through Faith, which is not found in the New Testament except from the pen or lips of Paul, in Acts xiii, 39, and in Galatians ii, 16; Romans iii, 26, 28, 30. Internal evidence, of which only a small part has been adduced here, affords abundant proof of the truthfulness of the narrative of the Book of Acts; and confirms, in a manner sufficient to exclude all doubt, the unanimous testimony of the early Christian writers that both the Third Gospel and the Book of Acts were written by Luke, a companion of Paul.

Touching the precise date of these documents, we have no decisive evidence. The writer does not profess, as we learn from Luke

i, 2, to have personally known Christ, but claims to have derived his information from eyewitnesses. We must, therefore, put him in the second generation of the early Christians. And this is confirmed by the fact that he claims, as we have seen, to have been a companion of Paul on his second and third missionary journeys and on his voyage to Rome, and in II. Timothy iv, 11, at the close of Paul's life, we find that Luke was with him. That in Colossians iv, 10, 11, Paul sends greeting from some whom he describes as the only Jews who have been helpful to him, and afterward, in verse 14, sends greeting from "Luke, the beloved physician," suggests that this last was a Gentile. If so, he is the only writer of the New Testament whom we know to have been such.

The Book of Acts enables us not only to allot some of the letters of Paul to the periods of his life at which they were written, but approximately to fix their dates in reference to contemporaneous history. Our aids in this study are sundry references to public men and events.

From Acts xxiv, 27, we learn that, some two years after Paul's arrest at Jerusalem, Felix was succeeded by Festus. Now, Josephus says, in his "Antiquities," Book XX, viii, 9, that Felix, after his recall, was followed to Rome and accused there by the leading Jews of Cæsarea; and would certainly have been punished but for his brother Pallas, whom Nero then held in honor. From Tacitus, "Annals," Book XIV, lxxv, we learn that Pallas died in 62 A. D., as was believed, poisoned by Nero; and the order of the narrative suggests that this was not later than midsummer. Therefore, if these notes of time be correct, the summer of Felix's recall was not later than 61 A. D. Again, after narrating the recall of Felix, Josephus says that through the influence of Burrhus two prominent Syrians of Cæsarea gained from Nero a letter placing the Jewish residents there under disadvantage; and then goes on to speak of the arrival of Festus. But in his "Annals," Book XIV, li, at the beginning of his narrative of 62 A. D., Tacitus records the death of Burrhus. Once more: Josephus says, in his "Wars," Book VI, v, 3, that during the Feast of Tabernacles, at the end of September, and seven years and five months before the siege of Jerusalem, and during the rule of Albinus, who, as we learn from the "Antiquities," Book XX, ix, 1, succeeded Festus, a peasant denounced woe upon Jerusalem. Now, as we learn from Josephus, "Wars," Book V, iii, 1, 2, VI, ix, 3, and from Tacitus, "Histories," Book V, x, the siege of Jerusalem began at the passover of 70 A. D. Consequently, late in September, 62 A. D., Albinus must have been governor and Festus already dead. And since, as we read in "Antiquities," Book XX, ix, 1, Nero did not

send Albinus to Judea as governor till he heard that Festus was dead, the summer in which Paul stood before Festus could not have been later than 61 A. D. The concurrence of these notes of time is fair proof that Felix was recalled not later than 61 A. D., and, if so, Paul was arrested not later than 59 A. D.

From Acts xxi, 38, we learn that, some time before Paul's arrest, an Egyptian made a sedition and led out into the wilderness some 4,000 men. This incident is related by Josephus ("Wars," Book II, xiii, 5) as occurring in the time of Felix, after Nero had made him governor of Judea. Now, Nero, began to reign in 54 A. D. Consequently, the revolt of the Egyptian was later than this. Yet it was evidently some time before Paul's arrest. This must, therefore, have been some years later than 54 A. D. Again, when Paul stood before Felix, the latter had, as we learn from Acts xxiv, 10, for "many years" been "judge unto this [Jewish] nation." Now, Felix was appointed governor, as we read in the "Antiquities," Book XX, vii, 1, when Claudius had reigned twelve years, *i. e.*, in 53 A. D. These two notes of time make it unlikely that Paul's arrest was earlier than the summer of 57 A. D.

Josephus tells us (in his "Life," Section 1) that he was born in the first year of Caligula, *i. e.*, in 37 A. D.; and adds (in Section 3) that in his twenty-sixth year (probably in the summer of 63 A. D., for only in spring and summer was sea-faring safe) he went to Rome to obtain release of some friends whom Felix, while governor, had sent there in bonds. His words imply or suggest that when he went to Rome Felix was no longer governor. Now, it is not likely that this journey would be delayed beyond two years after Felix's recall. And, if not, he must have been recalled not earlier than 61 A. D. Certainly this note of time makes it extremely unlikely that Felix was recalled earlier than the summer of 60 A. D. Moreover, in the dates of his own birth and his journey to Rome, Josephus' own words claim our confidence.

We have now found three indications that the recall of Felix was not later than 61 A. D. We found clear proof that it was not many years earlier than this; and we found a reliable note of time which made it almost inconceivable that he was recalled earlier than 60 A. D., and very unlikely that his recall was earlier than 61 A. D. Therefore, with such confidence as the scantiness of our materials, and their liability to error, warrant, we may accept this latter date as the most probable. That Felix was recalled several years before the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., and that Paul was arrested several years after the accession of Nero in 54 A. D., is open to no doubt whatever. If we accept 61 A. D. as the probable date of the

recall of Felix, we can, using this as a foundation, build up a chronology of the Book of Acts and of the Epistles of Paul.

Since Paul was two years in prison at Cæsarea, he must have been arrested at Jerusalem in the summer of 59 A. D., almost immediately after his return from his third missionary journey. If so, he left Ephesus, after the tumult, in the spring of 58 A. D., spent the summer in Macedonia, the winter following at Corinth, and the Easter of 59 A. D. at Philippi. Now, he was some three years at Ephesus. We, therefore, infer that he arrived there in the summer of 55 A. D., the year after Nero's accession. In the spring of the same year, the most likely time for beginning a journey, he probably started from Antioch, as we read in Acts xviii, 23, on his third missionary tour. The "some time" spent at Antioch would doubtless include the winter of 54 A. D. And the journey described in Acts xviii, 18-22, may well have been accomplished during the previous summer; allowing us to suppose that Paul sailed from Corinth for Syria in the spring of the same year. If so, his sojourn at Corinth of more than eighteen months (see Acts xviii, 11) would include two winters and the intervening summer—in other words, he arrived there in the autumn of 52 A. D. And since on that, his second missionary journey, he was, as we infer from Galatians iv, 13, detained in Galatia by illness and founded churches there, we must suppose that he started from Antioch in the early spring. But before starting on this journey Paul spent, as we learn from Acts xv, 35, 36, some time at Antioch; during which time Peter came, and others from Jerusalem. This

brings the date of the conference at Jerusalem to the previous year, 51 A. D. Reckoning back fourteen years, according to Galatians ii, 1, Paul's first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion must have been in 37 or 38 A. D., and his conversion three years earlier (Galatians i, 18)—about 35 A. D.

If this chronology be correct, the two letters to Thessalonica were written from Corinth in the autumn of 52 A. D.; those to Corinth, from Ephesus and Macedonia, in the spring and summer of 58 A. D.; and those to the Galatians and Romans from Corinth during the following winter. Apparently Paul's voyage to Rome began in the Autumn after the arrival of Festus in Judea, *i. e.*, in 61 A. D. If so, he arrived at Rome early in 62 A. D.; and remained there in prison till 64 A. D. During this time, as we have seen, he wrote his letters to the Philippians, to the Colossians, the Ephesians, and to Philemon. After this last date he was apparently set free, and visited Ephesus, Macedonia, and Crete; and wrote the First Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus. During the same interval of freedom, if we may trust the apparent reference in the Epistle of Clement of Rome, supported by tradition, he also visited Spain. A general tradition asserts that Paul was put to death in the reign of Nero, who died in June, 68 A. D. And we may suppose that the Second Epistle to Timothy was written shortly before the apostle's martyrdom.

The above scanty outline serves to indicate the method of Biblical chronology, and the various notes of time referred to are strong confirmatory evidence of the trustworthiness of the documents in which they are found.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WRITINGS OF JOHN.

THAT the Fourth Gospel and what we know as the First Epistle of John were both written by the Apostle John, was accepted without a shadow of doubt by all early Christian writers from the latter part of the second century onward. So Irenæus, "Heresies," Book III, i, 1: "Afterward (*i. e.*, after Matthew, Mark, and Luke) John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast, himself published the Gospel during his residence at Ephesus, in Asia." Abundant quotations prove that he had before him the Fourth Gospel in a form practically the same as we now possess. In Book III, xi, 8, he argues: "It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in

which we live, and four principal winds, while the Church is scattered through the world, and the 'pillar and ground' of the Church is the Gospel and the Spirit of Life, it is fitting that she should have four pillars breathing out immortality on every side and vivifying men afresh." This passage, taken in connection with many quotations from them, proves that in the days of Irenæus four Gospels, practically the same as we now possess, stood together above any other similar works as authoritative records of the works and words of Christ. In the "Fragment of Muratori," the Fourth Gospel is attributed to the disciple John, and the First Epistle is quoted as his. This unanimous reception of two anonymous documents, within a hundred years of the death of their alleged

writer, is very strong presumptive proof of their authorship.

By Justin, no names of evangelists are given; but, as we have seen, the words of Christ are frequently quoted in a form practically the same as that given in the Synoptic Gospels. In his "First Apology," chapter lxi, we read, "Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." This, though not a verbal quotation, proves that words practically the same as those in John iii, 3, were in the time of Justin attributed to Christ. In his "Dialogue with Trypho," chapter lxxxviii, we read, "As John sat by the Jordan and preached the Baptism of repentance, wearing only a girdle of skins and a garment of camel's hair, and eating nothing but locusts and wild honey, men supposed him to be the Christ; but he himself declared to them, '*I am not the Christ, but a voice of one crying*; for there shall come after me he who is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.'" The words in italics are found in John i, 20, 23. These, and some other less definite references, afford a strong presumption that the Fourth Gospel was then current. It is, however, worthy of note that the references by Justin to the Fourth Gospel are very few in comparison to his many quotations reproducing the words of Christ as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels.

In the Fourth Gospel we find an accuracy of detail which reveals a trustworthy eyewitness. Notice especially the exact indications of time in John i, 29, 35, 39, 43, ii, 1, 13, iv, 43, v, 1, vi, 4, 22, vii, 2, 14, 37, x, 22, xi, 55, xii, 1, 12, xix, 31, xx, 19, 26, xxi, 14. The Synoptic Gospels are not without notes of time; but these are few compared to those just quoted. Indeed, the chronology of the life of Christ rests almost entirely on the Fourth Gospel. Notice, also, the many references to persons, and successive references to the same person. We have vivid delineations of character of many who would be altogether unknown to us, or known only by name, but for the Fourth Gospel. As examples I may quote Nicodemus in John iii, 1, vii, 50, xix, 39; Lazarus in chapters xi, 1, xii, 1, 10; and Nathanael in chapters i, 46-50, xxi, 2. Many important details having every appearance of truth are found only in the Fourth Gospel: *e. g.*, the preliminary examination of Christ by Annas before he was sent to Caiaphas, as recorded in John xviii, 13-24. Sometimes the account given in the Fourth Gospel seems to differ from that given by the Synoptists: *e. g.*, the indications of the day of Crucifixion given in John xviii, 28, xix, 31, as compared with Mark xiv, 12. The force of these indications, and many others similar, can be felt only by personal study. To me they are complete proof that in the Fourth Gospel we

have a most reliable narrative of the life of Christ.

Of still more importance is the theological teaching of the same document. For in the discourses of Christ therein contained, and especially in the frequent assertion that they who believe in Christ have eternal life, we find a necessary connecting link between Paul's doctrine of Justification through Faith and the actual teaching of Christ. For, if they who believe in Christ have already eternal life, then are they already justified; for, to the guilty, pardon is a condition of life. Had we only the discourses recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, Paul's conception of the Gospel would be an insoluble mystery. It would be the Gospel of Paul only, not of Christ. For it would lack historic foundation in the recorded works of Christ. But now all is explained. We can easily conceive that the Synoptic Gospels embody Christ's ordinary public teaching, which was for the greater part a reproduction and development of the moral teaching of the Old Testament. But together with this ordinary teaching he spoke, privately as to Nicodemus, and to the apostles on the night of his betrayal, or occasionally in public, as in the discourse at Capernaum recorded in John vi, 26-58, words setting forth the Gospel in its fullness. The teaching of the Synoptists was in some measure understood at the time, and is widely appreciated now. The words recorded in the Fourth Gospel could be understood, even by those who heard them, only when expounded by the Spirit promised to the disciples; and to this day they are sealed to many who value greatly the teaching of the other Gospels. But in all ages this Gospel has been rich spiritual nourishment to the most devout of the followers of Christ. The above internal evidence proves only the historical truthfulness of the Fourth Gospel. Other internal evidence affords wonderful confirmation of the unanimous and confident belief of the early Christian writers that it was written by the Apostle John.

In all lists of the apostles, Matthew x, 2; Mark iii, 17; Luke vi, 14; Acts i, 13, we read of John, a son of Zebedee: and in Mark v, 37, ix, 2, xiii, 3, xiv, 33, with their parallels, we find him associated with Peter and James, and sometimes Andrew, as an inner and more intimate circle within the circle of the apostles. In the Fourth Gospel, John is never mentioned; but we find an unnamed disciple occupying the place which in the Synoptics John holds. So John i, 41, where, of two disciples of the Baptist who followed Christ and were admitted to an intimate interview with him, the name of only one, Andrew, is given; also chapter xiii, 23, where we read, "there was reclining in the bosom of Jesus one of his disciples whom Jesus

loved"; and chapter xviii, 15, 16, "there followed Jesus Simon Peter and another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest and went in with Jesus into the court of the high priest. But Peter was standing at the door outside. There went out, therefore, the other disciple, the acquaintance of the high priest, and spoke to the porter and brought in Peter." Similarly, chapter xix, 26, "Jesus then seeing his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, saith to his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then he saith to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her to his home." The same unnamed disciple whom Jesus loved is mentioned again in chapter xx, 2-5, as going with Peter to the grave of Christ, and again as being with some other disciples in Galilee when the risen Lord appeared to them. This unnamed disciple can be no other than the Apostle John.

We have now a remarkable phenomenon. Throughout the Fourth Gospel one of the foremost of the apostles, though several times silently referred to, is never mentioned by name. This cannot be accidental. How is it explained? If the unanimous tradition of the early Christians be correct, further explanation is needless. The writer refused to insert his own name in his account of the words and works of Christ. If John did not write this Gospel, the omission of his name is inexplicable. No honest writer would admit it. And the only alternative, namely, that it was omitted by someone who wished to pass off his own work as that of the Apostle John, is disproved utterly by the intrinsic worth of the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, one who had this aim would indicate the writer more clearly.

A verse at the close of the Gospel, which is undoubtedly genuine, John xxi, 24, claims it as a work of the beloved apostle: "This is the disciple who testifies about these things and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true." This is also the easiest explanation of John xix, 26, 35, where, after mention of John, as standing before the cross, we read, "And he that saw it hath borne witness; and his witness is true, and he knoweth that he says true things in order that ye may believe." With these last words compare chapter xx, 31: "These things are written in order that ye may believe."

An important confirmation of the historical truth both of the Fourth Gospel and of the Synoptics is the remarkable harmony in their delineations of the character and dignity of Christ, and of various other characters, *e. g.*, Peter, Martha, and Mary, and Judas the traitor.

To sum up: We have found in the writings of the early Christians, from the latter part of

the second century onward, complete proof that throughout the Roman empire the Fourth Gospel was everywhere accepted without a shadow of doubt as written by the Apostle John. We have found in it a portrait of Christ fuller and loftier than that given in the rest of the New Testament, yet in close harmony with, and needful to explain, the portraits given by the Synoptists and by Paul; a portrait revealing the hand of a painter of the highest ability and character; and an account of the teaching of Christ which is a necessary link between the Gospel of Paul and the teaching attributed to Christ in the Synoptic Gospels. We have found in its narratives and delineations of character abundant indications of truthfulness and extreme accuracy such as could be found only in an eyewitness; and a remarkable set of phenomena which can be explained only as coming from the Apostle John. We may, therefore, accept with perfect confidence the unanimous testimony of the early Christian writers touching the authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

The only serious objection to the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel is that very strong external evidence exists asserting that the Book of Revelation written by the Apostle John, while at the same time a wide difference in diction and modes of thought, and even in doctrine, makes it very unlikely that both documents came from the same pen.

Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxv, speaks of "The Revelation of John, which some reject, but others rank among the genuine." He thus distinguishes it from "the holy quaternion of the Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Epistles of Paul, and the First Epistles of John and Peter." It is once quoted by Clement of Alexandria with the words, "as John says in the Apocalypse"; and several times without the writer's name. It is frequently quoted by Irenæus, as written by John, and confirmed by "those who saw John face to face." Justin, in his "Dialogue with Trypho," chapter lxxxix, writes: "A teacher of ours, whose name was John, one of the twelve apostles of Christ, foretold in a revelation which was made to him that those who believe in our Christ should pass a thousand years in Jerusalem, and that after that there should be a universal and, in a word, eternal resurrection of all men together, and then the judgment." On the other hand, the Book of Revelation was not included, as were all the books reckoned by Eusebius as undisputed, in the very early and valuable Peshito Syriac Version.

From the above evidence we learn that in some quarters the Book of Revelation was received, in the middle of the second century, as written by the Apostle John, but that it was

not universally known and accepted, and that there were serious doubts about it even in the time of Eusebius. It thus differs in external attestation from the books mentioned by Eusebius as universally and confidently accepted.

On the other hand, the Book of Revelation contains a number of uncouth grammatical forms, utterly unlike anything else in the New Testament and a marked contrast to the Fourth Gospel. The distinctive words and phrases which are so marked a feature of the Gospel and Epistle, *e. g.*, the word *believe* and the phrases *abide in him* and *life eternal*, are conspicuously absent. In spite of some subtle links of connection, such as the word *overcome* in I. John ii, 13, 14, and Revelation ii, 7, 11, 17, 26, the general tone and modes of thought are different. Very difficult is Revelation ii, 20, where eating idol sacrifices is classed with fornication: in complete contrast to I. Corinthians x, 27-29; Romans xiv, 14, and the whole tone of the Fourth Gospel. Throughout the Book of Revelation, truth is thrown into concrete and visible forms; in the Gospel it is ever embodied in abstract statement. A very remarkable difference between the two documents, and one very difficult to harmonize with their common authorship, is the conspicuous absence of the author's name both in the Gospel and First Epistle and the fewness of references to him even in narratives of events at which he was present, in contrast to the conspicuous mention of John four times, in Revelation i, 1, 4, 9, xxii, 8, and the references to himself in the first person in chapters i, 10, 12, iv, 1, 2, v, 4, 5, vi, 1, 2, 3, 5, and throughout the book; and especially the personal incidents in chapters vii, 13, 14, x, 8-11, xvii, 6, 7, xix, 9, 10, xxi, 9, 10, xxii, 8-10. These differences create a difficulty which I cannot remove. But they do not overturn the abundant and decisive evidence adduced above, proving that the Fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle John. Even if we admit that the two documents could not come from the same pen, we should prefer the attestation of the Gospel, consisting as it does of the unanimous and confident testimony of the early Christian writers, and supported by very strong internal evidence, rather than that of the Book of Revelation which, though embracing external evidence earlier than that for the Gospel, was not unanimous and is supported by very little internal evidence.

But we are not driven to this alternative. Moreover, the strong external evidence for the authorship of the Book of Revelation must not be lightly set aside. And it need not be. Two suppositions are possible. It may be admitted that the two documents are not from the same man at the same time. But an ancient tradition asserts that the Apostle John lived to an

extreme old age. So Irenæus, Book III, iii, 4: "The church in Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John remaining among them till the times of Trajan": *i. e.*, till 98 A. D. The absence of any reference to Paul's work in Asia forbids us to place the Book of Revelation much earlier than the death of Paul, say 66 A. D. This leaves time, however, for the two works to have been written nearly thirty years apart. If, as seems likely, these thirty years were spent in a Greek city like Ephesus, this new and continued environment may in some measure account for the differences between the two documents.

Another supposition seems to me more likely. We need not assume that these Greek documents were actually written by the hand and pen of the Galilean apostle. Paul used an amanuensis (see Romans xvi, 22). John, writing in a language which was not his mother tongue, may have had literary help. Let us suppose that he had a friend and disciple, with facile pen, to whom he gave an exact account of the events of the life of Christ which he desired to have recorded, and of the profounder teaching of Christ about himself which had found insufficient embodiment in the Synoptic Gospels; and let us suppose that this friend grasped intelligently and firmly this inner and higher Gospel of Christ. Under the direction and supervision of the apostle, he may have written the Fourth Gospel. The Book of Revelation may have been written in a similar way, but by another writer of another stamp, and at an earlier time. If so, both documents might fairly be attributed to the Apostle John. In any case, abundant evidence, external and internal, compels us to accept the Fourth Gospel as a very early, and trustworthy, and most valuable account of the life and teaching of Christ. Other evidence attests the early date of the Book of Revelation. And its contents, as a unique type of New Testament teaching, give to it unique interest.

Neither document contains reliable indications of time or place of writing. As containing a more highly developed conception of the dignity of Christ, and of his relation to God, most scholars place the Fourth Gospel near to the close of the apostle's life. If the Book of Revelation be from the same writer, it must be much earlier. This supposition contradicts Irenæus who, in his "Heresies," Book V, xxx, 3, says that it was written "toward the end of the reign of Domitian," who died in 96 A. D. This is a testimony to the extreme old age attained by the apostle; but it is not decisive as a proof of so small a detail as the date of a book.

The Book of Revelation claims to have been written at Patmos, an island in the Ægean Sea.

The Fourth Gospel has no indication of date. A wide-spread and early tradition connects the last years of the Apostle John with Ephesus. And, if so, he may have written his Gospel there. So Irenæus, Book III, i, 1: "John the disciple of the Lord, who reclined on his breast, himself published the Gospel, while dwelling in Ephesus, of Asia."

That the First Epistle also was written by the Apostle John is attested by the writers quoted above for the Gospel, and by others earlier. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxxix, says of Papias, a writer who must have lived in the early part of the second century, that "he used testimonies from the First Epistle of John." In Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians, chapter vii, we read, "Everyone that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in flesh is Antichrist": in close, and almost verbal, agreement with I. John iv, 2, 3. This external evidence is strongly confirmed by both thought and diction, and contents of the epistle. It is a series of pious meditations on the words recorded in the Gospel as spoken by Christ. But the strength and development of thought forbids the suggestion that the one is a mere imitation of the other. As an example of valuable development, I may

quote the important double assertion in I. John iv, 8 and 16, that "God is love."

The short Second and Third Epistles of John are not supported by the early and unanimous, and confident external evidence quoted above for the First Epistle. But Clement of Alexandria, in his "Miscellanies," Book II, xv, speaks of John's "larger epistle"; thus implying shorter epistles or epistle; and they are apparently mentioned in the "Fragment of Muratori." Internal evidence seems to me to support their Johannine authorship. The Third Epistle gives an interesting, though by no means favorable, picture of early church life. The reasons which lead us to place the Gospel late in the apostle's life are valid also for the First Epistle. Touching the time and place of the shorter epistles, we know nothing.

To sum up: We may accept with perfect confidence the Fourth Epistle as a very early, and trustworthy, and valuable account of what Jesus said and did, and as almost certainly coming directly or indirectly from the Apostle John; also the First Epistle of John, certainly, and probably the Second and Third, as by the same writer; and the wonderful Book of Revelation as coming, by another channel, from the same ultimate apostolic source.

CHAPTER V.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THE great value and attractiveness of this epistle are universally recognized. It is, after the Epistle to the Romans, the most orderly and logical book in the New Testament. The writer proves successively that Christ is greater than angels, than Moses, and than the priesthood, temple, and sacrifices of the Old Covenant. And we remember that the Law was ordained by angels, in the hand of Moses, as mediator, and that in the ancient ritual the Law held abiding place before the eyes of Israel. On each of these three points of comparison and contrast is based a practical exhortation. The work is evidently designed to encourage the fainting hearts of the Jewish Christians.

There are passages in the Epistle of Clement of Rome which suggest that the writer had seen the Epistle to the Hebrews. Nothing is said about it in the "Fragment of Muratori," which mentions by name all thirteen Epistles of Paul. It is not quoted, though it is possibly referred to, by Irenæus. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book VI, xiv, quotes Clement of Alexandria as saying, in a work now lost, that "the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Paul to the Hebrews in the Hebrew tongue,

but that it was carefully translated by Luke and published among the Greeks." He quotes, in his "Church History," Book VI, xxv, Origen as saying that "the thoughts are the apostle's, but the diction and phraseology belong to someone who has recorded what the apostle said, and as one who noted down at his leisure what his master dictated. If, then, any church considers this epistle as coming from Paul, let him be commended for this; for neither did those ancient men deliver it as such without cause. But who it was that really wrote the epistle, God knows. The account, however, which has been current before us is, according to some, that Clement, who was bishop of Rome, wrote the epistle; according to others, that it was written by Luke, who wrote the Gospel and the Acts." We notice at once the difference between these doubtful and varying testimonies and the unanimous and confident attestation, quoted in Chapter I, that the thirteen epistles which bear the name of Paul were actually written by him.

Internal evidence does not favor the Pauline authorship. In chapter ii, 3, we read of "salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard";

in marked contrast to Paul who says, in Galatians i, 12, that the Gospel he preached was not received from man. The general style is very different from that of Paul. We notice, also, the absence of the distinctive Pauline phraseology and modes of thought, *e. g.*, justification through faith, adoption, according to flesh, according to Spirit, in Christ, crucified, dead, buried, risen with Christ, the Church represented as the body of Christ, and many others. Some quotations from the Old Testament suggest irresistibly that the writer did not know Hebrew, *e. g.*, Hebrews ii, 7, x, 5; quotations which, in this respect, have no parallel in the acknowledged writings of Paul. In view of these marked internal differences, the doubtful external testimony is insufficient to prove that the epistle was written by Paul.

On the other hand, we have no concurrence of evidence sufficient to justify our ascription of it to any other definite writer. Some have suggested Luke, others Apollos. But these are

little more than plausible guesses. The writer, able and brilliant as he was, remains unknown. Indications of time and place of writing are very scanty. From Hebrews ii, 3, we have already learned that the writer belonged to the second generation of Christians. This agrees with chapter xiii, 23, "our brother Timothy is set free, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you." This implies that the letter was written during the lifetime of Timothy by one of his friends. With these notes of time agree the tone, and contents, and apparent environment of the epistle, which agree far more with the rest of the New Testament than with the ages following.

Internal evidence leaves no room to doubt that the epistle was originally written in Greek. Its intrinsic worth and immense superiority to any early Christian writings outside the New Testament give it, in spite of our ignorance of its author, a sure place in the Sacred Writings of the New Covenant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

OF this epistle we find no mention in the "Fragment of Muratori." The earliest clear reference to it is in Irenæus, Book IV, xvi, 2, where we have James ii, 23, word for word, but without any reference to the writer. Origen is the earliest who mentions the author's name. He quotes it frequently as by "James," by "James the Apostle," by "James, brother of the Lord." So his commentary on John xix, 6, on Romans iv, 8, ix, 24; selections on Psalms cxviii (cxix), 153, xxxi (xxx), 5, etc. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxv, says: "Of the disputed books, but nevertheless known to many, the so-called Epistle of James is current, and that of Jude, and the Second Epistle of Peter." Jerome, 340-420 A. D., writes, in his "Illustrious Men," chapter ii: "James, called the Lord's brother, surnamed the Just, wrote one epistle only, which is among the seven catholic epistles; which is also said to have been published by another in his name, though it gradually obtained authority in process of time." Evidently Jerome himself accepted the epistle as written by James, the Lord's brother; but acknowledges that others had doubts. The Epistle of James was also contained in the Peshito Syriac Version, which dates, perhaps, from the fourth century.

The above somewhat scanty external attestation receives strong support from internal evidence. The epistle claims to have been written by "James, a servant of God and of the Lord

Jesus Christ." This suggests an author so well known that the mere mention of his name was a sufficient designation. That, although a servant of Christ, he writes to the twelve tribes in the dispersion, suggests that he was a Jew and had special relations to Jewish Christians.

Such a man is mentioned in Galatians i, 19, as seen by Paul at Jerusalem: "Other of the apostles I did not see except James, the brother of the Lord." In chapter ii, 9, his name is put before those of Cephas and John, as one who seemed to be a pillar. In verse 12, certain Judaizers are said to have "come from James." This does not imply that James sent them, or shared their sentiments; but that they looked up to him as in some sense their leader.

In complete harmony with the above, we read in Acts xii, 17, that Peter, when liberated from prison at Jerusalem, sent a message to "James," the simple name being sufficient to designate the person referred to. In chapter xv, 13, at the conference at Jerusalem, "James" speaks last. In chapter xxi, 18, surrounded by the elders at Jerusalem, "James" welcomes Paul, and advises him to pay deference to Jewish zeal for the Law by joining in the purification of four men who had a vow. Evidently, at the head of the church at Jerusalem stood a man known as "James."

To the same refers Josephus, who, in his "Antiquities," Book XX, ix, 1, describes the martyrdom of "James the brother of Jesus who is called Christ."

To this brother of the Lord, as we have seen, Origen attributes the epistle before us. This tradition is in complete harmony with its contents. Although written by one who holds "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ," it is farther from the standpoints of Paul and of John, and nearer to that of a pious Jew, than is any other part of the New Testament. It has much, both in phraseology and mental standpoint, in common with the First Gospel. This agrees with the position of James in the Book of Acts as the leader of the church at Jerusalem. His deep spiritual sympathy with all that was good in the Old Covenant made him a most valuable conservative element in the difficult transition from the Old to the New.

Another mark of the theological truth of this epistle, and, therefore, inferentially of its apostolic origin, is its deep underlying and essential agreement with the teaching of Paul. Written from an altogether different standpoint, it never contradicts the Gospel of Paul. In this respect it is a conspicuous contrast to the Jewish-Christian writings of the second century.

This subtle and deep harmony between the teaching of this epistle and what we know about James, and the importance of the theological standpoint here expounded, as an essential part of the exposition of the Gospel, justify our acceptance of it with confidence, in spite of its weak external attestation, as a genuine work of James, the Lord's brother.

The scantiness of the references to the epistle by the writers of the second century is easily accounted for by the fact that, whereas they were Gentiles, it was written to Jews; and written not to any one church which would be its special guardian, as Tertullian says about the epistles of Paul, but to Jews scattered over the world.

That James does not venture to call himself in this epistle a brother of our Lord, need not surprise us. He knew too well that bodily

relation to Christ gave no preëminence in the kingdom of God.

In Matthew xiii, 55; Mark vi, 3, we read of brothers of Christ associated with his mother and bearing the name of "James, and Joses, and Simon, and Jude." The mention of James is an important coincidence with the passages quoted above. Since Jesus was, as we learn from Luke ii, 7, Mary's firstborn, James and his brother and (Matthew xiii, 55) sisters must have been either younger children of Mary or older children of Joseph by an earlier wife. Between these hypotheses, which have been much discussed, the evidence before us does not warrant an assured judgment. In other words, we do not know whether the writer of this epistle was an older or younger brother of Christ.

From John vii, 5, we learn that six months before his death his brothers did not believe in him. But immediately after his ascension, as we learn from Acts i, 14, they were closely associated with his followers. In remarkable harmony with this change, we read in I. Corinthians xv, 7, that the risen Lord appeared to James. This appearance probably removed all doubt from the mind of James and his brothers, and led them to accept as their Lord one whose bodily nearness may have concealed from them his divine glory.

The epistle contains no sure indications of date. But that James uses, in chapter ii, 14-26, language which has an appearance of contradicting Paul, suggests very strongly that when he wrote he had not seen the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans. Otherwise, he would probably have been careful to remove even the appearance of contradiction. This slight indication of time is, perhaps, sufficient to justify our assuming a comparatively early date for the epistle. Since we never read of James, after the death of Christ, except at Jerusalem, this letter to Jews scattered throughout the world was written probably from the mother city of their race.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EPISTLES OF PETER AND JUDE.

THE First Epistle claims to have been written by "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ." That this epistle was known to Polycarp, whom Irenæus speaks of as having "conversed with many who had seen Christ," is proved by several verbal coincidences far too close to be accidental. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxxix, says that Papias (in a work extant in the time of Eusebius, but now lost) used the Epistle of

Peter. It is not mentioned in the "Fragment of Muratori." Irenæus quotes it, but not with anything like the frequency with which he quotes the four Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Epistles of Paul. So "Heresies," Book IV, ix, 2, we read: "Peter says in his epistle, 'whom not seeing ye love,' etc." Express quotations, but not many of them, are found in Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. Origen quotes it often, and by name.

Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book III, xxv, placed it among the books "acknowledged as genuine." And after his day it occupied an uncontested place in the Christian Scriptures.

This short and general epistle does not contain any internal indications of authorship like those which confirmed so powerfully the Epistles of Paul, or, indeed, like those adduced above for the Epistle of James. Though Peter occupied so conspicuous a place, both in the Gospels and the Book of Acts, where we find long addresses from his lips, we cannot point to any coincidences in his character or teaching sufficient to identify him with the writer of this epistle. Nor, as we shall see, does the Second Epistle help us. On the other hand, the epistle contains nothing against this identification. It is, while lacking the more distinctive features of Paul's teaching, perceptibly colored by his phraseology and thought, and even by that of James. But, in spite of this intellectual dependence on others, the spiritual earnestness, and the glow of feeling which burns on every page, give to this epistle a special value of its own. It is not unworthy of the illustrious writer by whom it claims to have been written.

The only alternative open to us is, either that the epistle was written by the Apostle Peter, or that it was written by someone else who deliberately palmed it off as his. No such person could have written a letter so helpful to the spiritual and moral life as this has been; nor is it likely that such a letter would have gained the early attestation quoted above. In view of the whole case we may accept the epistle before us, with reasonable confidence, as having been written by the heroic leader of the Galilean Apostles.

That no mention is made of Paul, in a letter to churches founded by him, suggests very strongly that it was written after Paul ceased to labor among them, *i. e.*, some time after his arrest at Jerusalem.

Whether the name Babylon in I. Peter v, 13, denotes the city on the Euphrates, or some other city, *e. g.*, Rome, is not certain. A widespread and trustworthy tradition connects the death of Peter with the city of Rome. And this suggests that to this city the writer refers. But the evidence is insufficient for a reliable judgment.

The First Epistle of Peter is of immense value, not only as a rich means of spiritual edification, but as proving that teaching practically identical with that of Paul and John was common to various sections of the early Church.

The Second Epistle claims to have been written by "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ." The spelling of the word

Symeon is found, from the lips of James, in Acts xv, 14. The writer claims, in a passage referring evidently (compare II. Peter i, 17, with Matthew xvii, 5) to the transfiguration of Christ, to have been an eyewitness of the greatness of Christ. He speaks, in chapter iii, 1, of the letter he was then writing as a "Second Epistle." Evidently the writer claims to be the Apostle Peter.

We have no quotation of, or clear reference to, the epistle till Origen, in the third century, of whose works a Latin translation quotes it several times. But the correctness of the translation is somewhat doubtful. Eusebius, in his "Church History," Book VI, xxv, quotes Origen as saying "Peter . . . has left one epistle undisputed; perhaps, also, a second, for it is doubted." In his "Church History," Book III, iii, Eusebius writes: "One Epistle of Peter, called his first, is universally received. This the elders of ancient times have quoted in their writings as undoubtedly authentic. But that called his Second Epistle, we have been informed, has not been received into the Canon. Nevertheless, as appearing to many useful, it has been carefully studied with the other writings." So, again, Book III, xxv. Jerome says, in his work on "Illustrious Men," chapter i, "Simon Peter wrote two epistles which are called catholic; the second of which most persons deny to be his, on account of its disagreement in style from the first." It had no place in the Old Syriac Version. From the above we see that the external attestation for the Second Epistle of Peter is much less than for any other part of the New Testament.

Nor is the external evidence strengthened by the contents of the epistle. We find in it no appreciable coincidences, in diction or modes of thought, with the First Epistle. The difference is more conspicuous than the similarity. On the other hand, between the epistle before us and that of Jude are close coincidences in matter, order, and diction which prove that one document is, in part, copied from the other, or both from a common source. Most scholars think that the Epistle of Jude is the original and that of Peter the copy. But this is a question of great difficulty. Even if it were admitted, it would not necessarily disprove the genuineness of the epistle. For even an apostle might reproduce the thought and diction of another. And we have seen that the First Epistle does not reveal special originality. In view of the late and doubting external attestation, unsupported as it is by internal evidence, we cannot claim this epistle as certainly written by the Apostle Peter. On the other hand, its genuineness is not disproved. The authorship of the epistle remains for the present an unsolved problem.

The writer of the Epistle of Jude, whose name might be spelled Judas or Judah, calls himself "brother of James." This designation recalls at once the famous man who, as we have seen, occupied a unique place at the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and who is also called "brother of the Lord." By an interesting coincidence, in each of the lists of our Lord's brothers given in Matthew xiii, 55, and Mark vi, 3, we find the name "Jude." In the lists of apostles given in Luke vi, 16; Acts i, 13, we find (translating literally) a name "Jude of James." But these words do not determine whether the man referred to was brother or son of James. We have no reason to identify the Apostle Jude with Jude our Lord's brother. Moreover, the writer of the epistle seems to separate himself from the apostles by his words in verses 17, 18: "Remember the words before spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they said to you, At the last time there will be mockers," etc. These words also suggest that Jude was somewhat later in time than the apostles. And this suggests further that the brothers of Christ were not sons of Joseph by an earlier wife, but younger sons of Joseph and Mary. The easiest explanation of the whole case is that the epistle before us claims to have been written, not by the Apostle Jude, but by a brother of James the Just and of Christ.

That, like James, Jude does not call himself here a brother of our Lord rather supports this claim. A writer who, at a later date, tried to pass off as written by Jude a work of his own or of some contemporary would have been less likely to have been deterred by delicacy from mentioning the relation of Jude to Jesus.

The Epistle of Jude is mentioned in the "Fragment of Muratori," but in somewhat ambiguous language. It is twice quoted at some length by Clement of Alexandria as written by Jude. Tertullian quotes it as written by Jude the Apostle. Origen quotes it several times; *e. g.*, "On Matthew": "Jude wrote a letter, of few verses, but full of powerful words of heavenly grace." Eusebius puts it, with the Epistle of James, among the disputed books. He says, in his "Church History," Book II, xxiii: "Not many of the ancients have mentioned it (the Epistle of James), and not even that called the Epistle of Jude, which is also one of the seven called catholic epistles. Nevertheless, we know that these, with the rest, are publicly used in most of the churches." Jerome writes, in his "Illustrious Men," chapter i: "Jude the brother of James left a small epistle indeed, which belongs to the seven catholic ones. And because in it he takes a testimony from the Book of Enoch, which is apocryphal, it is rejected by most. However, it has

already obtained such authority by antiquity and use that it is reckoned among the Sacred Scriptures."

This external attestation is not supported, owing to the silence of the New Testament about the professed writer of this epistle, by any internal evidence. On the other hand, we have proof that the epistle was current in the second century as written by the man whose name it bears, and as one of the Christian Scriptures. And against this evidence we have nothing to set. Therefore, with such confidence as the scantiness of the evidence permits, we may accept it as a genuine work of a brother of Jesus Christ.

In Jude 14, 15, words found in the apocryphal Book of Enoch are quoted as actually spoken by the patriarch. The portion from which they are taken was written probably about 170 B. C. The incident about the Archangel Michael is not found in the Old Testament. But I do not know that these references have any clear bearing on the genuineness of the epistle.

The provincial Council of Laodicea in 363 A. D. accepted as canonical, *i. e.*, belonging to the Christian Scriptures, all the books now included in the New Testament except the Book of Revelation, and no others. All, including this last, and no others, were accepted by the provincial Council of Carthage in 397 A. D.

REVIEW. We have found abundant evidence, external and internal, proving beyond possibility of doubt that the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians were actually written by the great apostle. This group of epistles thus became to us a sure standard with which to compare others attributed to him. And this comparison, taken in connection with much other evidence, proved decisively the genuineness of all thirteen epistles claiming to be his. We found, or pointed to, internal evidence which, taken in connection with the Epistles of Paul, assured us that the Fourth Gospel affords a trustworthy and most valuable account of the work and teaching of Christ; and that the First Epistle of John is a legitimate exposition of that teaching. This internal evidence, taken together with strong external attestation, gave us reasonable certainty that both Gospel and Epistle were, at least indirectly, from the pen of the Apostle John, and were clothed with his authority. Other accounts of the work and teaching of Christ, which by internal evidence and by comparison one with another, and with the writings of John and Paul, were proved to be trustworthy, we found in the three Synoptic Gospels, and we

found good reason to believe that these Gospels were authoritative records emanating from the first or second generations of the followers of Christ. We found, also, abundant proof of the trustworthiness and accuracy of the Book of Acts, and reliable evidence that it came, along with the Third Gospel, from a companion and friend of Paul. Around this well-authenticated group of documents, each of which was accepted with complete confidence by all early Christian writers, we found others with less abundant attestation, yet worthy of confidence, and of great value. One epistle we traced to the pen of James, brother of our Lord, the famous leader of the church at Jerusalem; and in it we found an all-important type of teaching different from, yet in close harmony with, and supplementing, those of Paul and John. Of the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, we found traces at the beginning of the second century: and its evidently early date and intrinsic worth gained for it at once a place in the sacred Canon. The Book of Revelation, we found accepted as written by the Apostle John, not universally but by witnesses reaching back to at least the middle of the second century; and this early testimony we were, even in spite of great dif-

ferences between it and the Fourth Gospel, unable to reject. We found a letter which was confidently accepted by all early Christian writers as from the Apostle Peter; and, although lack of internal evidence left this external attestation without further support, we found nothing against it. Considerable external evidence supported the claim of the short Epistle of Jude to have been written by a brother of James and of Christ. For the still shorter Second and Third Epistles attributed to John we found evidence, not abundant, but uncontested, and I think sufficient, that they came from the author of the First Epistle. The least attested of the writings of the New Testament, we found to be the Second Epistle, claiming to be written by the Apostle Peter.

In other words, we found in the New Testament a large inner circle of documents proved by decisive evidence to be trustworthy and very early records of the actual life and teaching of Christ, and genuine embodiments of the religious life and thought of his immediate followers; and around these a few short books, perhaps, taken together, one-sixtieth of the whole collection, of great interest, but not supported by decisive evidence.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARE OUR COPIES CORRECT?

WE now ask, To what extent do our English versions of the New Testament reproduce the sense intended by its original writers? This question resolves itself into two: (1) To what extent do the Greek texts used by the translators correspond with the Greek words actually written by the evangelists and apostles? and (2) To what extent do our English versions reproduce the meaning of the Greek text?

To answer the first question is the task of the department of scholarship known as Textual Criticism, or sometimes The Lower Criticism. Its work is to collect all early copies of the New Testament, or of parts of it, to decipher and compare them, and thus discover, as nearly as possible, the original text.

The evidence at our disposal consists of three kinds. (1) Early Greek manuscripts; and these are of two classes, Uncials, written in capital letters, and Cursives, in running hand. Roughly speaking, the uncials are earlier, and the cursives later, than 1000 A. D. Of the Gospels, six uncials contain the whole, four nearly the whole, eleven a great part, and many other smaller portions. For the rest of the New Testament, the number is less; least

of all for the Book of Revelation, namely, three containing the whole and two a great part. The earliest two uncials are from the fourth century, and probably from the former half of it. Of the cursives, including lectionaries or service books, there are, containing the whole or parts of the Gospels, some 2,200, and of the Epistles of Paul probably more than 600. (2) Ancient translations of the New Testament, which bear witness to the Greek text current when they were made. Of these, the most valuable are the Syriac, of which we have four versions and many manuscripts; three Egyptian versions known as the Coptic, Thebaic, and Bashmuri; and two Latin versions, namely, the Old Latin, of which we have one copy from the fourth and one from the fifth century and others later, and the Vulgate, of which we have valuable copies and which may be called the Authorized Version of the Roman Catholic Church. (3) Quotations in the writings of the Fathers. These are very abundant, in works written in the second and following centuries. But these works we possess only in copies made much later. Consequently this class of evidence, though sometimes very valuable, must be used

with great caution. For we cannot always be sure that we know what the Fathers actually wrote.

The testimony of these various witnesses has been carefully weighed and recorded. The earliest Greek copies, and some others, have been reprinted word for word; and some have been photographed page for page. Of a still larger number, we have collations, *i. e.*, published lists of their variations from a commonly adopted standard called the Received Text. We have also critical editions of the Greek Testament, giving not only a revised text, but, under each verse, the variations of the Greek manuscripts and versions and the more important quotations. Of these critical editions, I may mention those of Lachmann, in 1842-50 A. D.; Tischendorf, eighth edition, in 1869-72 A. D.; Tregelles, 1857-70 A. D.; and Westcott & Hort, in 1881 A. D.

What do these various witnesses, thus carefully interrogated, say about the state of the text of the New Testament? They reveal an immense number of variations. In almost every verse they appear. But a large proportion of these variations affect the meaning of the text very slightly or not at all. The number of important variations is comparatively small. On this point I may quote the testimony of Westcott & Hort in their "New Testament in Greek," Volume I, page 561: "If comparative trivialities, such as changes of order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names, and the like, are set aside, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt can hardly amount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament." In other words, the close agreement of almost innumerable copies proves beyond possibility of doubt that we have the Greek Testament in a form practically the same as that in which it left the hands of its original writers.

All the variations worthy of note are marked in the Revised Version. Where there is strong reason to doubt the correctness of the text used, a marginal note informs us that, *Many ancient authorities insert, or omit, some words given, or put others in their place.* Where the doubt is not great, but seems to the revisers worthy of record, it is indicated by the marginal phrase, *Some ancient authorities or some authorities insert or omit.* Where this last form is used, the doubt is very slight. Indeed, in some cases where the former is used, *e. g.*, Luke xxiv, 6, the doubt is hardly worth mentioning. Important and long variations are introduced with more precise marginal notes in Mark xvi, 9, John vii, 53. Where no marginal note is given, the Greek text adopted by the revisers, which has been published, may be accepted as, within narrow limits, correct.

Our second question is, Do our English versions reproduce fairly the text translated? The variety of translations will afford an answer. We have the Revised Version published in 1881 A. D., the Authorized Version published in 1611 A. D., and the Roman Catholic version published at Rheims in 1582 A. D.; three translations of very different origin, yet in the main they agree. We have in all versions the same portrait of Christ, the same Gospel, and the same expositions, and illustrations, and applications of it. These, therefore, must be due, not to translators, but to the original writers. Compare also the Latin Vulgate, as sanctioned by Popes Sixtus V. and Clement VIII., with Luther's German version. The same result will follow. And the theological differences between Roman Catholics and Protestants are vouchers for the comparative correctness of that which they agree to accept. I do not say that, wherever these witnesses agree, we may rely on their correctness; but that they agree in the main, and in the main may be accepted.

At the same time, we must remember that every translation is imperfect. It is a lens which absorbs and deflects, while it transmits, the light. In every translation something is lost in accuracy, clearness, and force. And translations sometimes err—not merely in failing to give the writer's full meaning, but by putting other thoughts in place of his. Not a few readers, and even writers, have fallen into errors of doctrine by using the English Authorized Version. Fortunately, this danger has been much lessened by the publication of the Revised Version, which, whatever may be its defects, reproduces far more accurately than does any earlier translation the thoughts which the writers of the Bible intended their words to convey.

An effective safeguard against doctrinal error in using the English Bible is to compare constantly one part of it with another. Hold with great caution any doctrine rarely taught. The Spirit of God has made provision for defects of translation by teaching the vital truths so frequently and so variously that there need be no serious mistake. The meaning of one statement is often determined by another given in proof. The line of thought is usually a safe guide to the meaning of sentences and words. Each effort to grasp their meaning and reasoning will bring the student into closer mental fellowship with the Sacred Writers, and thus explain their words. And each spiritual effort to grasp and appropriate the blessings promised, and to carry out in practical life the lessons taught, will open a way to further and greater lessons and to richer blessings. To the devout student, the English Bible will be in very truth the Voice and Word of God.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PLACE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

WE have now learned that all, or nearly all, the books of the New Testament are products of the first and second generations of the followers of Christ. They are also the only literary products of those generations which have come down to us. They are records of the life, and work, and teaching of Christ, expositions of his teaching, and applications of it to the actual life of his early followers. Upon these recorded facts, and especially upon his resurrection, rests the divine authority of his teaching and of his promise of life eternal to all those who put faith in him: for the facts are the proof of his divine mission and unique dignity. Consequently, upon the historic truth of these documents rests the faith and hope of the servants of Christ.

The historic truthfulness of the New Testament must be tested as we should test any other documents of the past; but with greater reverence and care proportionate to the greater interests involved. Its divine authority, resting as it does upon its historic truth, cannot be appealed to in proof of its truth. Else we argue in a circle. And it need not be thus appealed to, for apart from such divine authority, the documents of the New Testament contain in themselves complete proof of their substantial historic truthfulness. Its theological teaching and arguments must be carefully investigated according to the laws of human thought and language.

The letters which we have traced to the pen of Paul reveal to us the lovely homage with which he bowed before Christ as one infinitely greater and nearer to God than the greatest and best of men, a homage to Christ involving a new conception of God; and his firm belief that Christ had, in bodily form, been raised from the dead. They embody, also, his conception of the Gospel of Christ. They thus compel us to believe, either that Christ actually is what Paul confidently believed him to be, or that the greatest of his apostles, the founder of the Christianity of Europe, was in deep error touching his Master and the Gospel he preached, and touching the nature of God. The other books of the New Testament, from other writers, and some of them manifestly independent of the teaching of Paul, prove that his faith was shared by all the Christian writers of the first half-century after the death of Christ, whose works have come down to us. They thus prove that Paul's conception of Christ and the Gospel was not peculiar to himself. They compel us to believe, either that Christ is, in a unique

sense, the Son of God, or that all the men who gained for him the homage of mankind, and through whose agency he became the Savior of the world, were in deep error touching both Christ and God. The impossibility of this last suggestion is complete proof that the picture of Christ and the account of the Gospel given in the New Testament are historically and theologically true.

The place of the New Testament in the Christian life is now evident. It contains the documentary evidence for the unique claims of Christ and for the Gospel he preached. It is not itself a new revelation, for it contains nothing which was not known to men before a line of the New Testament was written, but it is a record and exposition of the supreme revelation given to men in Christ, and of certain facts needful to prove its divine origin and authority—a record sufficiently extensive and accurate for all the spiritual purposes for which the revelation was given.

The above argument, we may press one step farther. Had not the books of the New Testament been written, or had they not survived, we should not have had the solid historical foundation on which our faith and hope now rest securely. Without this confident faith and hope, there could be now no robust and strong Christian life. Christianity would almost certainly have been lost in the chaos of strange beliefs which arose in the second century. From that confusion the Christian faith was saved, as we read in the works of Irenæus and Tertullian, by appeal to the sacred documents. Without these, it would have perished. If so, the great purpose for which God sent his Son into the world, and for which Christ died, would not have been attained; and the Incarnation of the Son of God would have been a failure. Such failure is inconceivable. We, therefore, infer with certainty that the New Testament was itself an essential part of God's eternal purpose of salvation; that he who before the world was, resolved to give his Son to die, in order to save man and to build up the eternal kingdom of God, purposed everything needful for that end, and, therefore, resolved to secure for man a correct and sufficient record of the work and teaching of Christ.

A similar line of argument would prove that the Old Testament contains documentary evidence for earlier divine revelations preparatory to the great revelation in Christ, and is a divinely given record of these earlier and preparatory manifestations. In other words, the



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whole Bible occupies a unique place in human literature as a divinely given record of special and historical revelations from God to man.

Although, as we have seen, they were written to fulfill a divine purpose, the books of the New Testament were written by human hands; and these were guided, as we learn from Luke i, 1-4, and elsewhere, by ordinary motives of good men. These men and these motives were thus the means by which God accomplished this part of his great purpose. Now, the Holy Spirit is that Divine Person who comes into immediate contact with the mind and thought of men, and who works out in them the purposes of God. We may, therefore, infer that through his agency, moving them to write, and guiding and guarding them in writing, God secured for men the needful record of the Gospel of Christ. This inference finds remarkable confirmation in Acts xxviii, 25; Hebrews x, 15, where the Old Testament is quoted as a testimony of the Holy Spirit. Since, as we have seen, the Bible occupies a unique place in human literature and in the purpose of God, this influence of the Holy Spirit must also have been unique. We speak of it as the Inspiration of Holy Scripture.

The unique honor paid to the New Testament by the early Christians is abundantly attested by quotations in the works of Irenæus and of all later Christian writers. Among the other accounts of Christ referred to in Luke i, 1, the four Gospels stood alone as having spe-

cial authority. The same authority is given to the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul. Here and there one or two other works are quoted in a similar manner. But these never gained wide acceptance; and the books now recognized alone remain as being, in a special and official sense, the Christian Scriptures.

We may sum up the results of this inquiry by speaking of the New Testament, not as the Pearl of Great Price—this title must be reserved for the personal and incarnate Word—but as the casket containing that pearl and conveying it to us. Without the casket, the pearl would not have reached us. But he who gave the pearl gave also the casket. In itself it is a thing of divine beauty. But its glory is as nothing compared with the treasure within. The casket is locked; and none can open it except its divine Author. But wherever the casket is, there is the key. To all sincere inquirers, the Interpreter will open the hidden treasures, and thus make them rich indeed. The real worth of the New Testament is that in its pages we see the face of Christ, and hear his voice, and experience his power, and thus enter into abiding fellowship with him.

In the foregoing outline I have written without reserve, as a student to fellow-students, a worshiper to fellow-worshipers. We have nothing to hide. The more fully the facts of the case are known, the more firmly will our feet stand upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture.

Jos. Agar Beet



CHAPTER I.

THE MATERIALS.

IF a clergyman nowadays wishes to send a letter to a church in which he formerly preached, he takes up a sheet of paper, opens his inkstand, and dips the goose quill, or steel pen, or the gold pen into the ink — or perhaps he uses a fountain pen. If we could go back 1,840 years and stand at the side of the Apostle Paul, we should not find a metal pen in his hand, or in the hand of his secretary, and the ink would not be precisely like our ink, and the paper would be quite different from ours. Instead of one of our pens we should see a reed pen in his hand. Go to the river in the autumn, cut a ripe stalk of reed-grass, let it dry, and then sharpen a piece of the round stem into a pen-point, with a slit in it. You will find that you can write beautifully with it, if you trim it off neatly. Some people draw pictures with reed pens. Now, the reeds are a little different in different countries, but to all intents and purposes it was with just such a reed pen that the letters of Paul were written. His ink was probably a homemade ink — that is to say, an ink that he mixed for himself by adding water to soot that had been rubbed fine in gum arabic. As for the paper, that was quite another thing. It was, it is true, smooth enough to write upon, and light colored so as to show the black ink clearly, but still it was not our paper. They called it "papyrus" (the same word that we now write "paper"), because it was made out of the papyrus plant. Now, this papyrus was of all kinds and sizes, just as our paper is. There were coarse kinds for handbills, and fine kinds for letters, and intermediate kinds for all sorts of books, and accounts, and notices. Pretty and smooth as this papyrus was, it had one bad quality: it cracked easily. An old letter, as we know, sometimes cracks apart in the folds even when the paper is fairly good, but a papyrus letter could not be folded and unfolded or rolled up and unrolled often without cracking all over. That is one thing that prevented the original letters of Paul from lasting very long. The Thessalonians, or Corinthians, or Galatians received his letters and read them and lent them, perhaps, to a neighboring church and the papyrus soon began to fall apart, so that

the churches must have very soon copied the letters, and nobody is likely to have troubled himself about the worn-out originals.

For the longer Epistles and for the Gospels, of course, a number of sheets of papyrus were necessary. At that day they did not write letters on a number of separate sheets as we do, nor did they make books in leaves. They pasted the sheets together on the right and left edges, so as to make what we might call a broad ribbon, and this was rolled up. Such rolls were sometimes many feet long. The writing was in narrow columns so that in reading it was not necessary to have much of the roll open. A reader rolled one end together — the end he had read — column for column, and rolled the other end open so that he could read the next column. The back of the roll was blank, for it would have cracked and torn apart very quickly if they had tried to roll it in two different ways. In the narrow columns they tried to save space, and even went so far as not to leave any space between the words at all. One letter followed upon another letter and one word upon another, and it was only now and then that a clear sign showed the end of a sentence. It was not easy to read a manuscript of this kind quickly, but at that time people were not in a hurry, and they were not distressed if a good thing had to be brought out slowly.

When the Church began to understand that the end of the world would not come immediately, and to see that the writings of the first teachers would have a lasting value, and would be read and reread in the churches for an indefinite time, the people who copied the New Testament writings gave up the papyrus, so far as their means allowed, and copied these valuable books on parchment. Parchment is a skin — usually sheepskin — well cured and rubbed smooth, and often whitened with chalk. This parchment was far better than papyrus. If a man has some especially valuable writing in our day, like a college diploma, or a deed, or a will, he does not have it put on paper, but on parchment, so that it may last a long, long while. It was just the same with these priceless books of the Christian Church. As soon as they saw that the books must needs endure,

they copied them on parchment, if they could get it. During the second century, between the years 100 and 200 A. D., the Four Gospels were brought together into one collection, Paul's Epistles were gathered together, and the Catholic Epistles. At the close of that century, accordingly as large or small rolls happened to be chosen, the New Testament, as we call it, could be written off in four, or ten, or a still larger number of rolls. If there were only four rolls, one for the Gospels, one for the Acts and the Catholic Epistles, one for Paul's Epistles, and one for the Revelation, then the Gospel roll and the Pauline roll would be very large. It is likely, therefore, that the separate Gospels were usually on separate rolls, that the Catholic Epistles had a roll to themselves, and that Paul's Epistles were divided into several rolls.

Possibly somewhere about the year 300 A. D., bookmakers found out that instead of the long, clumsy rolls that must be rolled open and shut to find particular passages, it would be possible to bring the text of long writings into separate leaves bound together like our books. With papyrus that did not work very well, because it cracked apart so easily. So far as I am aware, but a single manuscript on papyrus is known that was made in book form. It is a few leaves of Zechariah and Malachi. The owner is willing to sell it, but he is right in asking a large price for it. I wish somebody would buy it for America. Of course, there were many leaf-books made out of papyrus, but they did not last long as a rule. Parchment, on the contrary, was just the stuff for a leaf-book. It was smooth, and it was stiff enough, and it was so tough that generations could turn the leaves of the book without cracking it apart. In the old rolls everybody was used to writing and reading the narrow columns that were so convenient because the reader could hold in each hand a rolled-up part of the book and still read the column in between; it would have been tiring to hold the hands far apart. When they began to make leaf-books they do not seem to have thought at first that it would be as well to make broader columns of writing. In consequence of this the oldest two large manuscripts of the New Testament in Greek, the "*Codex Sinaiticus*" and the "*Codex Vaticanus*," have very narrow columns, just as if they were on rolls and not on leaf-books.

Let us have a look at the "*Codex Sinaiticus*." It is one of the most remarkable manuscripts known. It contains a large part of the Old Testament and the whole of the New Testament. Tischendorf found a few leaves of it in the year 1844 in the convent of St. Catharine on Mount Sinai. He tried for years to find the rest, but in vain. The leaves that he saw be-

longed to the Old Testament. When, finally, in the year 1859, he discovered the remaining leaves he was delighted to see that they contained also the whole of the New Testament, as well as other valuable matter. He went to Cairo and begged the monastery there to send to Sinai for the manuscript, and it was at once brought by a swift camel rider to Cairo. Here Tischendorf received eight leaves at a time, copied them, with the help of two Germans, and gave them back so as to get the next eight leaves. After several months they gave him the whole manuscript so that he might publish it and then hand over the original to the emperor of Russia, all of which Tischendorf did. It is now in the imperial library at St. Petersburg. If we open the "*Codex Sinaiticus*," we find on each page four of those narrow columns, so that the two pages with their eight columns are like a good long piece from one of the old rolls. The "*Codex Vaticanus*" is much like the "*Codex Sinaiticus*." It has been in the Vatican library at Rome for centuries, but it is only within the last thirty years that it has been carefully studied. It has three columns on each page, and six on the two pages, when you open the book. This codex contains much of the New Testament, but not all. These two manuscripts—the Sinaitic and the Vatican—are by far the most important as well as the oldest of our large copies of the New Testament. They seem to have been written in the fourth century. We find in the writings of Eusebius an account of certain manuscripts that he prepared in 331 A. D., and it seems possible that these two manuscripts belong to this very collection. The way of it was this. The great Constantine, the first Roman emperor who came to the conclusion that it would pay to favor the Christians, commanded Eusebius to cause fifty splendid Bible manuscripts to be made so that he, the emperor, could give them to the churches. Eusebius did as he was told and he says, apparently, that the manuscripts were written in three and four columns. Now, of course, other manuscripts were written in three and four columns, and yet, when these two large and fine copies seem to be from that time, and when we reflect that not very many people could pay for the good and big parchment leaves, and for the careful writing, it is not at all improbable that, as Tischendorf thought, these two really are from among those fifty manuscripts. The "*Sinaiticus*" and the "*Vaticanus*" were written only about 300 years after the time of Christ and they are now 1,500 years old. Verily, they have a chance to tell us a great deal about the words that are in the New Testament. The manuscripts from which they were copied may possibly have been written less than 100 years

after the Crucifixion. If we suppose that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans in the spring of the year 59 A. D., the original roll of papyrus may have lasted twenty, or forty, or sixty years, according to the way in which it was used more or less carefully by the elders of the church at Rome. If it lasted sixty years, the manuscript from which Eusebius' scribes copied some of the fifty Bibles might have been copied directly from it or have been compared with it. At any rate, if the "*Sinaiticus*" and the

"*Vaticanus*" were chiefly copied from the rolls of the second century, it is quite plain that there need not have been very many steps between them and the original books, so that they are exceedingly valuable for us. The "*Codex Beza*," a Greek-Latin manuscript now at Cambridge, England, in the university library, and the "*Codex Claromontanus*," a Greek-Latin manuscript now in the national library at Paris, were both written in the sixth century.

CHAPTER II.

THE WRITING.

WE have already spoken of the two great Greek manuscripts, the Sinaitic and the Vatican, and we have also referred to the "*Codex Beza*" and the "*Codex Claromontanus*." These four belong to the older and more weighty class of manuscripts—to the Uncials as they are called. The name Uncial means that they are written in Uncial or, as we should say to-day, in capital letters. Up to about the year 1000 A. D. the Christians usually had their Biblical manuscripts, as great treasures, written in these capital letters, and, as said above, the words, as a rule, were not separated from each other. In the earlier books the letters are all of one size, but in the later ones there are larger letters for paragraphs and chapters. If we count all the known fragments of such New Testament manuscripts, we have to-day over a hundred. They are by no means alike in appearance. Some, like the "*Sinaiticus*" and the "*Vaticanus*," have the most delicate little letters, closely packed together in their columns. Others have huge letters that seem to spread themselves out like opening flowers. Some have letters with great heavy strokes, and the letters stand crooked, perhaps leaning forward or to the right, or perhaps leaning toward the left, according as the fashion of the day or of the country called for the slope of the letters. Some of them are on parchment that has been dyed a deep dark purple, and they have silver ink instead of black ink, which would not show on the dark purple. In these purple and silver manuscripts, the names of God and of Jesus are written in letters of gold. Think how beautiful they must have been when they were new! The people who ordered such manuscripts as these were willing to pay a great deal for the work. Such luxurious books were also splendidly bound. Very few of the manuscripts that we now possess are still in their old bindings, for they have almost all literally, or figuratively, gone through the wars. But well-to-do

Christians, and rich churches, and monasteries bound their Biblical volumes gorgeously. The heavy oaken boards of the sides were covered with silk or velvet and then silver corners were put on them. Sometimes, indeed, the boards were completely covered with silver. And then on the corner pieces and in the middle precious stones were set. Very often a large silver crucifix was put in the middle. In every way they tried to show how much they valued the Holy Scriptures. It is true that the books nowadays are usually bereft of their ornaments, yet if they have not been rebound in Western Europe, we still often see remnants of the former elegance, patches of silk or satin, the marks where the metal corners were, and the holes that once contained the precious stones. Even when the binding has been torn off, or has been plundered of its valuables, the last fly leaf sometimes still gives the name of the man who bound the volume and the name of the man who paid for the binding, showing how much stress was laid upon it. A few of the old Uncial manuscripts are, however, very hard to read. They are what are called "palimpsests." After they had been used for years and the writing had become very pale, a man who wished for a new book used the leaves—the parchment leaves—of the old book precisely as if they had been clean, fresh parchment, and calmly wrote the new writing over the old writing as if it had never existed. In one way this was a great pity, because we care more for the older and less for the younger books. But then we must remember that if the old parchment had not been used in this way, it would probably have been thrown away outright and then we should never have seen it, never have been able to read it all. But it is very hard work to study out the old letters so faded and dim underneath the bold letters of the new writing. I have spent hours over a very small piece of a palimpsest seeking for sure traces of the ancient words that are worth

so much to us. One of the most famous palimpsests is in the national library at Paris. It is called the "*Codex Ephraemi*," because the upper new writing contains a Greek translation of the words of Ephraim the Syrian. There are three or four manuscripts written in short lines according to the sense, so that the lines make, in a certain measure, a punctuation, but that wasted entirely too much room and this method never came into general use.

By far the larger number of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament are not written in Uncial, or capital letters, but in small letters as we should say. After the tenth century—after the year 1000—the capital letters were used for the beginning of books or of chapters, but the body of the manuscript was written in a running hand, many of the letters being joined to each other. Certain large volumes of Scripture lessons were still usually copied in capital letters, but that was in order to make them more stately, and, perhaps, to make it easier to see the writing by candlelight in the church services. Many a New Testament manuscript has spots of wax on it from the candles in church. That, of course, does not mean that the great altar candles dropped wax on the pages—that was impossible. But in the dark the readers often took little short candles and held them close to the book as they read line by line, and thus wax often dropped on the writing. I have seen the reader in a Greek church do this, and, much as I felt like blaming him for his carelessness, I could not but be glad to have so clear a display of the way in which wax-drops came to fall on the manuscripts. But we must go back to the manuscripts written in a running hand. I said that they were the larger number, and you will agree with me when you learn that as against the hundred and more Uncial manuscripts, there exist at least 3,000 of the Minuscules, as they are called, or small-letter manuscripts, and probably when all the libraries of the

East are catalogued we shall have 5,000 or 6,000. Of those that have been carefully, or, perhaps, only hastily examined, there are, I suppose, at least 1,300 that contain the Gospels, several hundred that contain the Acts and Catholic Epistles, and several hundred the Pauline Epistles. It was stated above that the Uncial manuscripts were the most valuable. Nevertheless, the Minuscules are not worthless. They will tell us, when they are carefully examined, a great deal about the history of the text. They will show how each country and each century copied the New Testament, and will thus help us to understand all the steps that lead back to the original writing. There is still a great deal of work to be done here, for it will take a great many hands to compare the text and to examine carefully the character of these thousands of volumes. These Minuscules are as different from each other as the Uncials are. Some of them are in a very small, fine hand, and others are in bold round letters. In some the ink is very pale, in others a deep brown, and in still others a sooty black. The capital letters at the beginning of books and of chapters are usually in red ink. Not seldom, however, they are in several colors, or even beautifully painted with all manner of figures. For example, a large B is made by painting a man and a big snake touching his feet with the tail, then bowed out in a curve and coming back to go round his waist, and finally touching the man's head with his open jaws. An A is made by two fish leaning against each other and crossed by a little fish. An O is made by a single big fish hollowed out, or by two fish curved to come together with their heads and tails. I have seen an A made by a picture of a man carrying a bucket in his right hand stretched somewhat toward the back; his right foot touching the bucket made a rather slanting crossbar. In one manuscript an E is made by a combination of two birds and two hares, all resting on a beast's head.

CHAPTER III.

PICTURES.

IT is also common to find in these volumes pictures—large full-page pictures—of the four evangelists. Each one sits and writes away at the beginning of his Gospel. Such pictures are sometimes profusely decorated with heavy gold leaf wherever the painter could find an excuse for putting it on. If a writing desk or a closet be in the picture, it is possible that a door ajar below shows a big bottle of ink and a pile of parchment ready to be written upon. On top of the desk lie the

scribe's tools—a couple of extra reed pens, a knife to sharpen the pens, an inkstand with black and one with red ink, a pair of compasses to measure off the lines, a leaden wheel to dent the lines into the parchment without cutting it, a brush or two for painting the pictures, and a bit of pumice stone to rub off a false letter or to polish a rough place in the parchment. In one manuscript I saw a basket with *rolls* of parchment, and I think that picture must have been copied from some old picture that had

been painted when rolls were used instead of leaf-books. If I am not very much mistaken, one of the most interesting of all the pictures in these manuscripts is one that is frequently found at the beginning of the Gospel of John. According to tradition, the Apostle John was very old when he wrote his Gospel, and it is said that he did not use the pen himself but dictated the words to a pupil of his, just as Paul dictated many a letter to his young friends who were with him. Now, the name of the pupil to whom John dictated his Gospel was Prochorus. The picture gives the whole story. For God's spirit or power inspired the apostle and this is portrayed by a cloud in the upper right-hand corner of the picture from which a hand comes forth pointing toward John, and the hand may bear the inscription: "The Hand of the Lord." If there be no hand, there will at least be rays of light gleaming forth from the cloud as if God's spirit became visible in the overshadowing light. This is the heavenly part of the picture. Then we see the apostle standing in the attitude of attentive listening. One hand he stretches upward toward the heavenly apparition as a sign that he thus receives from heaven the message. With the other hand he points downward toward his pupil. And, finally, his pupil sits in the corner of the picture below and writes what the apostle dictates. By the pupil's head stands the inscription, Prochorus. Is that not a pretty way to tell all about it?

Another manuscript—in the national library at Paris—has a very ingenious arrangement of colors. The words that read straight along in the text, that tell how Jesus went here and there, who came to him, and the like—all these words are in bright vermilion. Of course, that is then the larger part of the text in many places. If, however, an angel, or Mary the mother of Jesus, or one of the disciples, says anything, that is put in a clear blue color. The words of Jesus are in a rich crimson. And finally, the words of the Pharisees, and of the devil, and of all enemies of Jesus are in deep black. The moment you open a page you see the character of the words on it.

The men who copied the manuscripts in olden times were not always as careful as they should have been to copy correctly. Who knows whether you and I would have done better if we had been in their place? But some of them knew how easy it was to make mistakes—or, we might say, how impossible it was, and is, not to make mistakes—and they always went over their work again and compared it with the manuscript from which they had just copied it. It may be that they did this as they went through the book again to put in the capital letters in red ink, and I have

thus sometimes seen the corrections made in red. If they had written a letter or a word too much, they put little dots above, below or around it. If a word were wrong, they either scraped it off and wrote the right one in its place, or they put dots over it and then wrote the right word in the margin. Not infrequently the scribes took some other old manuscript—not the one from which they had copied, but some other good one. If they found a different word in this, they sometimes wrote it in as above; sometimes, however, if they were not perfectly certain which word was right, they placed a sign of some kind over the word in the text and then wrote the other word in the margin with this same sign. In such a case a following scribe who copied from this book might easily write both words in the text—and we do find just such cases—thinking that it had been left out of the text by mistake. In some places several words were put in thus alongside of, and not instead of, the words they were intended to replace.

I have said that the scribes who were careful compared their copies with good manuscripts. Now, we know that there was once a very fine library at Cæsarea in Palestine, brought together, or at any rate specially cared for, by Pamphilus at the end of the third century. A few volumes still contain statements that they, or volumes from which they were copied, had been carefully compared with the best manuscripts in the library of Pamphilus at Cæsarea. It is further of interest that Eusebius, to whom Constantine sent the order for those fifty fine Bibles, was bishop of Cæsarea and that he was so warm and devoted a friend of Pamphilus that he was and is still named Pamphilus' Eusebius. In other copies we find a note telling of their text being compared with that of the best manuscripts that were kept on the holy mountain at Jerusalem. More than one Christian scholar gave himself up to doing all that he could to make the manuscripts of the New Testament books exact and in every way well fitted for use. One named Euthalius attended particularly to the letters of Paul and gathered all the lists of chapters and so forth that he could find, or made new lists for himself, so that his copies contained as an introduction a long description of Paul's life, and journeys, and martyrdom, then a special description of his letters, and besides that each letter was provided with a good preface, and with a full list of chapters that gave even the headings of divisions within the chapters—if the chapters happened to be very long—and a full list of all quotations that occurred in the letter. These quotations, mostly from the Old Testament, were numbered as carefully as the chapters were. And to make all his work as

complete and as correct as possible Euthalius even counted all the syllables of all these lists and put at the end of each the number of syllables, or rather of lines of a given length, so that any reader could count for himself and see if everything was there. I have just spoken of

chapters that were used in the fourth century, for Euthalius flourished, perhaps, at the end of the fourth or in the middle of the fifth century, and the chapters were in use before his time, but you must not think that these were our chapters.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTERS.

OUR chapters, in fact, never appear in the Greek manuscripts properly so-called. There are only a few Greek manuscripts, of a late date and written in Western Europe, in which the scribe put down the division that we have—a division that was made in the Latin Bible and then transferred to our Bibles. If we take up the Gospels we find that in Greek manuscripts Matthew had 68 chapters, Mark 48, Luke 83, and John 18, so that they are very different from our 28 chapters for Matthew, 16 for Mark, 24 for Luke, and 21 for John. Besides these large chapters the Greek had little chapters that were ingeniously made to contain the separate pieces of the text, divided according to the relation of the Gospels to each other. I must explain this more clearly. The readers wished to know how far what was in one of the Gospels was to be found in another, or in others of the four, and they wished to know where to find it. For this purpose each Gospel was cut up by Eusebius into small chapters, of which Matthew had 355, Mark 233, Luke 342, and John 232, and a chapter always stops the moment the words are no longer to be found in precisely the same Gospels. Take, for example, the end of the tenth chapter of Matthew: verses 34 to 36 are chapter 95, found in both Matthew and Luke, in Luke as chapter 160; verses 37 and 38 are also found only in Matthew and Luke, but they are made a separate chapter—96—because they stand in another place in Luke, namely, as chapters 182 and 184; verse 39 is chapter 97, which is found in Matthew, Luke (chapter 211), and John (chapter 105); verse 40 is chapter 98, which is in all four Gospels—Matthew, Mark (chapter 96), Luke (chapter 116), and John (chapters 40, 111, 120, 129, 131, 144), showing that John had used the material in his own way; verse 41 is only in Matthew, and is numbered chapter 99; and finally, verse 42 (or chapter 100) is found only in Matthew and in Mark (chapter 98). In order to be able to tell at once where the chapter stood in the other Gospels, Eusebius made ten lists—canons as he called them—and put in the first list the chapters of Matthew that were found in *all* the other Gospels,

with the corresponding chapters on the same line, and then under each of these chapters in the margin he placed a red *a*, which stood for "one." Hence at Matthew 40, mentioned above, you would find on the margin a, which means that 98 is in list one, and on turning to list one you would have found 98 in the Matthew column and opposite to it 96 in the Mark column, 116 in the Luke column, and those six (given above) in the John column. The second list was for the chapters that are found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke; the third for those in Matthew, Luke, and John; the fourth, Matthew, Mark, and John; the fifth, Matthew and Luke; the sixth, Matthew and Mark; the seventh, Matthew and John (only seven chapters); the eighth, Luke and Mark; the ninth, Luke and John, and the tenth, the chapters that are only contained in a single Gospel. It is a pity that our Bibles to-day are not arranged with such divisions on the margin.

Our verses are much more modern even than the chapters. They were made, or divided off, by Robert Stephanus or Robert Étienne, a great French printer. He did the work on a horseback journey from Paris to Lyons, probably not while riding but while resting. The first edition in which the verses appeared was his edition of the year 1551, a lovely little edition in two volumes; it is very rare, indeed. The Book of Acts, and the Catholic Epistles, and Paul's Epistles had also their own chapters in the Greek New Testament, but there is nothing peculiarly interesting about the division. But the Revelation had an interesting reason for its division which was the work of Andrew, a bishop at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, Asia Minor—not Eusebius' Cæsarea. In the first place, he divided the whole of Revelation into twenty-four books, or words, or discourses, according to the number of the elders,¹ and then, as if he regarded each discourse as an elder, he said each one of the twenty-four had a body, a soul, and a spirit, and, therefore, he divided each discourse into three chapters, making 72 chapters in all. Besides the chapter division, the

¹ Revelation iv. 4.

manuscripts frequently give the division for the church-lessons; for example, 116 in Matthew, 71 in Mark, 114 in Luke, and 67 in John. That leads us, however, to a somewhat different class of books—to the lectionaries.

It was above observed in passing that the lesson-books, or lectionaries, for reading in the churches, were written in capital letters even after the other Biblical manuscripts came to be written in small letters. That agreed with the large size of these books and with the heavy ornamentation inside and outside. Each lesson usually had a very beautiful great letter at the beginning, and these letters were sometimes exquisitely painted in miniature in gold and colors. One book held the Gospel lessons and one the lessons from the Acts and the epistles. The former was called, and in the Greek church to-day still is called, simply "The Gospel," and the latter "The Apostle." Let us open "The Gospel." We find that it begins with the first chapter and the first verse of the Gospel of John, as appointed for Easter Sunday. "For the Holy and Great Sunday of the Passover," is the heading, and then follows "According to John": "In the beginning was the word," and so on up to the end of the seventeenth verse. After this come the Gospel lessons from Easter to Whitsuntide, from the Passover to Pentecost, almost all of which are taken from the Gospel of John. In "The Apostle" the Book of Acts was read from Easter to Whitsuntide, and we know from Chrysostom that that was the custom at Constantinople in his day. On Whitmonday the Gospel lessons from Matthew begin and last until the sixteenth or the seventeenth Sunday thereafter, although the week-day lessons for the latter part, say, from the eleventh week, are drawn from Mark. On the Greek New Year at September the lessons were taken from Luke, and these continued up to just before the beginning of Lent, with week-day lessons again from Mark in the last few weeks. In Lent there are lessons from Mark, and special

lessons for all the chief days, closing with the lessons for Holy Week, including twelve Gospels of the Passion and four Gospels for the third, fifth, sixth, and ninth hours on Good Friday. That is the first part of "The Gospel," the part for the movable feasts. The second part is for the fixed days and saints' days and begins at "New Year" or September first with the lesson for the day of Simon Stylites. It then goes through the months with Christmas and Epiphany as great days, and ends on August 31st.

For "The Apostle" it is only necessary to add that the Epistle to the Romans began after Pentecost and that then the various epistles were brought forward as need might be, without special subdivision, until Lent. It is easy to see that such a series of lessons scarcely omits anything in the New Testament, with the exception of the Book of Revelation, which as we have said, does not appear at all. These lectionaries then must be consulted so that we may learn what text the church used in its services. It will, I think, sometimes appear that they offer a very old text, just as the Psalter in the English Prayer Book gives us a translation that has long passed away in the Bibles generally used. By the way, the earliest printed Greek lectionaries are, for comparison with the text, quite as good as some of the manuscripts, for they were taken from manuscripts and had nothing to do with the editions that were printed at Alcalá, and Basel, and Paris. Furthermore, it really should be emphasized that for the majority of the members of the Greek Church these lesson-books were the New Testament, since they were too poor to have Bibles of their own, or too ignorant to read them, and could only take that which was offered to them in the services of the church. But even thus they often knew enough of the Bible to put to shame people in our day who have beautiful Bibles but do not read them, and who pay little heed to what they hear in church.

CHAPTER V.

TRANSLATIONS.

WHEN we are trying to find out what the original words in the Greek New Testament are, we dare not neglect the translations into other languages, for as we have already said, many of these translations or versions are very ancient, and then, too, they were made in different countries and, therefore, help us to reach a widely spread tradition. Palestine is in Syria, and the language that Jesus and his disciples spoke was a

later kind of Hebrew, the Aramaic language, which is also very closely related to Syriac or is, if you like, a kind of Syriac. The earliest Christians were, then, in general terms Syrian Jews, and we may be sure that there were not a few of them in Antioch and perhaps even in Edessa and Nisibis in Eastern Syria. These Syrian Christians undoubtedly needed a Syriac New Testament very soon—as soon as they learned that there was a Greek New

Testament. I think it most likely that they translated the books into Syriac before the end of the second century, and I regard it as possible that many of the books were translated before the end of the first century. We may be sure that the Syriac text had a special charm for them in the thought that it was almost precisely the language that Jesus had used as he went about from Galilee to Jerusalem, and back again, and to Perea, and to the neighborhood of Tyre. In the place where our Bibles have an Aramaic expression, like "Rabbi," "Talitha Cumi," the Syriac translation did not add, as the Greek does, and as our Bibles do, a translation of these words, for they were Syriac already and every reader understood them. This very nearness of the language to the language used by Jesus, and the fact that thus the Syriac translation stood so close to the cradle of Christianity and to the traditions cherished in the circles that centered around the original disciples, the twelve, undoubtedly did much to further that correcting and modifying work upon the text which we have found to be peculiar to the time of the earliest tradition by word of mouth. No one will then be surprised to hear that the text which we find in the "*Codex Bazaræ*" and in the "*Codex Claromontanus*" is much like the text found in some manuscripts of the Syriac translation. I suppose that these manuscripts represent one of the oldest forms of Syriac text.

It is, in this connection, of weight to observe that at the beginning of the Christian era the intercourse between Italy and Syria, between Rome and Antioch, was very frequent indeed. Rome was the first capital of the Roman empire, but Antioch was the second, the eastern capital. Furthermore, we must remember that Antioch was a city of great culture, and, finally, that it was a central point for Christianity and Christian missions. There the name "Christian" was first given. Thence Barnabas and Paul, and Paul again and again, set out for their preaching journeys, and thither they returned, even though they touched the mother city Jerusalem on the way. Add these three things together—Roman sub-capital, high culture, Christian central city—and you will see how of necessity it must follow, and actually did come to pass, that Antioch and then, with her, her sister Syrian capital, Edessa, became the seat of great Christian schools. These schools paid, then, at least at a later day, much attention to the text of the Bible, and it is not yet possible for us to say just how early they began these special studies. The thought is worth considering that the condition of their New Testament text in the second century, as compared with some manuscripts which they knew must be good, led to their careful and

painfully exact treatment of the text, both of this and of the Old Testament. We may also remark that their work on the text was, so far as we can judge, much like the Massoretic work upon the Hebrew Scriptures, and that also fits in well with their Semitic relations to Judaism and to early Christianity. As a result of this we shall find that the Syrian church, with its central Syro-Greek city Antioch, took an important part in the history of the Greek text. They revised the Syriac text itself, but they appear to have been so judicious as first to revise the Greek text. If they knew the Greek text to be uncertain or wrong, their first duty was to make it right and then to translate as well as they could. It was in a measure the same, for example, when the American and English committees, who issued the revised English Version of the Bible in 1881, found that they must very often go back and correct, or determine surely, the Greek text before they could say what the proper English translation should be. Such a revision of the Greek and then of the Syrian text was probably made by the scholars of Antioch about the middle of the second century. At the beginning of the sixth century, a later revision of the Syrian text was made, and this was again revised at the beginning of the seventh century, but the result of these revisions did not change the main Syrian text, for the revised manuscripts were copied by themselves and the old ones by themselves. Before we leave the Syriac translation we must call attention to one interesting fact. It is well known, in the history of the collection of the books of the New Testament, that the Old Syriac manuscripts did not contain the Second Epistle of Peter, the Second and Third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, or the Revelation. But we must go farther and observe that they also omit Luke xxii, 17, 18; John viii, 1-11, and I. John v, 7, 8. We see by these things that the Syriac translation goes back to an old and, to a certain extent, independent tradition. The last great discovery in this line was the Old Syriac manuscript of the Gospels which Mrs. Agnes Smith Lewis and her sister, Mrs. Gibson, found at Mount Sinai, and have just published, after the most careful research into all the questions connected with the text contained in it. This book sheds great light upon the condition of the text of the New Testament in early times, and we shall, without doubt, learn more and more from it the longer we compare it with the other witnesses for the original form of the books. We hope this will not be the last discovery made by these learned women, so unusually endowed by nature, education, and fortune for investigations in the recluse libraries of Eastern churches and for fructifying the results of these investigations.

If Syria contained the cradle of the Christian Church, Egypt was connected by history, by tradition, and by the Flight into Egypt, with the Old Testament basis and with the beginnings of Christianity. Judaism was strongly represented, not only in the trade but also in the philosophy and literature, of the Nile country. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, here first saw the light. It was, then, only what might have been expected, when the new religious start of Jewish origin began to throw out vigorous shoots in Egypt. Whether Mark worked there or not, cannot now be determined, but the Gospel flourished, whoever was the preacher. The young language of the Copts, freeing itself from the trammels of the old hieroglyphics and appropriating the Greek letters, seems to have been used at a very early date—perhaps even before the end of the second century—in a translation of the New Testament. Since the language itself fell into dialects, we have various forms of the Coptic New Testament. The most important forms are the Sahidic and the Bashmuric. These translations follow, as would be supposed in advance, closely the Greek text. In many instances they put Greek words in among the Coptic words, either because the translator could find no Coptic word to express the thought, or because he and his fellow-countrymen understood the particular Greek word perfectly well and liked to hear it. It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind of those who study history, that the Greek language was the language of the world in the early centuries of Christianity. And it must be added that the Greek language is not dead, that it never has ceased to be spoken, and that it is to-day the chief language of general intercourse on a great part of the shores of the Mediterranean. Many a Greek word was then known—was perfectly familiar to the Egyptians. Indeed, we might have said the same in speaking of the Syriac translation. In the Semitic languages the words are usually short. If in a Syriac book one sees a long word, the safest thing is to read it as a Greek word, and one is seldom disappointed. But to return to the Coptic versions: These translations must have been made from old and good manuscripts and they are among the most valuable witnesses to the ancient text of the New Testament. Within the last few years much has been done towards preparing a good edition of the Coptic New Testament, and Rev. George Horner, M. A., a learned divine of the English Church, has begun to print the Gospels at Oxford. When his New Testament, with its English translation, is done, we shall be able to appeal much more safely to this valuable aid.

But we must go still farther into Africa and knock at the door of the Abyssinian Church. This Church probably translated the New Testament into Ethiopic in the fourth or fifth century. There is something singular about the Abyssinian Church. The Jews in very ancient times had pressed into Abyssinia from southern Egypt and they exercised a great influence there—so great that the language of the New Testament translation exhibits various Jewish or Aramaic ingredients. And even to-day the Church is said to retain in its practices much that is clearly Jewish. This is for us a token of the conservative character of the Abyssinian Church, and makes its text only the more interesting and valuable. If a church be separated by differences, by disagreements, by contests about questions of doctrine or order, from the neighboring churches, the Bible that it uses is only the more likely to remain untouched by the changes that are going on in the general stream of Christianity. Much as separation is to be deplored for many reasons, it has in this respect a good influence because it preserves tradition. Both the Abyssinian Church and the Coptic Church were in this way hedged in, and in that far their testimony is all the more valuable to us.

If we leave Egypt and return through Syria towards the north, we reach Armenia, a land associated with many of the ancient stories of human experience. The Armenian Church was most intimate with the Syrian Church and must have shared with it in its literary and theological studies and researches, even though we have thus far no account of that early time. I have no doubt that the libraries of Armenia, if once thoroughly examined, will give us much of great value for the history of the beginning of the Christian Church. Mr. Conybeare has of late brought forward surprising documents from Armenia. One of them is intensely interesting for those who study the text of the New Testament. The last part of the Gospel of Mark—xvi, 9-20—is, as we have long known, not a part of the original Gospel. There is in a few manuscripts another and shorter end for the Gospel, but that also is not genuine. Of course, we should like very much to find the real end of the Gospel, the end that the writer himself added, for we do not suppose that he by some chance failed altogether to finish it. Even if, however, we cannot find the real end, we should like to know where the usual end—these verses 9-20—came from, for that may help us to understand at what time the real end was lost. That is just what Mr. Conybeare's great discovery has done. He found in an old Armenian manuscript that this usual end really was taken from the works of Aristion. Aristion still lived at the beginning

of the second century. He was a disciple of Jesus — that is not one of the twelve, but one who had heard him speak and had believed on him. This Aristion was one of the two men upon whose testimony Papias especially relied. Besides that, Aristion wrote a book called: "Narratives of the Words of the Lord," a book that was undoubtedly like parts of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It was simply another example of the process of turning tradition by word of mouth into written tradition. The proper end of the Gospel of Mark was probably lost at least early in the second century, and someone who had read this part of Aristion's "Narratives" placed these lines here as a suitable substitute for the missing end. After a while some scribe left Aristion's name out and these verses were copied regularly as if they were by the author of the rest of the Gospel. Thus this problem — the problem as to the origin of these verses — has been happily solved by the intervention of this Armenian manuscript. If the Armenian translation had never done or should never do more than this for the text of the New Testament, we should be profoundly thankful for its existence. But we look for much more from it. This end of Mark which is not genuine is nevertheless of the greatest interest. We might almost say that it is just as good as if it were genuine. Aristion was a hearer of the Lord and his report of the last moments may be entirely correct, and may be as authentic as anything in the New Testament. Thus we see that the question whether these verses belong to Mark's Gospel or not, is to be separated from the question as to whether these verses stand for a substantial fragment of early Christian tradition prized by the primitive Church.

We may here turn from the Eastern versions. Just as it is a great pity that American libraries have so few manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, so also it is too bad that they have so few of the Eastern translations. There are a few Syriac manuscripts in America, and Dr. Isaac H. Hall, of the Metropolitan Art Museum in New York, is one of the most thorough Syrian scholars living; but I know of no Coptic or Ethiopic manuscripts in America. Mr. S. Brainard Pratt, of Boston, Massachusetts, has an Armenian manuscript written in 1262 A. D., and illustrated. If the men who give such immense sums for pictures by modern French painters could only be persuaded to turn part of their wealth to the purchase of manuscripts, American libraries would soon offer a different kind of material for the study of philologists and theologians. And it is strange that Americans should give large prices for printed books, of which there are often two or more copies known, but that they are unwilling to pay for

these very much older written books of which each one is a "single," a *unicum*. The number to be had is constantly diminishing and the prices are rising. When it is too late, everybody will be wishing to make a name for himself by giving his favorite university or college a costly manuscript.

Among the Western translations it will be enough to refer to the Latin ones and to the Gothic. In one respect these two are poles apart from each other, namely in the number of manuscripts. For the Gothic version exists in only three manuscripts — at any rate not in half a dozen — while the Latin versions are to be found in thousands of manuscripts. Let us take the Gothic first. It was translated by Bishop Ulfilas, who was born about 310 A. D., and died about 380. It presents a text which is in some points of view quite ancient. But then we only have fragments — some from the Gospels and some from the Epistles of Paul. This translation is so old that it were much to be wished that we had a complete copy of it. The order of the Gospels in the purple-silver manuscript at Upsala in Sweden, is Matthew, John, Luke, Mark. This arrangement is not seldom found in Western manuscripts. Perhaps it arose from the wish to have the two apostles together at the beginning so that the earlier book, Matthew, came first and then John, which was acknowledged to be later, and then the larger book by one who was not an apostle, and, finally, Mark, the shortest book. One other reason is possible. It often happens that the text was accompanied by a commentary. In some manuscripts the commentary was shortened as much as possible by referring, in the course of the Gospels, to similar passages already discussed. The commentator gathered his comments out of the writings of the Fathers and wrote the notes on the edges of the pages — that is to say, around the text — although a pretty, clean margin was still left over. He began with the Gospel according to Matthew, and in it he gave a full commentary for verse after verse. Then he took up the other Gospel from an apostle, the Gospel according to John, because he found in it still a very great deal of fresh material to be commented upon — long passages that were not in Matthew at all. When he had finished these two he began to examine the Gospel according to Luke, and found in it some few new passages, although in a great many places he simply wrote at the end of a series of verses: "See above, in Matthew." Only Mark was left, and here he found almost no passages that had not already been explained, and the chances were that he copied out the text of Mark without a particle of commentary, leaving the reader to find it for himself in Matthew or Luke.

CHAPTER VI.

LATIN MANUSCRIPTS.

WHEN we approach the vast army of Latin manuscripts, we find that they resolve themselves into two parts, one of which is large and promiscuous and the other small but select. As can readily be imagined, the small part is the most ancient one. The Latin translation was probably first made in North Africa and not much more than a century after the death of Jesus. In Rome at that time the most of the Christians spoke and read Greek and they did not need the translation. In the course of nature the translation then spread through Italy, and the Latin-speaking Christians in different provinces modified the expressions of the translation to suit the dialect or the custom of the language in each particular district. Hence it came that the translation sometimes appears to separate into several translations because the words are different. There are not many manuscripts of the Old Latin. One, however, is interesting as perhaps having been written by Eusebius, bishop of Vercelli in northern Italy, who died as a martyr 371 A. D. The manuscript was kept for a long time in the open part of the cathedral at Vercelli—that is to say, in a place from which it could be easily picked up and handled and kissed as a great and worthy relic of the past. Of course, no book of delicate parchment could be handed about and treated in this way for years and years without being much injured, and this beautiful volume is now a poor, weak, faded remnant of what it originally was. I saw it in the private rooms of the library. It is now carefully sealed under a silken ribbon that crosses its open pages and a glass case keeps the dust from it. One of the few copies of the Book of Acts and of the Book of Revelation is found in the "Giant of Books" at Stockholm, Sweden. This immense book lies in a big case by itself and can with difficulty be moved about. Of the Catholic Epistles there are only a few fragments, and certain verses of the First Epistle of Peter are strangely enough lost and yet are legible, for before they were lost they were pasted into the binding of a book and when they were torn out of the book the traces of the letters remained in the paste. The letters were all backward; so Leo Ziegler took a mirror and read them off. There are so few remnants of this Old Latin in many books of the New Testament that scholars eagerly look for new ones in every old binding, and every now and then a few new verses come to light and are carefully compared with the Greek text, and with the

older parts of the Latin translation, and with all the traces of the New Testament in Old Latin Fathers, in order to tell where the verses were translated.

The other part of the Latin manuscripts belongs more or less strictly to the Vulgate. This Vulgate has an interesting history and a very long one. Those Old Latin manuscripts were, as we have seen, quite different from each other, since people had altered them so much. Toward the close of the fourth century, probably in 382 A. D., the Pope, whose name was Damasus, thought it was unfortunate that the Bible should be in such a forlorn and confused state. So he asked Jerome to take the manuscripts and to prepare a new text. It was like the revision of the English version in one way, but, instead of great committees in England and America, one scholar had to do the whole work. Jerome (he wrote his name Hieronymus) was born in Dalmatia, had studied at Rome, had been in the East, had been made a priest at Antioch, and in 382 A. D. had returned to Rome. I think he must then have been about fifty-three years old. He was very learned and Damasus made a good choice. Hieronymus, then, revised the Bible and his Latin text was the text that everyone should have used. But people in general are slow to take up new things, even if they be good, and they like to stick to what they have always used; it is easier. Therefore, Jerome's translation was not kindly received. People complained of it everywhere in unmeasured terms, just as the amiable and yet fierce dean of Chichester, the late Doctor Burgon, attacked with might and main the English revisers, as if they had been criminals and as if their work were bad instead of good. For years and years the new and better translation was put aside. Yet gradually, if only gradually, it won friends for itself and was to a certain extent brought into use. As a result of this half-and-half way of doing things, the confused Old Latin translation, and the revision of Jerome, and perhaps some new thoughts of scholars in various countries, became so intermingled that it was very hard to tell what was quite old, what was half new, what was quite new, and what was totally bad. Every now and then somebody tried to clear out errors and the confusion from the text. But in spite of Cassiodorus, and Alcuin who gave his revised copy to Charlemagne in 801 A. D., and of Theodolf of Orleans, and of Lanfranc of Canterbury, and of Hugo of Saint Caro, and of Roger Bacon, the text remained

bad. We may say that it really still remains bad, but at present there is good hope of a thorough change. John Wordsworth who is now bishop of Salisbury, his chaplain, Henry Julian White, Prof. William Sanday of Oxford, Dr. Samuel Berger secretary of the Protestant Theological Faculty at Paris, and Dr. Peter Corssen of Berlin have done much to make the text better. Bishop Wordsworth has already issued a new edition of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and it is to be hoped that he will have the strength to finish the whole New Testament—yes, the whole Bible. The best manuscript of the Gospels in the Vulgate translation is the "*Codex Amiatinus*," now in the Laurentian library at Florence. It was written shortly before 716 A. D. at the order of Ceolfrid, abbot of Yarrow and Wearmouth in the north of England, and he started to carry it to Rome but died on the way at Langres, France, on the 25th of September, 716 A. D. Probably his companions carried the great book on to Rome.

Then it remained for a long time in the Cistercian monastery on Mount Amiata—whence the name Amiatinus—and finally it reached Florence. America has a few, but so far as is known only a few, manuscripts of the Vulgate. There are at least three at Harvard, one in the Astor Library, and one in the library of Mr. Irwin at Oswego, New York. Mr. Irwin's copy is a splendid manuscript of the Gospels written in golden letters on purple parchment; it was formerly in the great Hamilton Library. Professor Wattenbach of Berlin read an article about it before the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin, and Dr. Samuel Berger of Paris described it in his history of the Vulgate. The national library at Paris and the British Museum have a great many Vulgate manuscripts, and many a smaller library possesses at least a few precious old copies, as for instance the library of Trinity College at Dublin, the library at Stonyhurst, that at Durham, that at Würzburg, and that at Wolfenbüttel.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FATHERS.

THE fact has been touched upon, that even less ancient manuscripts, and manuscripts with a less peculiar text, may be of use in studying the history of the text of the New Testament. The translations to which we have called attention give much information in this direction, for anything found in the Syriac translation points to the presence of the particular thing in Syria or in the neighborhood of Syria and not, for example, in Spain; and anything in the Coptic translation speaks for a text in Egypt and not in Italy. But we can go farther in this direction—farther towards determining the place of texts—by turning to the writings of the Christian Fathers, and these Fathers will also help us tell definitely certain things about the time at which given readings were in use. One important general conclusion which the Fathers of the fourth century force us to draw, is that all the main defects of the Greek text were at that time—the fourth century—in existence. Before this was known, scholars sometimes spoke of trying to find the text of the fourth century, and of their readiness to be satisfied with that. Now, however, we know that several kinds of text were then in use, and that we do not gain anything of value by simply going back to the fourth century. What we wish to do, and need to do, is to distinguish between the good texts and the bad texts, between good readings and bad readings. The Fathers can help us much when we are able to say precisely what they

considered the exact reading. If a preacher gives a passage in a sermon, we shall only feel sure that he has quoted exactly if we discover upon examination that he is accustomed to do so; otherwise we are apt to think that he simply quoted in general so as to have the Scripture authority for his statement, without caring about the precise words. Preachers in the haste of sermon writing often dash down a Scripture sentence in this inaccurate way. Dr. Ezra Abbot showed that no one of nine places, in which Jeremy Taylor quoted a text from John, agreed with the English version, and that in only two of the places Taylor agreed with himself. If one of the Fathers quotes a passage in controversy with another, we look carefully to see that his opinion in the contest has not led him to warp the words in some way. If a Father quotes long passages, verse after verse, then we feel sure that he took down the New Testament book and copied the words off. And if, finally, he goes carefully to work and discusses the readings and says what is in the manuscripts before him and what other authors read, then we know as much as we could wish to learn from him. The older—the earlier—a Father is, the more valuable his testimony is. If we only had the Greek of Irenæus' work "*Against All Heresies*," we should learn a great deal that is new. The Latin translator does not appear to have troubled himself to translate precisely the texts which Irenæus quoted.

Clement of Alexandria was a great scholar

and he quoted a great deal in his writings, both from sacred and from profane books. Origen, the mighty champion of Christianity, the man of profound learning, unbounded industry, and unlimited devotion, wrote a large number of books and quoted much from the Bible. Unfortunately the Church was so ignorant as to condemn many of his works as heretical and thus they have been lost. But aside from his other writings Origen paid especial attention to the text of the Bible. He wrought through the text of the Old Testament and wrote the original text and the various translations that he had at hand in six columns—perhaps in some places in eight—so that the text could be very precisely determined. For my part I also believe that he studied particularly the text of the New Testament, even though we have no word of a Hexapla for it. Origen has, nevertheless, also a value for us as showing how a Father could make mistakes or draw wrong conclusions, even when he tried his very best to give the original reading. In discussing John i, 28, he tells us calmly that almost all manuscripts have the reading Bethany, and we know how old his manuscripts must have been—far older than any that we have now. But, instead of accepting the testimony of these witnesses, he goes on to say that he had gone to Palestine and that there was no such place there, as if many a village had not been destroyed in the 150 years that had passed! And he says that it must have been Bethabara, and that it is clear for him because the allegorical meaning of the name suits. After all, the great thing for us is the clear testimony to the reading of his manuscripts. That is just as good for us as if we had for this passage a half a dozen or a dozen manuscripts of the second century before us. Indeed, it repeatedly happens that we do not accept a Father's judgment about a reading, although we are deeply grateful to him for telling us what various copies of the New Testament in his day read. At about the same time as Origen, there lived two Latin Fathers who are of great value to us. One was Tertullian, a Christian lawyer at Carthage and Rome. Curiously enough, he gives us a very strange reading of the Lord's Prayer, a reading of which we find no sign anywhere else. He gives it: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thy kingdom come." The other of the two is Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who died in 258 A. D. He published "Testimonies," which we might call "Scripture Proofs," and thus he copied passage after passage at length, so that the book is a treasure for the study of the text. The Father who was mentioned above as revising the Latin version, Jerome, must also be named here, for in his

studies, and his journeys, and his translation and revision, he came to know a great deal about the manuscripts and he often tells us precisely what we read in different ones.

These are, then, the chief witnesses for the text of the New Testament: The Greek manuscripts, the various ancient translations, and the Fathers. It is, in a different sense, a vast "cloud of witnesses." Let us cast our eyes over the centuries and ask what, in general, the character of the testimony in each age is. During the very first century but little can be expected, and yet one book is there. It is the letter of the Church at Rome to the Church at Corinth, about 96 A. D., and it is usually called Clement of Rome, because Clement is supposed to have been one of the chief presbyters of the Church of Rome at that time and to have written this letter. At that early date the Christians were only just beginning to use the books that were later to compose the New Testament. We, therefore, are not surprised to find that the Old Testament is the chief source for the quotations in this letter. Still, as if to give us the assurance that our New Testament books, with the same contents as later, were then in the hands of these churches, the writer quotes from the Gospels, although not from John. He quotes also from the Epistle to the Romans—the epistle that his, the Roman Church, had received about forty years before from Paul. Aside from this the Epistle to the Hebrews is used, and there are various expressions which seem to have been drawn from striking verses in our New Testament.

In passing to the second century we recall the fact that the Old Latin, the Old Syrian, and the two main Coptic versions probably were made during this period. Among the writers we find Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, and Tatian, but the three chief ones are Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Clement of Alexandria. Besides these we receive every now and then a little evidence from some of the heretics or Gnostics of that day, whose words are professedly given by Hippolytus or by other writers, but we are not yet quite certain of the genuineness of these quotations. In the third century we still have no Greek manuscripts, and we have no new versions, but we find, apart from Dionysius Alexandrinus, and Gregory Thaumaturgus, the very full and important authors Origen, Hippolytus, Methodius, and the Latin writers Tertullian and Cyprian. With the fourth century the Greek manuscripts open their pages to us, namely those great manuscripts the "*Codex Sinaiticus*," and the "*Codex Vaticanus*," besides a fragment of First Timothy. Here, too, comes the Gothic translation and perhaps the Ethiopian. And a manuscript of the Latin translation, that one at Vercelli,

was written in this century. Moreover, this is a great century for the Fathers, for church writers, and for more or less heretical writers, who wrote in Greek, Syrian, and Latin. The names of Cyril of Jerusalem, of Amphilochius, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa are worthy of mention, but they are overshadowed in reference to the text by Eusebius of Cæsarea, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Epiphanius. The Syrian writers Aphraates, Ephraim, Jacob of Nisibis, and Titus of Bostra, and then such Latin writers as Hilary, Lactantius, and Ambrose yield in importance to Augustine and Jerome, while a host of lesser names cluster around them. The fifth century offers us eight fragments of Uncial manuscripts and adds the "*Codex Alexandrinus*" and the "*Codex Ephraemi*." The Armenian translation comes in here, and also nearly twenty manuscripts of Syriac, Egyptian, and Latin versions.

In the Fathers we have Theodore of Mopuestia, Basil of Seleucia, and Theodotus, and then the four chieftains, Andrew of Cæsarea, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria, and Victor of Antioch. Victor of Antioch busied himself with Mark.

Andrew of Cæsarea wrote a commentary on the Book of Revelation, the chapters of which have already been referred to. As a matter of fact Andrew has so taken possession of the Book of Revelation that it is not easy to find manuscripts that have not been influenced by him or by his text—by the text used in his commentary. Of the "edition" of epistles that Euthalius published in this century, we have spoken above. Among the many Latin Fathers of this period, it will be enough to mention Fulgentius of Ruspe, Ruffinus, Sedulius, and Vigilius Tapsensis. Ruffinus translated many a book of earlier Fathers from Greek into Latin, and in some cases the original is lost, so that we owe our knowledge of these works in these cases to his industry. Unfortunately, however, he did not hesitate to correct the works that he translated, so as to make them suit him or the Church better, or to bring the Bible quotations into harmony with the text to which he was accustomed. In this respect, he is a hindrance and not a help to critical research. The sixth century brings up a couple of dozen Greek manuscripts, or fragments of Greek manuscripts, of which the "*Codex Beza*"

and "*Codex Claromontanus*," with the purple manuscripts of the Gospels, are especially interesting. One of the purple manuscripts is but a few scattered leaves at London, Vienna, Rome, and on Patmos. Another is the manuscript that Gebhardt and Harnack found at Rossano—the manuscript with beautiful pictures. Another was discovered by the Abbé Pierre Batiffol at Berat. And another has, I am told, just been bought in the East. This century sees the preparation of the "Philoxenian" (Syriac) translation. More than thirty Syriac manuscripts date from the sixth century, eleven Old Latin manuscripts, sixteen Vulgate manuscripts, and the three Gothic manuscripts. Several Greek writers flourished at this period, but no very important ones. Of Latin writers we must name two. The first one is Cassiodorus who was a great statesman, but who then gave himself up to theology and to theological education. He tried his best to have the Latin translation correctly and carefully copied. The other one is Primasius who, like Andrew of Cæsarea, wrote much about the Book of Revelation; his writings are very valuable for the text of that book. It may also be observed that perhaps two of the Greek Gospel lectionaries, or books of lessons from the Gospels, were written in the sixth century. The seventh century only adds thirteen of the Greek Uncial manuscripts—the most of them being mere fragments—and with these we may associate eight lesson-books. It was early in this century that Thomas of Heraclea, then living as an exile in Egypt, corrected the "Philoxenian" (Syriac) translation; the revision is named the Harclensian, from Harkel or Heraclea. Fourteen Syriac manuscripts, eight Old Latin ones, and twelve of the Vulgate represent the versions here. The few writers are scarcely worth naming, unless we make an exception for Andrew of Crete, who may, however, be of the ninth century. But this will suffice for the review of the centuries. From the seventh century onward the manuscripts are more numerous, but as a rule less valuable, and the writers decrease in numbers and importance, although Œcumenius of the tenth, Theophylact of the eleventh, and Euthymius Zigabenus of the twelfth century did much to make the text of the New Testament more sure by adding to their form of it their full commentaries.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INTERPOLATIONS.

WE saw above that the present end of Mark does not belong to the Gospel. There are only a few long passages in the New Testament whose genuineness is in dispute. One of the most famous of these is found in the Gospel of John¹ and gives the story of the adulteress, whom Jesus sends away with the command to sin no more. These verses probably were not a part of the original Gospel. Nevertheless, they may be part of a very old tradition, a section from such a book as Aristion's, or from the Gospel to the Hebrews. The scene itself is most vivid and real. The incident may be an actual one. It is true we may assume that these verses do not properly belong to the Gospel of John, but they may be older than it, and as true historically. Besides the actual omission in the best witnesses, the suspicious character of the passage is shown by the fact that the text in it is, perhaps, more corrupt than that of almost any other passage in the Gospels. Scarcely any two manuscripts are alike in their reproduction of these verses. One variation is worthy of remark. Everyone remembers that Jesus stoops down and writes upon the ground. It is usually supposed that he merely made strokes hither and thither with his finger as a sign that he was not paying any attention to the people who stood about him. But many old manuscripts add here the words: "the sins of each one of them"—that is to say, he wrote in the sand the sins that each man standing before him had been guilty of. The following sentence in the usual text says: "And they *hearing* [what he had answered] and smitten by their consciences went out one by one." Now, in a very few manuscripts I have found instead of "hearing" the word "reading," so that the picture becomes a wonderfully dramatic one. The men accuse the adulteress. Jesus stoops down and writes on the ground, for example, "Murder," and one of the eldest of the accusers, in the front row, reads the word and remembers, conscience-smitten, a crime that no one else living knew of; the face of the murdered man rises before him and he hurries away from the place, uncertain whether Jesus will perhaps tell the others. Then Jesus writes "Theft," and the next man remembers that ten years ago he appropriated the money that belonged to a defenseless widow, and he also rushes off. And thus it goes on until the ground is too hot for them all and Jesus is left alone with the woman. Is not that an inter-

¹ John vii, 53, to viii, 12.

esting scene? There is no great authority for the reading, but the scene is quite possible, even with the other reading, and we seem to be hovering over the place and beholding the actions of the group of people. These two passages—the end of Mark and the story of the adulteress—are without doubt very old traditions, indeed. We have in the New Testament another, happily very short passage, that has no shadow of authority in early times. It is the words about the heavenly witnesses,¹ which the English revisers have properly removed from our Bibles. The said verses do not appear ever to have been in a Greek manuscript, unless possibly in one which was a translation here from the Latin text, until the sixteenth century—until after the first Greek New Testaments had been printed. The demand that they should be put into the text was a great mistake, and it is well that we have now succeeded in leaving them out.

The manuscripts of the New Testament sometimes have at the end a subscription which tells us about the writer and the owner of the book. I found an interesting one in the gymnasium or school at Saloniki, the ancient Thessalonica. It was in a lesson-book of the Gospels to which I gave the Greek number "seven." It read as follows, saving the place where a thief had scratched out the name of the monastery from which he had stolen it: "In memory of and for the forgiveness of the sins of the servant of the Lord, Nicholas, a monk and the president of the monastery——, who with longing acquired this holy book. It was written by Luke, a monk, and a sinner, and a wretch. Ye who read this book—priest, pastor, deacons—pray to the Lord for me. If, as being also a man, I have made mistakes, pardon me for God's sake. Amen. It was finished in the year 1072, the tenth indiction, at the time of the removing the bodily eyes of Romanus, the king, the son of Diogenes, and of the coming of the godless Turks. Amen. Luke, a monk." Another manuscript, written in 1327 A. D. and now at Athens, tells at the end how the monks had been driven away from Mount Athos by the lawless race of the Musselmen, and were then staying at Berœa. The scribe excuses his faults in writing; he had to copy off the Gospel lessons, because they had no book of them for themselves and no duly practical writer could be found. The same volume has the prayer: "Remember, Lord, thy servant Michael the priest, who bound this Holy Gospel. Amen."

¹ I. John v, 7, 8.

And then we find also the words: "We further pray for mercy, life, holy peace, salvation, and remission of the sins of the servants of God, George, and Demetrius, and Mary." Another manuscript at Athens gives the sentence that often occurs in various forms in such books: "The hand that wrote this molders in the tomb, but the writing lasts till the most complete times"—that is to say, till time shall be no more. The scribe wrote in 1089 A. D. His name was Andrew and he was a notary and a "beautiful writer," a writer who could write fine books, engross deeds, and the like. Still, Andrew was afraid he had made some mistakes; so he added at the end: "And if there be any very little mistake, forgive me for Christ's sake." In another book, written in 1132 A. D., the scribe made a great many errors, and he knew it and asked to be pardoned for his "immeasurable faults." A scribe in a volume at Venice took a much loftier point of view and said in excuse for his incorrect writing, as he begged the readers to pray for him: "For nobody writes without writing wrong." A Gospel lesson-book at St. George's at Venice has a long double subscription. The first is from the hand of the scribe: "The present Holy Gospel was finished by me, the unworthy priest and first judge of the most holy metropolis of Lacedaemonia, Nicholas, the son of Malotros, and ye priests who shall hereafter turn its leaves, pray for me, the wretched one, so that the Lord may also forgive your errors in the awful day of his retribution." The second is from the hand of a priest who had received the volume as a gift: "Everyone who reads this Holy Gospel should pray for, and in the sacred offices remember, Nicholas, the son of Eustathius, who bought it and gave it to me the spiritual Isaiah so that I may remember him (in my prayers) as long as I live. After my departure from here (death) I am to leave it to some monastery, to whichever one I please. I received it in the year of Christ 1462, indiction 11." A subscription in a book at Bologna shows how exactly some scribes thought the date out: "This volume was fin-

ished on the third of March, at two o'clock on Monday under the rule of Constantine the Dueller and Zoe Born-in-the Purple, and under the patriarch Michael, written by the hand of Sabas, a monk and priest. Ye readers pray for me to the Lord. In the year 1046, indiction 14." Sometime a manuscript was used by the monastery like the death-roll in a family Bible, to contain the deaths of the monks or at least of the presidents of the monastery. At other times they wrote on the margins special events that took place. For example, in a manuscript at Carpentras there are notes about the occurrences of a pestilence on the island of Cyprus, with the number buried on one day, and how they put five into one grave in their haste. That was in the year 1438, and another pestilence came in 1575.

But we must not forget to remark the way in which scribes tried to keep their books from being altered or torn or stolen. It was easy to add or strike out when the book was in manuscript. Let us take the case of a copy of the Four Gospels at Paris and see how the monastery to which it belonged tried to secure its possession. The subscription reads: "The present book belongs to the most holy metropolis Xanthe, [to the monastery] of the honored Forerunner [John the Baptist], and whoever may wish to take it away from this monastery, may he have the curses of the three hundred and eighteen divine fathers that were gathered together in Nicæa, and may he be condemned with Judas, and may he have the honored Forerunner for his accuser in the day of judgment." The three hundred and eighteen fathers of the council of Nicæa are most frequently called upon to curse book-thieves. Of course, a thief could easily tear out such a curse-bringing leaf, and thieves often did in this way spoil the volumes, and, therefore, we sometimes find the curse extended to anybody who removes the leaf. Cursing is a poor business, and the history of the manuscripts shows that it did not save them from harm or from being stolen.

Caspar René Gregory.

BOOK XII.

FROM THE BIRTH IN BETHLEHEM TO THE CRUCIFIXION ON CALVARY.

BY REV. WILLIAM CLEAVER WILKINSON, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

FOUR years before the beginning of the Christian era—that is, almost exactly nineteen hundred years ago—there was born in the East a babe who grew to be the greatest man that the world has ever seen. This man was the greatest of warriors, though he never drew a sword. He was the greatest of conquerors, though he never fought a battle. He was the greatest of kings, though he never occupied a throne. He was the greatest of legislators, though men never appointed him to the legislator's office. He was the greatest of statesmen, though he never sat in a cabinet. He was the greatest of judges, though he never wore the ermine. He was the greatest of philosophers, though he never named the name of philosophy. He was the greatest of teachers, though he taught in no school. He was the greatest of preachers, though he commanded no pulpit. He was the greatest of reformers, though he never urged what would be called a reform. He was the greatest among leaders of thought, though he was not what would be called a thinker. He was the greatest force in literature, though he never wrote a book. He was the greatest promoter of scholarship, though he was not what would be called a scholar. He was the greatest promoter of science, though he was not what would be called a scientist. It might fairly be added that he was the greatest of poets, though he never wrote a verse. This man put forth such pretensions for himself of right to dominion over others as no one else ever put forth, yet he was the meekest of men. He claimed such ownership of all things as no one else ever did, yet he denied himself and sacrificed himself beyond any example or parallel. He was the greatest of saints, for he never committed a sin. He was the greatest of sufferers, for he bore the sins of the world. This man's name was Jesus, and he had no other name. Others had borne the name before him. Others bore the name after him.

But he is the man always meant when anyone speaks of Jesus.

The circumstances of the birth of Jesus were remarkable, fitly resembling, in this respect, the circumstances of his career in life, as also those of the long sequel (yet unfinished) that has been unfolded in history. Some of the remarkable circumstances of his birth immediately attended that event; but some preceded it. We are to deal in this chapter with those which preceded it.

One of those precedent circumstances occurred partly in heaven. For an angel—his name is given, it was Gabriel—was despatched from heaven by God on an earthly errand closely connected with that extraordinary human birth which was then soon to take place. The destination appointed to this angel was perfectly definite and particular. He was to go to a country named, to a city named, and to a person named. The person named was a woman—a young woman; unmarried, and a virgin. It was Mary. There had been Marys before; there have been Marys since; but what the angel told that Mary that day would, when fulfilled, result in making her incomparably the most illustrious of all the illustrious women that ever have borne her beautiful name. The city in which Mary lived, and to which, therefore, the angel Gabriel was sent, was Nazareth, in the province of Galilee, a country of Palestine. "The angel coming in to her said." Such are the simple words which tell all that we know of the time, and of the manner, of the angel's coming. In what appearance he presented himself, we know not. Whether by day or by night, we know not. But we know what he said. He said: "Hail, highly favored! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women!" How simple, how courteous, how reassuring! We feel like applying Milton's epithet, and calling Gabriel "the affable archangel." But Mary was troubled at the greeting of this visitor—

gracious, nay, even deferential, as it was. And one cannot wonder. For, however the celestial messenger might veil his glory and accommodate himself to the character and the state of the young Galilean maiden; however sincerely respectful he might seek to be, and be, still there was something that could not but startle in such an apparition. Mary pondered; but she did not speak. The angel saw her trepidation, and he addressed himself to that. "Fear not, Mary," he said. That familiar name! Her own from earliest recollection, how the sound of it must have calmed her! And his gentle "Fear not!" Then he went on and said: "For thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

What an august announcement; with what exquisite simplicity and dignity conveyed! We do not naturally think of politeness, of courtesy, of complaisance, as a trait or characteristic of the Supreme Being. But may we not — must we not — if we think deeply and truly, think of this message from God to Mary, brought by an angel and by that angel delivered so beautifully — must we not think of it as an act, on God's part, of divinely considerate politeness? God might have made this chosen woman Mary the mother of his Son without apprising her beforehand of the unique honor to which she was elected. But he would prepare her for the things that were to be. He might have done this by sending her a vision or a dream. That way he had sometimes taken, when he wished to communicate a purpose of his to a selected one among the children of men. He would, as we shall soon see, take this way again in the case of a man to whom Mary was very nearly related. But a dream sent to Mary would not do her the honor, the high and open honor, that he wished to bestow on the elected mother of his Son. God would have Mary herself know, and he would have his angels also know, that she was one who, for his own sake, doubtless, and for the sake of her Son to be, still more than for her sake, the King of heaven delighted to honor. He would send an angel, not a dream, to be his messenger to her. The angel was, perhaps, even an archangel. There may have been yet another reason for the divine forewarning to Mary. In the case of a heart so pure as hers, some previous consciousness of her high vocation to such motherhood would serve to ennoble her character,

and so to qualify her better for her future part by feeding her mind with solemn thoughts during the period that was to intervene before her child was born.

Mary's behavior was just that lovely blending of docility, of faith, and of maidenly modesty, that one sees now to be most fit in a woman chosen to such a destiny. She spoke to the angel. Her instinctive, irrepressible maidenly scruples overcame in her all lingering fear; as also apparently for the moment they quite effaced from her mind all thought of the unparalleled privilege and distinction conferred upon her. She said: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Now, Mary, though still unmarried, was already betrothed. This meant, according to the manners of her place and her age, that she, by a public ceremony, which, though not marriage, was as sacred as marriage, had bound herself to be in due time the wife of a certain man; who, in his turn, having given a reciprocal pledge, regarded himself, and was regarded by his neighbors, in much the same light as if he were already her husband. There must, then, have glanced through the mind of this bride to be, a thought of her affianced, one apparently as stainless in character as she was herself. But whether or not Mary thought at this moment of Joseph, she said only what we have already seen. The angel, as if he revered in Mary the motive that prompted her question, answered it with a majesty of simplicity befitting his own celestial rank; befitting likewise the august, the awful, purport of what he had to say: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren. For no word from God shall be void of power."

Mary's manner of receiving this communication from the angel was the perfection of what was fit and felicitous. The chief mark of it was humility, that truest humility which consists in absolute, instant obedience. Making no protestations of her own unworthiness to be singled out from among women for an honor so inconceivably great, she simply said: "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

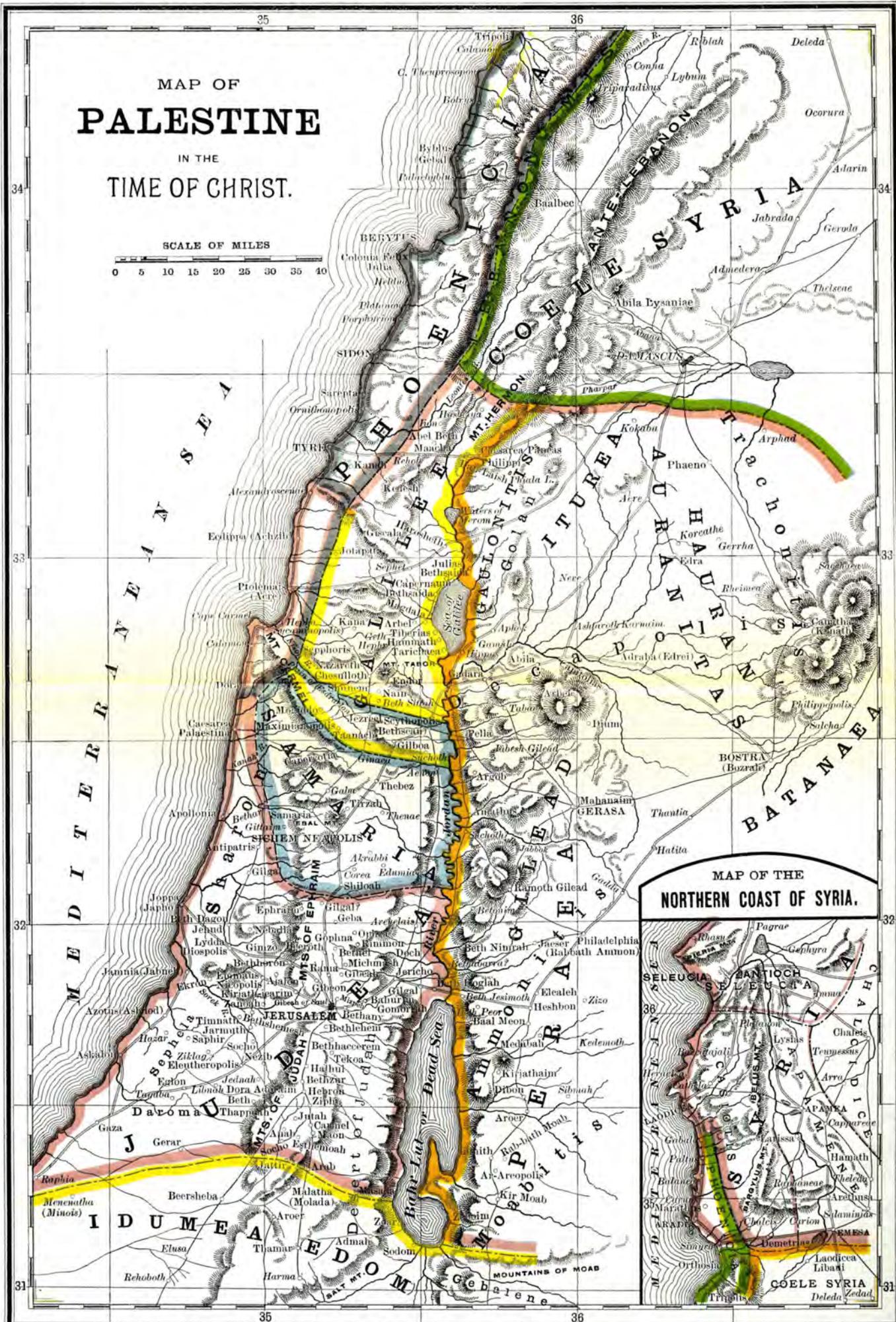
MARY'S VISIT TO ELIZABETH.

Mary had accepted her vocation with a composure inimitably serene, a composure that could have had but one spring, namely, such limpid obedience as hers. But the name of her cousin Elizabeth pronounced by an angel

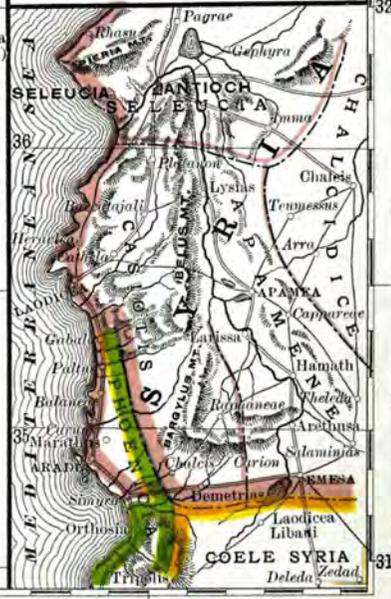
MAP OF PALESTINE

IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST.

SCALE OF MILES



MAP OF THE NORTHERN COAST OF SYRIA.



from heaven in communication of such tidings concerning her, stirred the placidity of her spirit with an eagerness of sympathy, perhaps of chastened curiosity, that she could not resist. She must see that cousin Elizabeth and see her at once. What a charming touch of nature was here! With no further delay, we may suppose, than was needful, Mary started for the hill country of Judea, where her kinswoman lived. She journeyed "with haste." Her heart went before her, beating quick with desire to be there. She found the house of Zachariah; she went in and saluted Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was perhaps alone in the room where her visitor found her; but more than she herself heard the salutation of Mary. Elizabeth, too, was soon to become a mother, and her babe, five months old, still unborn, leaped within her at the sound of Mary's voice. That babe was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. His unconscious instinct prophetic told him even then, and it thrilled him with generous joy, that the mother of his Lord was nigh. Elizabeth was now filled with the Holy Spirit and she responded to Mary's salutation with words wiser and higher than she could herself, even with premeditation, have framed. She raised her voice in speaking, so much we know; and we can imagine that it was with a kind of triumphal chant that she spoke. The process of translation cannot destroy the noble rhythm of the language: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me? For behold, when the voice of thy salutation came into mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a fulfillment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord." It was an interchange of psalmody between the two that must have surprised them both. The passage is too familiar to need repeating here.

It deserves to be noted in passing that Elizabeth had performed a signal act of obeisance to Mary, in addressing her as she did. Elizabeth was a woman advanced in years, while Mary, as we may assume, was in the bloom of her youth. When it is considered what respect to age was observed and enforced among the Jews, it appears very striking that Elizabeth should at once have deferred, with such a grace of humility, to her youthful kinswoman. The deference paid was to Mary as mother of Elizabeth's Lord. One remembers that deep saying of the Apostle Paul: "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit." That qualification Elizabeth then had; for on the present occasion she was "filled with the Holy Spirit." This Luke expressly tells us.

Mary remained as guest with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home in Nazareth. It would be an idyl of sweet and holy home life such as was never yet written, if we could have, in the style of narrative and description found nowhere except in the Bible, the story and picture of those rural three months of communion between Elizabeth and Mary. We must content ourselves with only that first scene of it already presented; for only so much is given us in the accounts of the evangelists.

Of one thing we may be quite sure. The chief topic of the mutual talk between the cousins, was the wonderful coincidence—coincidence and contrast both at once—in their several experiences as miraculous mothers to be. It could not but have been, to each one of the two, a most strengthening and comforting reassurance as to the solid reality of her own solemn, peculiar vocation from God. Human nature is in its basis one and the same, from age to age, and from race to race, of men. We need not for one moment imagine those Hebrew women to have been free from the occasional invasion of doubts and misgivings. We may be sure they sometimes asked themselves whether, after all, they were not, in their extraordinary experiences, the subjects of mistake and delusion. Especially did Mary need the most abundant support for her faith and her obedience, to sustain her through that peculiarly trying ordeal of silent months which she saw herself appointed to undergo. It was divine wisdom, shown in divine complaisance, that word from the angel to Mary about Mary's kinswoman Elizabeth. It would be impossible to conceive an expedient, short of continued immediate miraculous intervention from God, better adapted to furnish to Mary the needed confirmation of her faith and, besides that, chance of the secret delicate sympathy needed, than was the expedient actually employed, namely, that announcement to her of Elizabeth's condition, kindred, yet contrasted, to her own.

Traits like these in the New Testament narrative put it at immeasurable remove from the possibility of its being supposed the invention of the imagination of men. The spirit of myth would have multiplied miracle. The spirit of truth limited miracle to the actual fact. And it was according to a principle which God seems always to observe—the principle of strict parsimony, forbidding needless display of the supernatural—that Mary should thus have been left, as she was, to the perfectly natural resource of drawing sympathy and support from her kinswoman Elizabeth. That resource was sufficient—made sufficient by the simple fact of Mary's having received her first

and her only intelligence of Elizabeth's condition from the lips of an angel.

Both the annunciation and the salutation thus described have furnished subjects for painters. The highest artistic genius and skill have found their opportunity in representing on canvas to the eye, the imagined persons, postures, and environments of these exquisite Scriptural stories. Because artists have sometimes chosen, from the Bible and from Church history, such subjects for treatment with the brush, as, for instance, the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross, the Martyrdom of

Saint Sebastian, it has been said that the influence of Christianity has debased art, by substituting haggard, emaciated figures for the blooming and graceful forms, "god and god-like men," which were the ideals of antique pagan painting and sculpture. But certainly never did subjects inherently more fit and inspiring tempt the imagination and the hand of the artist than are supplied in the Annunciation, and in the Salutation of Elizabeth. For proof of this, if any were needed, let witness the pictures actually produced on these subjects.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTH.

THERE came a time, we know not exactly at what point in the course of the history, when Joseph had to learn, from some source, the condition and the expectation of his betrothed. How he first learned it, we can only conjecture. But when he did learn it, either he was not told the whole story of Mary's amazing experience, or else, being told it all, he did not believe the miraculous part of it. Whichever alternative was the true one, Joseph was purposing and planning in his thought to put Mary away from him — that is, cancel the betrothal, and not marry her. It was the impulse of a man who looked out for his own blameless repute.

Now, Joseph could proceed in either one of two ways. One way would expose Mary to open shame; the other would, as far as possible, shield from the public eye her apparent fault and misfortune. He chose the latter way. But before he took the step that would be decisive, God intervened. Joseph had a dream in which an Angel of the Lord appeared to him. The angel is not named. Perhaps it was an undistinguished one among the innumerable heavenly host of those that wait on God to do his pleasure. This angel, speaking to Joseph, called him by name, with significant allusion accompanying to Joseph's rightful place in the royal line of Judah. He said: "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shalt save his people from their sins." Joseph was not disobedient to the heavenly vision and Mary was brought under the grateful shelter of acknowledged relationship to a husband. She, in that sacred privacy, accomplished the months of her patience and her hope.

But when now her time drew nigh, behold, a surprising coincidence of history. Galilean as Mary was, and Nazarene, she must yet bear her miraculous child, not at Nazareth, and not in Galilee, but in Bethlehem of Judea. This place of nativity for the Christ of God had been long before announced. No miracle was resorted to for bringing the necessary fulfillment of prophecy about; but what appeared to be (although in truth it was not) the great main movement of human history was easily wielded in the hand of divine providence to effect this purpose of the divine will. The Roman emperor of the world, at exactly the meet moment, issued a decree which, without his meaning it or dreaming it, caused the birth of the Lord's Anointed to occur where ancient Hebrew prophecy had predicted that it would occur. A census of the Roman empire was ordered. In accordance with the wisely indulgent policy of the mighty despotism of Rome, the provinces of Palestine were permitted to set about obeying the imperial mandate in their own chosen ancestral way. The Jewish practice was for each family to report itself for registration at that city which, to the head of the family, was in a peculiar sense "his own." Now, to Joseph, he being of the house and lineage of David, that city was Bethlehem. To Bethlehem accordingly Joseph, with Mary, went. The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem (some five miles south of Jerusalem) was about eighty miles. The journey would naturally occupy from four to six days. Arrived at Bethlehem, they tarried there, and there the hour came upon Mary and her babe was born.

The earthly life of Jesus, from the first of it to the last of it, was, like the manner of speech that he loved to use, full of paradoxes. Never in any other case was birth of babe into the world at once so magnificent and so mean, so

illustrious and so obscure. The parents of Jesus—his reputed parents—although they could both of them trace their line of descent back to King David, were poor. We know this, not from the fact that Joseph was a worker in wood, or "carpenter," as he is now customarily called. Such he might have been, though a man in easy circumstances. For it was a wholesome practice with the Jews to put their sons, whatever the standing and circumstances of the fathers, to the learning of a trade. Generally it would be the trade become hereditary in the family. But when, according to the law of Moses, Jesus, as a firstborn child of his parents, was brought by them to the Temple at Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord, the offering that accompanied was the one appointed for the poorest of the poor, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Such was the parentage of Jesus. And at Bethlehem, the quarters that Joseph and Mary occupied apparently corresponded. For the newborn babe, wrapped, as the custom was, in swathing bands, found his first resting place in what is now called a "manger." That name is not unfit; and still, unless we consider the customs of the time and the place, we shall perhaps form a mistaken idea of the situation. It was, in fact, a case of not unnatural adjustment to circumstances, such adjustment as is still practiced in the same country by travelers. But with every relief thus thrown upon the character of the infant Savior's accommodation at Bethlehem, yet what a lowly birth was his! How few human births, not absolutely abject and squalid in misery, have ever been lowlier! That is one side of it. But look at the other side.

In the region about Bethlehem, there were, at that early winter season, shepherds staying out of doors, and so, under the open sky, keeping their flock by night. The flock that they tended was perhaps made up of sheep destined for sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem. These men were chosen to be recipients of a remarkable revelation from heaven. The choice of them was, so far as we are told, for no character of special worthiness in them to invite the choice. It seems, for all the indication given, to have been an exercise of the free, undeserved, electing grace of God. Their situation, indeed, at the moment, and their employment, were opportune. They were waking, and were out of doors. They were thus ready to observe that which happened. An Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them. The apparition appalled them. But the angel spoke reassuring words. He said: "Be not afraid; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: For there is born this day in the

city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you; ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger."

Following this announcement, and following it suddenly, there came a further celestial revelation. This time, ear as well as eye was filled and overpowered. There was no longer one angel, with one angelic voice; but, surrounding the messenger from on high that had already spoken, there hovered a multitude of the heavenly host who joined in a choral hymn of praise to God and of joyous proclamation to men: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men."

The heavenly vision and the heavenly voices passed to those shepherds. But, simple men as, of course, they were, they were yet, it would appear, not altogether unworthy to have seen and heard what they did. For they believed. They said to one another, "Let us go, let us go now unto Bethlehem, and"—not learn whether that voice was, indeed, from heaven and whether what it told was true, but—"see this thing that is come to pass." As they did not doubt, so they did not wait; and they did not loiter on the way. They went "with haste." And they were rewarded; for they found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying, as had been described to them, in the manger. Naturally, they then spread far and wide what had been said to them from heaven concerning the child; and naturally, too, wonder sprang up everywhere with the spreading of the news. With many that heard, the wonder may have been short-lived; but as for Mary she treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. There were other things in due sequel to occur concerning the child, which would give the musing mother more matter for thought. Of those other things, we may mention first a noteworthy incident, which, probably, however, was not the first one to happen. Certain strangers from a distance—how great distance, we know not, that they were "from the East," is all that is told us—appeared in Bethlehem and paid a visit to Mary's place of sojourn. We naturally figure these strangers as venerable in appearance, and we can hardly avoid making their number three, such being the quite groundless, but prevailing, tradition regarding them. In the Scripture narrative they are called magians, or sages—"wise men," our Bibles translate the Greek word. Beyond this character attributed to them, and the fact just mentioned that they came from the East, all is mere conjecture, as to who, how many, what, and whence, they were. What, on their arrival at the house, they saw, is not said by Scripture to be Mary, with her child, but the child with his mother. They

fell prostrate in obeisance, not to her, but to him; not to her along with him, but to him alone. They did more. They opened their treasures and presented to him gifts. The gifts were such as befitted a prince to receive, consisting of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. With the bestowal of these gifts, their signs of homage paid as to a sovereign, the errand at Bethlehem of those mysterious strangers seems to have been accomplished. They went away.

Their return journey, however, they made by a different course from that by which they had come. This change of course on their part was occasioned by a dream sent them by God. God's warning to them was not to see Herod again. In coming, they had most naturally betaken themselves first to Herod, the king. He, they thought, should surely be to them the best source of information concerning the royal birth of which they had taken that journey to the Jewish capital, Jerusalem, to inquire; for the birth was of one destined to be "King of the Jews." Perhaps the "star" that they saw was, without other clue to the fact, interpreted by them to mean this birth. But we know that there was rife among the nations at this time, a rumor of one expected by the Jews soon to appear, who should be to them a great ruler and deliverer. This widespread rumor was doubtless due to that dispersion of the Jews which had already scattered them in considerable numbers all over the habitable globe. Every pilgrim Jew, wherever he went, bore with him as a comfort, a support, and a boast, his hope of the promised Messiah to redeem Israel from the shame and the distress of their bondage to the Gentiles. The recourse of the wise men to Herod had an undesigned and unexpected effect. They at first learned nothing to their purpose from Herod; but Herod at once learned something that he thought to his purpose from them. He was profoundly disturbed; and so was the city of Jerusalem with him. Herod's character was such, and such were his office and power, that his capital city inevitably felt many of the emotions that were first felt by the king. Herod thought that his royal dynasty was threatened. We know from Josephus that he was sensitive and jealous on this point, to the extent even of putting to death those of his own kindred whom he deemed not sufficiently loyal to himself and his house. Fresh suspicions and fears were now awakened in that uneasy royal heart. A "King of the Jews" born somewhere, of whom *he* knew nothing! With long-exercised art of concealment, he veiled his thoughts from his visitors. On some pretext, he seems to have detained the wise men in Jerusalem, while he should make a certain remarkable inquiry; an inquiry for the purpose of which he called to-

gether the chief priests and the scribes of the people. Herod must either have had some effective firsthand knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures—though an Idumean (Edomite) he played the part of a Jew; or else, which is perhaps more probable, he had learned through general report concerning the nation's expectation of a great personage to arise among them in the character of a champion and a king. The remarkable question that he propounded to his Jewish advisers was this: "Where is your expected Christ to be born?" In Bethlehem of Judea," was their reply.

Herod had now got part of what he wanted. He next secretly summoned the wise men into conference, in order, if possible, to get from them the rest. They had told him, in their first audience, that they had seen the "star in the east" betokening the advent of the child whom they were thus come to Jerusalem to honor. Herod inquired now: "Exactly *when* did this star appear?" The answer of the wise men, he seems to have considered, furnished him the *time*, as the answer of the Jewish doctors had previously furnished him the *place*, of the appearing of the Christ. He would take measures accordingly, to make assurance doubly sure that there should be, here at least, no Messiah born to displace either him or his lineal successor on the throne. The measures that, in fact, he took were suitable to his character of craft and of cruelty. "Go to Bethlehem," said Herod to the wise men; "and when you have found the famous child, return and let me know. I shall wish to come myself and do him homage."

The Eastern strangers withdrew from the royal presence, and, guided now by the star, which seems at this juncture to have reappeared, to their surprise and their joy, they came, without need of further inquiry, to the very cradle-side of the child. For the bright phenomenon (called, perhaps, only from its star-like resemblance, a "star," whatever in its real nature it was) moved before them as they moved, until it reached a station where it stood directly over the place in which the young child lay. Thus star-led to Jesus, those favored pilgrims from the East did the acts of homage to the infant Lord which have already been described. Their visit and their worship may be taken as representing something far more than the mere individual impulse of the wise men themselves. Was it not also a symbol in act of the now slowly accomplishing approach which we are this day beholding, of the great and populous Orient to bow in submission and obedience at the feet of the ascended and glorified Redeemer of men?

The appearance and the disappearance in history of those wise men from the East have

somewhat the same effect now to the imagination of the reader as their appearance and disappearance must have had then in the experience of Mary. They came to her out of mystery; and they vanished in mystery from her view and her knowledge. When ever, before or since, did any other group of nameless men go hand in hand together down such an endless and shining track of universal human fame?

With the adoration of the magi, the brilliant side was complete to the paradox of lowliness and lordliness in which Jesus was born. An historic atrocity must now follow to tinge with somber and with tragic the too-cheerful background against which, without that foil, the birth of the suffering Savior of mankind would be shown. Herod was enraged against the wise men for not coming back to him. His rage stirred up his cruelty. Poor royal wretch, he was himself at this time in the torturing vise of a terrible mortal disease, and no doubt the pangs that he suffered clouded his reason and drove him frantic. But his natural and habitual way was to be inconceivably truculent and brutal. He comes down to us distinguished, among many rulers that bore the same name, by the historic epithet "Great." "Herod the Great," he richly deserved to be called, if eminence in wickedness could constitute the title required. He was certainly one of the very wickedest men of whom history has given us record.

The barbarity that he now committed is but one in a long list of crimes, among which this is the most celebrated only because it is associated with the memory of the most celebrated of men; not at all because it was the most monstrous. Indeed, revolting as it justly seems, it would, but for its connection with Jesus, have been quite lost from human recollection. For Josephus, our chief authority in the history of Herod, writing up a frightful catalogue of Herod's outrageous misdeeds, passes this one in silence, as, perhaps, in his view, unworthy of mention. But Josephus may not have known of it. For it is not necessary to suppose—indeed, it is contrary to probability—that Herod accomplished the massacre openly. It was doubtless an instigated wickedness, instigated and bargained for by Herod; it may have passed, at the time, for a piece of private violence, the perpetrators of which—this is conceivable, their employer was quite capable of such perfidy—may even have been punished, instead of being paid for it, by the perjured royal assassin-in-chief. It was nothing more than the murder of a number of innocent babes—all the male babes that there were at the moment in Bethlehem two years old and under, estimated to be at most some twelve or fifteen.

The wail of the innocents slaughtered, the shrieks of the mothers bereaved, were doubtless loud enough in the hearing of the Lord God of Sabaoth; but they were not heard at the time by the nation at large, though they have never ceased to echo in the sympathetic ears of mankind. Such was Herod's way of making himself and his royal house secure against *that* threatening danger. Let *all* the male babes at the moment in Bethlehem perish at a stroke! Thus, at least, the one babe among them born to be King of the Jews, if such babe indeed there were, should not survive. But Herod reckoned without taking God into the account. God had been beforehand with the tyrant. Already he had warned Joseph in a dream: "Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I tell thee: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Joseph obeyed; he remained in Egypt until Herod died, which was not long after. (The tyrant died miserably of a loathsome disease. "Eaten of worms," is the frightfully suggestive phrase that describes in Scripture the end of a grandson of this monarch. The same expression would fit the case of the grandfather, who reached the age of seventy—notwithstanding his excesses. He attempted suicide at last—in vain—as an escape from his sufferings.) Then, again instructed by a dream from God, Joseph came back into the land of Israel. Because, however, Archelaus, like-minded son of Herod, was reigning in his father's stead (though over only a portion of his father's kingdom), Joseph, afraid to go into Judea, and directed by yet another dream divinely sent, went into Galilee and took up his abode with the child and with Mary in the city of Nazareth.

THE PRESENTATION.

Up to the present point we have followed without interruption a series of incidents in the infancy of Jesus, that seemed to belong together in a natural order of sequence. We turn back now a moment to introduce one or two other incidents which happened meantime, but on which we have thus far bestowed no attention.

The divine child was duly circumcised at the customary age—eight days—at the same time receiving his name, Jesus; the name prescribed for him beforehand by the angel. At the close of forty days' time, he was taken to the Temple at Jerusalem for the ceremony of presentation to the Lord. This rite was obligatory in the case of every firstborn Jewish child.

There could, we should suppose, have been nothing outward to distinguish this child from many another presented in the Temple, at near the same time, for the same dedication. As

has already been said, the parents must have been very poor, since they made the least expensive offering in their child's behalf that the law of Moses permitted. It was doubtless part of the wisdom of God that he who was to become, through suffering, the Redeemer of the world, should enter an earthly lot that would, even at this earliest point, bring him into sympathetic relation with the lowliest of his human brethren.

But there were not wanting at the Temple circumstances that should after all make the presentation of Jesus conspicuous. There was a man in Jerusalem — perhaps only a sojourner there, but by some divine coincidence brought thither at just this moment of time — whose character, as described by the sacred historian, fitted him beyond many to be let into the secrets of the counsel of God. This man's name was Simeon; and "Simeon," through him, has become almost a synonym for amiable and venerable sanctity of spirit and life. He was a just man and devout, who kept himself in an attitude of believing and hopeful patience, waiting for the consolation prophesied for forlorn and afflicted Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him, not apparently for one particular occasion alone, but as a habit of his life—a calming and steady, as well as an enlightening, power.

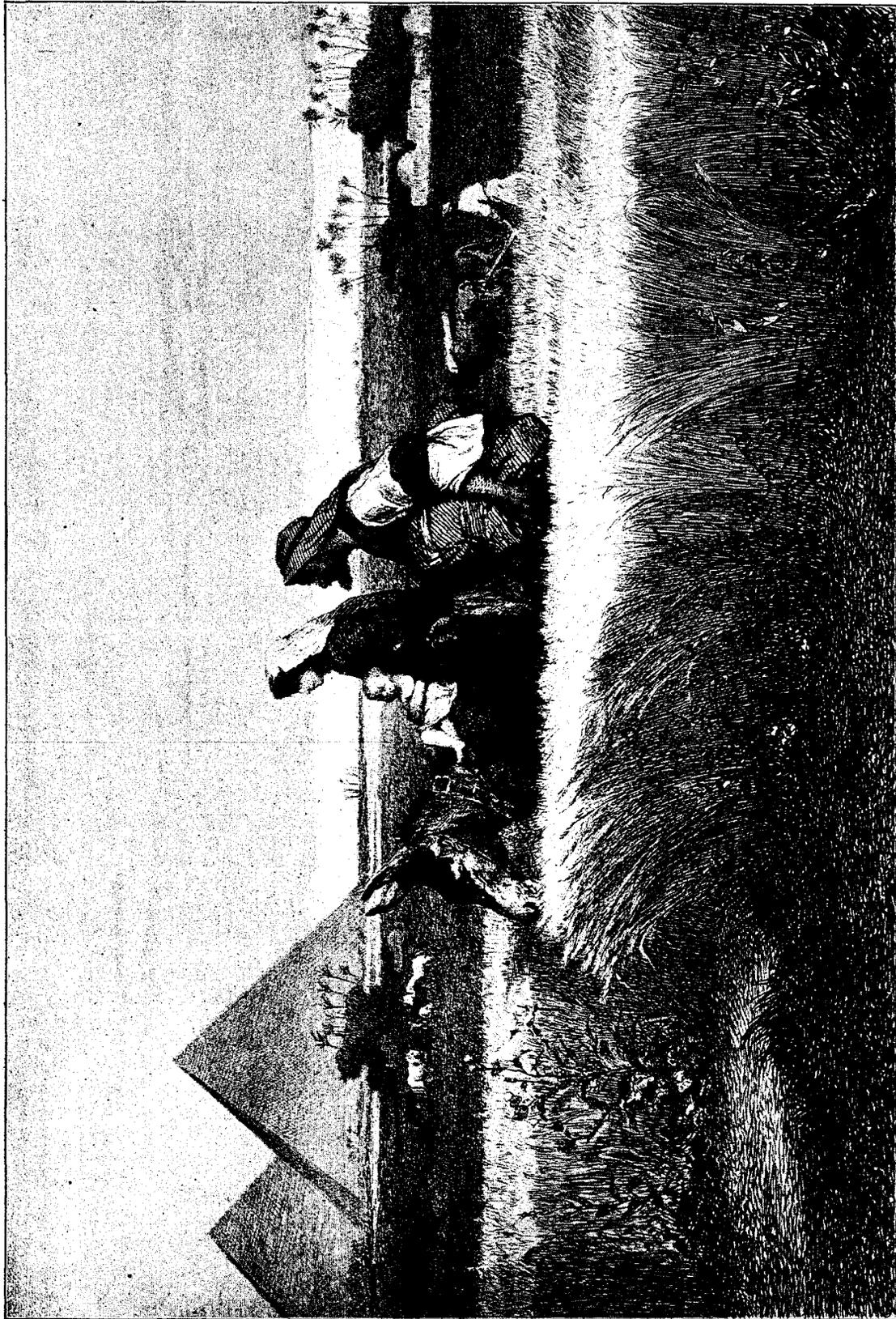
It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit that, however long he might have to wait for such fulfillment of his desire, he yet should not see death till his eyes had looked upon the person of the Christ of God. This aged sage and saint—aged, we think of him with certainty as being, although he is not expressly called so in Scripture—came one day into the Temple with a prophetic sense divine, as would appear, possessing him, of something signal that day to happen there. For he came by the Spirit, it is told us by Luke. He was not to be disappointed. The parents of Jesus brought in their child, to fulfill the ritual requirements laid down by Moses touching a case like his. Whether or not Simeon waited for these first to be fulfilled, does not appear. Either before or after the ceremonies which constituted the formal presentation of the child to the Lord, the mood of thankful recognition and prophecy invaded Simeon's heart, at the same time uplifting alike his faith into vision and his utterance into song. "Now, Lord, lettest thou," so he broke forth, taking the child up in his arms, and, as we may conceive him, lifting his eyes toward heaven:

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to thy word, in peace;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;
A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of thy people Israel."

It was partly like a cry of release and relief, as if there were now nothing left for which the speaker wished longer to live. He does not pray for deliverance from life; he seems to recognize and to accept deliverance as that day graciously granted him. It was, he testifies, "according to the word" of the Lord. There had been an understanding established between the saint and his Heavenly Father that this was to be thus; and the saint did his part in acknowledging with thanks and with joy that his Heavenly Father had already done his.

There is a note in Simeon's "Nunc dimittis" — for so, from the words beginning it in Latin, this outburst of Simeon is sometimes called — there is a note here that should not be missed. It is not simply a blessing for Israel that Simeon recognizes in the child whom he holds in his arms; there is also in that child a light for a revelation to the Gentiles. This constitutes the very earliest express mention occurring in New Testament times of the Gentiles' share in the salvation brought in the first instance to Israel by the advent of Christ.

Joseph and Mary stood wondering by, to hear the things spoken by Simeon. After all that had happened, their wonder could not have been wonder as at a disclosure entirely novel. Rather, we may conjecture, it was wonder at an unexpected confirmation of what they already knew; perhaps, also, at that enlargement of this, just noted, which took in the Gentiles as fellow-heirs with the Jews of the blessing predicted. While the parents thus wondered, Simeon went on and blessed *them*, in words not presented at full in the record. But to Mary the mother, in particular, he said what must have mingled a mysterious bitter with the sweet of his prophecy: "Behold, this child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea, and a sword shall pierce through thy own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." The pangs to Mary the mother, that were to pierce her soul like the thrusts of a sword — those are all past and done now; healing long ago followed, and then a perpetual peace. But it still holds true that, through Jesus, the thoughts of many hearts are revealed. For Jesus is now, as he was while he lived on earth, as he has always been since, and as he forever will be, a touchstone character and person. Every man is brought out to view in his own true, deepest self, by the attitude that he takes — and some attitude every man must take, be it only the attitude of unconcern and neglect — toward Jesus. Thus is it that the profoundly searching prophecy of Simeon persists in an incessant process of fulfillment; and the thoughts of many hearts are even yet infallibly revealed.



BIDA.

THE DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT.

As if in order that woman not less than man, or rather that both the two equal halves of the one whole humanity, should take part in saluting the infant Savior of the world, an aged widow also was present at the self-same moment in the Temple, and she opened her mouth, along with Simeon — that is, in close sequel to him — in words not reported, concerning the child Jesus. Anna was this woman's name; and her father's name is also given, Phanuel, together with, further, the name of the tribe, Asher, to which she belonged. Anna is expressly styled a prophetess; a personage, she must have been, well known to the habitual visitors at the Temple; for she made her home there, realizing for herself the blessing pronounced by the Psalmist on those that "dwell" in the house of the Lord. Connected with the extensive edifice called comprehensively the

Temple, and indeed architectually one with that, were many attached buildings that afforded places of permanent residence for those engaged in the various services of the consecrated spot. This is probably what, thirty years or so afterward, suggested to Jesus the form of his saying: "In my father's house are many mansions." From her chosen abode in one of the many mansions belonging to her Heavenly Father's house below, Anna the prophetess no doubt was soon after removed to take up her eternal residence in one of the many mansions belonging to her Heavenly Father's house on high. There she has since been learning every hour something new concerning him of whom in her earthly old age she faithfully spoke, according to her light, to all that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOY OF TWELVE.

ONLY one more story remains to be told of that part of the life of Jesus which passed before his brief public career began. But that story is characteristic and beautiful. It is given us by Luke alone. "And the child grew and waxed strong, becoming filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him."

The foregoing scant information, repeated a few verses after in substance and almost in form, but hardly added to, is all that the frugal history of Luke — no one else tells us anything — reports concerning the childhood of Jesus, in Nazareth of Galilee. Nazareth was, in its natural aspects, a lovely home for the boy. It was a busy hamlet of some size, nestled high among limestone hills, out of the substance of which its houses, gleaming white in the Syrian sun, were built. Near was the great plain of Esdraelon rolling its waves of green, crested here and there with flowers of many hues, twenty miles or more away westward to the foot of Mount Carmel overlooking the sea. The slopes of the hills on which Nazareth lay were, no doubt, in the days of the childhood of Jesus, terraced to the summits, and rich with the fruits of laborious tilth. Galilee, throughout its whole extent, swarmed with people; and these could find their sustenance only as they industriously made the most of the natural resources of both the waters and the soil. The waters abounded with fish and the soil was generously responsive to culture. Esdraelon is one of the most fertile plains or valleys in the world. Its fertility seems literally inexhaustible. For thousands of years, apparently

without the application of manures, it has gone on yielding its plenteous, its undiminishing, harvests of grain. The prodigal bounty of the soil, as if to show that its strength is more than any amount of merely useful labor can tire, frolics everywhere into flowers bright and beautiful and various beyond what the present writer remembers to have seen anywhere else in the world produced by the wild exuberance of nature. The hillsides round about are also gay in springtime with flowers. The voices of birds regale the ear, as the forms and colors of blossoms delight the eye.

Amid such scenes and conditions of physical nature, the boyhood of Jesus was passed. Few traces, however, of influence on his character, from the outward world that immediately environed him in his boyhood and youth, are to be recognized either in the words or the deeds of his manhood. The forms, it is true, under which he taught were in many instances affected by his own individual situation and experience in life. But that in him which in other men we should call by the name of genius, or of mental and moral bent — that deep determining something, that basis of personality, which constituted him what he was — remained to the last independent of any molding power from his circumstances.

Of the influence of his home life upon the boy, we know nothing; but we may with confidence conjecture much. The woman that could chant, in celebration of her choice by God to such motherhood as hers, the famous "Magnificat" of Mary — for by that name is sometimes called, from its commencing word

in the Latin, the psalm of praise and rejoicing recited by Mary in saluting Elizabeth—was certainly a mother that would train, and that could train, her son from his tenderest years in knowledge of the Scriptures. That psalm itself is so much molded on Old Testament models of thought and of expression, that some critics have even denied to it any originality. Wise critics will, on the contrary, find in it precisely such human originality, and no other, as was fit to one like the author placed in a situation like hers; while also finding in it a breath of different inspiration that could come only from heaven.

Of the father we know little, but the little that we do know is all favorable to his character. If, as might seem, he was somewhat deficient in the stronger, more positive elements of manhood, such deficiency did not in the least disqualify him for dealing wisely and well with a son like his, who needed neither correction nor restraint. It could not but be that a devout believer such as Joseph was, would be prepared to stand in a kind of awe before the boy, whom yet he felt providentially bound to bring up as if he were indeed—though he was not—his son. It is delightful, and at the same awe-inspiring, to think of the child Jesus in that unique relation which such a child must necessarily hold to one like Joseph standing in the father's place, while not the father. Doubtless the divinity in Jesus was veiled sufficiently to Joseph, not to dazzle or to confound him. It was also, we must suppose, in some degree unconscious to the boy himself. At any rate, to whatever degree, great or little, hidden from being recognized by himself or by others, it certainly did not work to exempt Jesus from the duty of filial obedience. It is expressly told us that as to his parents, he was "subject to them." Meantime, as also it is expressly told us—and that this, and, with a single exception, this only, should expressly be told us concerning his childhood, is worthy of note—meantime, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." This is said by the evangelist, *after* he has said that the boy had entered, noticeably it must have been, upon a course of being "filled with wisdom." The increase spoken of would seem, therefore, to have been something much more than the ordinary advance in knowledge observable in children, keeping pace with their years. It is strikingly characteristic of the strict sobriety of the narrative of Luke, that no marvelous stories are told by him to illustrate his own strong general statement as to the mental proficiency of Jesus in his youth. The anecdote which constitutes the single exception already mentioned to this abstinence on his part, is hardly an exception.

It comes out incidentally in the narrative, that Joseph and Mary were in the habit of making yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover. On one of these occasions, the boy Jesus, having reached the age of twelve years, and now perhaps for the first time since his infancy visiting Jerusalem, remained behind in the city, after his parents had started on their return way to Nazareth. The lad was not missed, until a day's journey in the direction of home had been accomplished by the parents. There were, it appears, a considerable number of their kindred and neighbors, traveling with Joseph and Mary. The parents had supposed that their son was somewhere in this company; and naturally they were much concerned when they found that he was not. They retraced their steps all the way back to the city. It was not till the third day—that is, probably the third day after the homeward start of the parents without their boy—that they discovered him. He was in the Temple, seated among the doctors of the law, hearing their discourse and asking them questions. Those that were present as witnesses of the scene were astonished at the Galilean lad's evident intelligence. The parents themselves seem to have been surprised by what they saw, quite as much as they were relieved and delighted. "They were amazed," is the strong expression of Luke. Mary gave voice to their emotions. She gently chided her boy. "Child," said she, "why didst thou thus deal with us? Behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing."

At first blush, our instinctive sympathies are with the mother in the case. We are tempted to feel that she had good ground for her tender reproof. It does not, on the face of it, look like quite a fair way of behavior for a dutiful son toward his parents. But Jesus in his reply admits no fault of conduct on his own part. He does not (so far as reported) express sympathetic regret at his parents' sorrow on his behalf. He merely expresses a surprise which seems almost to retort a certain blame on Joseph and Mary. He says: "How is it that ye sought me? [Why should you not have been clear where to find me?] Did ye not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

Now, the fact that Jesus was sinless—this, by his own claim, not disputed even by his enemies ("Which of you convinces me of sin?" he asked them once, and they made no reply)—this fact obliges us to seek an explanation of his deportment on the present occasion. In the case of an ordinary twelve-year-old boy, we should not, without some adequate explanation to relieve his behavior, acquit him of blame if he should stay behind his parents in a strange city, they not knowing that he

purposed doing so, still less having given him their approval in such purpose. What justified conduct like this in Jesus?

It is not necessary to suppose that there was any intentional, or even conscious, separation of himself from his parents on the part of Jesus. There may have been an innocent misunderstanding between the parents and the son as to the plan of the return. The parents perhaps assumed that the son knew what, in fact, he did not know, about the proposed time of the start homeward. They were occupied, it may be, with necessary preparations, while the son repaired to the Temple, drawn by his instinct for "things divine." The preparations complete, the start, we may conjecture, was made without attention on the parents' part to the fact that their son was not among the company traveling with them. This might easily happen amid the bustle and confusion incident to the beginning of such a journey by such a number of persons. The boy meantime intent upon his object in the Temple, and not aware of what was going on outside, stays hour after hour, until at last the day is spent. His parents will know where to find him, he reflects, and his mind, filial at once toward God, his Heavenly Father, and toward his earthly parents, abides in perfect peace.

What has thus far been said, has been said independently of anything supernatural in the character of the boy Jesus, or in the consequent relation subsisting between him and his parents. But we cannot properly leave this important consideration out of account. And in view of this consideration, it is not too much to say, that *if* fault was committed on either side, it was committed on the side of the parents rather than on the side of the son. Knowing, as those parents both of them knew, what the peculiar divine relation of Jesus was, having in addition observed, as they must have had abundant occasion to observe, through twelve years of that unique childhood in their son, what his transcendent character and mission were, they were bound to watch the signs of special impulse and development in their sinless child, and see to it that, so far as lay in their power, he should, in spiritual things, have his own way, unhindered and unchecked. In accordance with this obvious duty on the parents' part, the waiting, if any waiting on either side were needful to be done, should have been rather done by them on their boy than by their boy on them, *as far as concerned*, for instance, *the matter of determining when he was to leave his business in his Father's house*. At any rate, the boy Jesus had a sense of a different, a paramount, obligation that might properly, upon occasion requiring it, transcend and override his obligation to his earthly parents. There should have been no

conflict between these two obligations. Perhaps, in fact, there was none. But if, on the contrary, such conflict there was, the fault was not in him who rightly made the obligation to God greater. It was in those rather, if any such there were, who interposed their claim in preference to God's.

We cannot fail to see that there was some imputation, however slight, of reproach in the mother's words to Jesus. We can as little fail to see that not only was there no confession following, from the son, of fault on his part, but instead there was such language used by him as may easily be understood to imply a certain sweet and gracious reflection of reproach and blame upon the parents. Their fault—if they committed fault—perhaps lay in something deeper than either the mere administering to him of undeserved reproof, or the failure to know where they would be sure to find their missing son. It may be that they had declined somewhat from the high spirit of faith and vision in which they began their relationship to Jesus before his birth and at his birth. We shall, as we proceed, come upon other occasions for observing Mary under some shadow of disapproval from her son. "Blessed among women," as she was, Mary seems not to have been always quite perfect before God. It is even remarkable that, save only that tender commendation of Mary to John by the dying Savior on the cross, the Scripture gives no instance in which the Ideal Son speaks either to or of his mother otherwise than with some accompanying implication of blame. It seems like a rebuke beforehand of that false regard for Mary which was destined afterward to reach the idolatrous excess of associating the Virgin Mother with the Divine Son himself—nay, sometimes of exalting her above the Son, in claim to human homage.

"And they understood not the saying which he spoke to them"—so Luke tells us, with reference to that question addressed to them by Jesus, "Did ye not know that it was needful for me to be in my Father's house?" To us, at the end of nineteen centuries of Christian history, lying luminous, to our backward-looking eyes, against the background of what we know Christ subsequently did, and said, and suffered, and was, it may seem, at first thought, strange that the parents of the youthful Jesus should have been at any loss to understand the purport of those words from their son. Had they forgotten the wonders in which he was born? Had they forgotten the solemn significance of the message brought them by the announcing angel? Had they forgotten what Simeon had said, and Anna, in the Temple? Not altogether, certainly. But imagine the everyday routine of commonplace through

which their shut-in, laborious life was drawn out at Nazareth. Remember that other children were given them, as the years went by, to divide the parental care with Jesus. Consider that the preternatural character of this particular child of theirs was meantime probably suspended in a kind of abeyance and unconsciousness, necessary in order to proper preparation on his part in secret for the work which—but not before the fullness of his time was come—he should accomplish in the face of the world. Take all these things duly into account, and nothing assuredly will seem more likely, than that, in the course of such experience on the part of the parents, and of such divinely purposed, though, it may be, unconscious, hiding of itself, on the part of the son, the parents' impression of what had passed mysteriously so long before should have grown gradually somewhat obscure and dim to them; at least should have ceased to exercise a present and vivid influence on their habitual ways of regarding their boy.

The New Testament idyls of the birth, the infancy, the boyhood, of Jesus—they are beautiful, but do they answer to realities? Are they truth, or are they poetry? But there is a different alternative. Are they perhaps both truth and poetry? Both, let us confidently reply. These idyls are truth, and the truth which they are, is poetry. It would have been strange, indeed—nay, but it would have been *inadmissibly* strange—if such a life as that of Jesus, ending in such a death as his, then followed by such a resurrection, should *not* have begun with miracle. That, were it once supposed as true, would be an occasion of doubt and misgiving with regard to the alleged facts of all the after history. The miracle of the life, the character, the death, the resurrection, of Jesus may be said almost to require miracle preceding, attending, following, his birth; it may certainly be said to make such miracle in the highest degree probable.

But observe how little, after all, is the measure of the miracle that contented the divine requirement—how little, that is to say, additional to the one chief miracle of all, the miracle of God's becoming man. The *fact* of that miracle granted, the *method* of the miracle followed strictly as a matter of course. There was no other method even conceivable to men. But, *beyond* the miracle, confessed to be stupendous, of the divine incarnation itself, how marvelous the paucity of things marvelous in the narrative of the beginning of Christ's life on earth! There is no extravagance here, no ostentation, no excess. All is divinely moderate and restrained. And, besides the quantity of the demonstration, so limited, consider the quality of it—how exquisitely adapted, how

simple, how beautiful! Human invention would not have satisfied itself so easily. Witness the bizarre extravagances of the parallel Buddhist legends. Witness the rejected, riotous mythologies of the apocryphal so-called "Gospels of the Infancy." *Those* are things such as the unchecked, unguided human imagination produces. The New Testament idyls are *history*. Thus only are explained their existence, their frugality in number, their moderation of tone, their simplicity, their fitness, and their beauty, their indestructible, their invulnerable, life.

EIGHTEEN SILENT YEARS.

A blank page, or rather a page blank except for an inscription on it of these words only: "He was subject to them" [his parents] and, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men," would be the fitting chapter in this history to cover the next eighteen years of the most memorable human life ever lived on earth. There exists in the record such a gap of absolute silence and mystery that it is strange that the myth-makers have never sought to fill it up with their fictions. We have apocryphal "Gospels of the Infancy" of Jesus still extant, written no one knows exactly when. We have apocryphal "Acts" in abundance. But there have been, so far as the present writer knows, no attempts on the part of myth-makers to bridge over with the fabrications of fancy the historical chasm which yawns, vacant and mysterious, between the twelfth year of Jesus and his thirtieth. We suppose, indeed with probability, that Jesus learned and practiced the trade of his father, that of a worker in wood. We idealize about it, and say, "How faithfully, how fairly, with what industry, with what cheer, with what skill, that Perfect Man must have wrought!" Safe idealization, no doubt; but perhaps after all the most reverent way, and the wisest, the most wholesome, and in every respect the best, is to leave the entire interval as Scripture leaves it, impressively voiceless.

The few following extracts from the books of myth that were written early, some of them, perhaps, from 1,700 to 1,800 years ago, about Jesus the boy, may serve instructively to hint what sort of stories might have been produced concerning the youth of Jesus, had the imagination of man set itself to the work of supplying the void in history which marks the period referred to. These fictions need no comment. The contrast between them and the historical accounts of the New Testament, is in its bare self stronger than any rhetoric of remark could make it.

The so-called "First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ" expands the account furnished

by Luke of the boy Jesus in the Temple into arid and idle extravagances like the following:

"When a certain astronomer, who was present, asked the Lord Jesus whether he had studied astronomy, the Lord Jesus replied, and told him the number of the spheres and heavenly bodies, as also their triangular, square, and sextile aspect; their progressive and retrograde motion; their size, and several prognostications; and other things, which the reason of man had never discovered.

"There was also among them a philosopher, well skilled in physic and natural philosophy, who asked the Lord Jesus whether he had studied physic. He replied, and explained to him physics and metaphysics, also those things which were above and below the power of nature; the powers also of the body, its humors and their effects; also the number of its members, and bones, veins, arteries, and nerves; the several constitutions of the body, hot and dry, cold and moist, and the tendencies of them; how the soul operated upon the body; what its various sensations and faculties were; the faculty of speaking, anger, desire; and lastly, the manner of its composition and dissolution; and other things, which the understanding of no creature had ever reached."

The same "Gospel of the Infancy," in an earlier chapter, has the following to tell about the part which the boy Jesus took in helping Joseph at his trade:

"And Joseph, wheresoever he went in the city, took the Lord Jesus with him, where he was sent for to work, to make gates, or milk-pails, or sieves, or boxes; the Lord Jesus was with him, wheresoever he went. And as often as Joseph had anything in his work to make longer or shorter, or wider or narrower, the Lord Jesus would stretch his hands towards it. And presently it became as Joseph would have it. So that he had no need to finish anything with his own hands, for he was not very skillful at his carpenter's trade."

"Thomas' Gospel of the Infancy" has the following: "When the child Jesus was five years of age, and there had been a shower of rain, which was now over, Jesus was playing with other Hebrew boys by a running stream; and the water, running over the banks, stood in little lakes; but the waters instantly became

clear and useful again; he having smote them only by his word, they readily obeyed him. Then he took from the bank of the stream some soft clay, and formed out of it twelve sparrows; and there were other boys playing with him. But a certain Jew, seeing the things which he was doing, namely, his forming clay into the figures of sparrows on the sabbath day, went presently away, and told his father Joseph, and said, Behold, thy boy is playing by the river side, and has taken clay, and formed it into twelve sparrows, and profaneth the sabbath. Then Joseph came to the place where he was, and when he saw him, called to him, and said, Why doest thou that which it is not lawful to do on the sabbath day? Then Jesus, clapping together the palms of his hands, called to the sparrows, and said to them, Go, fly away; and while ye live remember me. So the sparrows fled away, making a noise."

Also the following: "Another time Jesus went forth into the street, and a boy, running by, rushed upon his shoulder; at which Jesus, being angry, said to him, Thou shalt go no farther. And he instantly fell down dead; which when some persons saw, they said, Where was this boy born, that everything which he says presently cometh to pass? Then the parents of the dead boy, going to Joseph, complained, saying, You are not fit to live with us in our city, having such a boy as that: either teach him that he bless, and not curse, or else depart hence with him, for he kills our children.

"Then Joseph, calling the boy Jesus by himself, instructed him, saying, Why doest thou such things to injure the people, so that they hate us and persecute us? But Jesus replied, I know that what thou sayeth is not of thyself, but for thy sake I will say nothing; but they who have said these things to thee, shall suffer everlasting punishment. And immediately they who had accused him became blind."

Who that wisely loves either truth or poetry would not prefer, to puerilities and blasphemies such as the foregoing, the eighteen silent years that the New Testament history of Jesus leaves us, stretching unbroken between the twelve-year-old boy's appearance in the Temple and the going forth to be baptized by John of the young man of thirty, ready now for the self-sacrifice of his life and his death?

CHAPTER IV.

A VOICE.

THE Voice was that of Elizabeth's son, John, the cousin of Jesus. "John the Baptist" is the historic name by which he is known — "the Baptist" being a designation equivalent to "the Baptizer." Baptizing was the conspicuous visible feature of the work that he performed.

There is no other great active figure in history at once so distinct, so striking, so heroic, so noble, and, in the details of his character and career, so little known, as John the Baptist. We have the highest authority that ever uttered itself in human speech, for pronouncing this Hebrew prophet the peer of any man whatsoever that, up to his time, had arisen anywhere on earth in any age of the world. "Verily I say unto you," said Jesus, in that solemn form of asseveration which from those lips became so incomparably impressive, "among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." What other human being had ever, by name, a testimony to his comparative rank of greatness among his fellows, worthy to be once mentioned as parallel to that?

How suddenly this commanding human figure strides forth out of absolute obscurity into the broad blaze of publicity — a publicity as illuminating as ever yet shone briefly and brilliantly about any man in the whole course of history! "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," cries the Voice abruptly aloud; and, from end to end, as from side to side, the land rings again with the tones of the message. The aspect and habit of the crier accorded with the peremptory purport of the cry. His raiment was woven of camel's hair, and he wore a girdle of leather about his loins. He fed on locusts and wild honey. He made his haunt the uninhabited wilderness of Judea; and it was there that he lifted up his voice. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," was his own description of himself, taken out of Isaiah the prophet. Out of the same prophet, John took also the words of the cry:

"Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
Make his paths straight."

The phrase was different, but the sense was the same as when the summons had its other form, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In the one case, it was the kingdom approaching; in the other, the King. The language is the language of one performing the part of a forerunner. Even yet in the East, important personages driving with some cere-

mony through the streets are preceded at a little interval by young men strikingly dressed who keep up, panting, but proud of their office, a rapid run in advance of the equipages of their masters, crying out, as they go, a shrill, ringing, imperious warning to everybody in the way to prepare a broad clear passage for the great ones coming. Such is the imagery under which John the Baptist is presented — under which he presents himself — as a "forerunner," announcing to men the nearing advent of "the Lord." That Lord was Jesus — now about to take up his vocation as the promised, the long-expected, Messiah. But this, John himself did not yet seem exactly to know. Indeed, at times he seems almost literally a Voice, rather than an Intelligence, in respect to the message that he bore. The great heart that he was — great, self-postponing, self-effacing heart! Never a repining word out of his mouth! Never a syllable to imply that he felt it a hardship to be himself only a forerunner, while another than he was the one chosen to be the King! "There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." How willingly that "burning and shining light" paled away and lost itself in the splendor of the sun, which, as the morning-star, he heralded! All praise and honor to John, the solemn, the joyful, self-effacer!

Such a Voice as he did not need to go to the multitude in order to be heard. The multitude came instead to him to hear. The wilderness was suddenly populous; for in the strong language of evangelist Matthew, "There went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan." It must have been a remarkable movement and concourse of people. They came to hear; they heard, and were baptized. The place of the baptizing was the river Jordan. Those baptized accompanied this, their act of obedience to the summons of John, with a confession of their sins. But among the thousands on thousands that thus thronged to the baptism of John, there came one offering himself for the rite who had no sins to confess. The stern Baptist was staggered. He did not afterward flinch before Herod the tetrarch; although, in confronting that tyrant with bold denunciation of his sins and his crimes, he took the risk of going, as indeed he went, to prison and to death, for his fidelity. But before this cometh to his baptism John was abashed. It was his own cousin that

came, his cousin and his junior; but still he was abashed.

The new comer was from Galilee, from Nazareth. It was Jesus. The Baptist expostulated. "I have need to be baptized of thee," he said, "and comest thou to me?" Whether John had had previous personal acquaintance with Jesus, we have no means of knowing. As to what, if it be supposed that he had, was his previous impression concerning his kinsman, we are equally ignorant. It may be that now first, at this moment, so pregnant, was borne from above into the soul of the Baptist a sense divine of the extraordinary character and mission of his cousin. Some such sudden revelation perhaps it was, unlooked-for, surprising, that led him to utter his almost involuntary words of deprecation to Jesus. It must have awed the beholders, when they saw a man that awed everyone else, now himself thus awed in the presence of an applicant for his baptism. But with that meekness of majesty, that majesty of meekness, which characterized Jesus, he made his reassuring reply. "Suffer it now," he said; "for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." "Us"! It was not often that Jesus, in his recorded discourse, joined himself with any other man by saying "we," "our," "us." But he did so on the present occasion. It was a noble recognition of John, as joined in a kind of transcendent partnership with himself. John, having performed his needful act of self-postponing homage thus rendered as to his Lord, made no further pause or objection. His humility was the true humility of immediate obedience. He baptized Jesus in the stream of the Jordan. It was almost as if in prefiguration of the death that the one thus baptized would so soon accomplish at Jerusalem. "I have a baptism to be baptized with," Jesus solemnly said once, in prospect of his then imminent obedience unto death. The language was remarkable. It is not unlikely that, in being baptized by John, Jesus had some premonition in his soul of this symbolic and prophetic meaning hidden in the act. The act, so far as his own part in it was concerned, was at least, in speaking emblem, a whole dedication of himself to the work that he was to do.

Such an occurrence as this on earth could not pass without divine demonstration of some sort from heaven. That which in fact happened is very briefly, very unostentatiously, described. It was august in its simplicity, its fitness, its sufficiency. The exact point at which it occurred was when Jesus, having been baptized, was coming out of the water; that is, when this great act of obedience and self-dedication on his part was freshly complete. The heavens were opened. The visible phe-

nomenon was a striking part of the occurrence. Mark, the graphic evangelist, says, "rent asunder," instead of, more quietly, "opened." This suggests a rupture of the sky — a "kindly rupture," to use Milton's phrase applied by him to something far different, it must certainly have been; while yet an act of parting visible and noticeable to a qualified observer.

"A qualified observer," let it be remarked; for it seems not clear that anyone saw this phenomenon but Jesus himself. The statement of Matthew is that "the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw." He saw yet another phenomenon not less remarkable than the rupture of the sky. Mark says that "he saw the heavens rent asunder and," with that rending asunder of the heavens, the same sequel as the one described by Matthew. Only Luke uses language which might imply that others than Jesus himself saw these extraordinary phenomena; he says simply, in general terms, "the heaven was opened," adding, however, in description, the interesting point that Jesus was "praying" at the moment when these things took place. John, it should be noted, John the Evangelist, reports John the Baptist as saying afterward, "I have beheld." So that John at least, the baptizer, along with Jesus the baptized, saw what immediately succeeded the sublime celestial phenomenon of the sky opening over that unique baptismal scene. And this is what succeeded, told in the words of John the Baptist: "I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him" [Jesus]. That heaven-descended dove, symbolic of the Spirit, was to be a sign from God to John, indicating that he on whom it alighted was the Coming One. It was, John says, for the purpose of making manifest to Israel the promised Messiah — "the Son of God," as John here calls him — that he himself came baptizing in water. He that should come after would baptize in the Holy Spirit instead.

But there was something more than has yet been described, in that amazing demonstration from heaven. The ear was appealed to, as well as the eye. A voice came out of the heavens: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Thus Mark and Luke report that audible voice from heaven; in form, as if it directly addressed Jesus himself. Matthew gives it a turn, as if it were addressed to bystanders and observers; or, as if it was intended for assurance to John, at least, not less than to Jesus. It is possible, indeed, that both forms of speech were used. But it seems more likely that here is an example in the Gospels of that freedom from rigid regard for non-essential details, which to wise readers of history always

seems confirmatory, rather than destructive, of the substantial trustworthiness of parallel narratives.

The baptism of Jesus, constituting his solemn inauguration to the Messianic office, was now accomplished, with the accompaniment of those awful and beautiful signs from heaven which have been described. At the same moment was mainly accomplished John's brief mission of forerunner to Jesus; for the Messiah was now "made manifest to Israel." His earthly career would henceforth hasten to its tragic conclusion. But there remained to John a period of continued testimony on behalf of the manifested Messiah, followed by a moment of pathetic suspense and doubt. To Jesus, before the commencing of his public activity, there remained a period of mysterious trial.

THE TEMPTATION.

An event so momentous in the history of the world—of the moral universe, we may say—as the open induction into office, with attestation from heaven, of one solemnly undertaking to be champion of humanity, to be Redeemer of men, to be Destroyer of death and of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil—this obviously could not fail to attract the attention and the presence of any adversary to the purpose in view who might at once have knowledge of the fact and be able to come and observe what happened in person. Such an adversary there was, and the name by which he is known is "the devil." We need not doubt that the devil was present at the baptism of Jesus. The event took place on earth; but it was witnessed both from heaven and from hell.

The period of mysterious trial that after his baptism immediately followed to Jesus, presents one of the profoundest problems in the whole Gospel history. Read Matthew's plain, brief statement of fact: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." No interval apparently elapsed between the baptism and this Spirit-led resort of Jesus to the wilderness. Mark uses his favorite adverb, and says that what is thus narrated happened "straightway." At another point he varies slightly from Matthew, choosing a strangely vivid different word. He says, "The Spirit *driveth* him."

If the statement of the evangelists were that the Spirit urged Jesus into the wilderness—this, and nothing more—it would seem easier to understand. Some wonder it still might occasion that the Messiah should thus begin his public ministry by hiding himself. But we should say, "Doubtless he retired for a season of lonely meditation, self-examination, and prayer." If the statement were double instead

of single, if it read that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, *and* the devil there tempted him, that, again, would be a less difficult problem than the one which actually confronts us. But he was led thither by the Spirit *for* the devil to tempt him. The problem could hardly be more difficult.

What is the meaning of the narrative? What was the purpose of the things narrated? We shall be in a better position for answering these questions when we have the whole of the narrative before us.

The experience of Jesus in the wilderness began with a long fast—a fast of forty days and forty nights. It used to be objected by skeptics that such a fast was impossible; that no man could live so long without food. We know now that men have lived even longer than that without either food or drink. But in the case of Jesus, there is no reason for seeking to escape the supposition of miracle. In fact, it is expressly told us by both Matthew and Mark that, on this occasion, a miracle occurred; for the angels ministered unto him. It is safe to say that never, up to that time, had the angels performed their ministering office with equal delight. The word translated "ministered" is to be understood as implying that the angels brought food to the Lord.

The temptation from the devil that was suffered by Jesus *during* the forty days' fast, is left unrelated, unhinted, by the evangelists. It is not expressly stated that Jesus, throughout this whole experience of his, was without human companionship. But such, no doubt, is the meaning. "He was with the wild beasts," says Mark. That lonely wrestle with Satan, prolonged through forty days and forty nights of fasting! Was it also sleepless? What were the incidents of it? No one knows. Jesus seems not to have felt the need of food to sustain him. But at the end of the forty days—not till then—he hungered.

It was while he was in this state of conscious craving for food that the first *recorded* temptation from Satan befell him. "The tempter"—for so Matthew here names the mysterious being alluded to, but Luke still calls him "the devil"—"came and said unto him." This form of expression seems to imply that the presence and urgency of the devil intermitted at times. The tempter perhaps withdrew now and again to meditate some changed mode of assault. The first expedient was adapted to the perceived condition of Jesus. In what form the devil appeared, or whether in any visible form; with what voice he spoke, or whether with any audible voice, we are not informed, nor need we ask or conjecture. He "said"—that is, he intelligibly conveyed somehow to Jesus this meaning: "If thou art

the Son of God" — "Son of God," Satan had no doubt heard pronounced from heaven as the name of his adversary — "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." The wilderness of Judea, a desolate region lying southeast of Jerusalem, abounds with stones. Many of these are flat, not unlike in shape the thin outrolled loaves in which the Syrians bake their bread. The suggestion was a not unnatural one. Those stones, by a mere miraculous word from the mouth of the Son of God, might be changed into loaves of bread. Not an instant's lodgment did the impious suggestion gain in the breast of Jesus. If miracle could sustain him through stones made bread, equally could miracle sustain him without the intervention of bread, however produced or provided. The reply was prompt, and it was drawn from Scripture: "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This was equivalent to saying, "I do not depend on bread for life; I live directly from God."

The temptation was in effect a temptation to forsake God, by ceasing to trust him. Jesus was there in the wilderness not on his own errand, but on God's. He had put himself in God's hands, in the very act of going. In truth, he not so much *went*, as "was led." It was not time yet, it never would be time to Jesus, to take himself out of God's hands.

There was no use discussing with one that could answer, and that would answer, like that; and Satan did not press his point. He tried a fresh expedient. He took Jesus away from the wilderness into the Holy City, and there stationed him aloft on the pinnacle of the Temple. Just what this station was, has been much questioned. We need not trouble ourselves to settle the point. It was a station of great height, perhaps looking down a sheer wall of rock masonry into the depths of Kedron valley below. Satan seems to have taken his cue for the particular temptation now proposed to Jesus from the spirit of the reply with which he himself had just been met and foiled. The tempter said to himself, "This enemy of mine makes a great point of *trust*. I will offer him a chance to exercise his favorite virtue. He loves Scripture, it seems; I will recommend my proposal with a text." "If thou art the Son of God," said he to Jesus, "fling thyself down from hence; for it is written, 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to guard thee'; and, 'On their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.'" If this temptation succeeded, Jesus would commit the sin of presumption. And *any* sin whatsoever from him would answer the purpose of the tempter. For no one could be a

Savior from sin who was himself a sinner. "Again it is written," said Jesus to Satan "thou shalt not *tempt* the Lord thy God. This time, also, Satan tried to parley. Crest-fallen he must have been: but he had one master stroke in reserve. He took Jesus with him to the summit of an "exceeding high mountain" and thence showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. *How* Jesus was thus transported, what the "exceeding high mountain" was, what means were used for the world-wide panoramic display—the "show" may have been a *mere* show, or ocular illusion—whether the glory of the kingdoms was expatiated upon to the ear, as well as flashed in vision on the eye—these are questions that have much tempted conjecture; but we shall here pass them in silence.

The existence, the activity, the knowledge, the power, of a spiritual being such as the devil is represented in Scripture to be, may well stagger and confound us; but that there is a living and dreadful personal reality corresponding, cannot be doubted by anyone who is willing to understand the language of the Bible in its obviously intended meaning, and to accept its statements, thus understood, as true. With the reality of the devil of Scripture supposed, the present narrative becomes entirely credible—credible, observe, but by no means, therefore, at all the more comprehensible. Comprehensible to us, it probably never will be. But it is perfectly reasonable to say that, let the matter be wisely considered, the fact of a signal temptation to Jesus from the devil is far easier to believe than it would be to disbelieve it. Granted the existence of a person like the devil, it follows, with the force of demonstration, that he certainly would summon all his power and all his craft, and this, in one concentrated and supreme exertion, promptly put forth, against a recognized adversary like Jesus. Satan, we may be sure, waited only to be certain who his predestined adversary was, to attempt that adversary's overthrow. And perhaps the Holy Spirit resident in Jesus urged him into the wilderness, only in order that he might *there* endure his inevitable temptation from Satan—there, rather than elsewhere. It should be a duel, with no witnesses, no seconds, on either side; a long and deadly grapple joined between the two combatants *alone*.

The privilege and power of Satan were formidable, were tremendous. He seems to have been denied nothing in the way of what might be called outward or material resource. He could apparently do with Jesus what he would, only so as not to touch his soul within him in any way except in the way of proffered bribe and inducement. He has now rapt on high the

alleged Son of God, the predicted Savior of men, to a mountain-top whence, through some optic effect not described, the kingdoms of the world with their glory are subject, or seem subject, to view. He dilates vauntingly on the spectacle, claims that all is his own to bestow, and dazzlingly offers to lavish all upon Jesus on a single condition—which he names. Now, we are likely to mistake. This is not to be regarded as a boastful offer of Satan's that he could not make good. It was not simple brag-gadocio on his part. The lie that was in the offer was not the open lie of an utterly false claim from Satan to power which he did not possess. It is mysteriously true that, in a certain sense, the lordship of the world was indeed his own. Jesus himself does not scruple to call Satan the "prince of this world." The lie in the tempter's words was a covered lie. It lay hidden in the suggestion, the implication, that *such* a kingdom of the world as Satan could bestow, was *the* kingdom that Jesus came to win. The idea was a specious one. The alternative virtually presented to Jesus was—kingdom through suffering, and shame, and death, after long delay (compare that notable expression in Scripture, "the kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ"); or, kingdom at once, with no cost at all to himself. No cost *except*—

Except *what*? Why, only a form, a gesture, a posture. The soul need take no part in it. It was something purely outward. Jesus had merely to acknowledge the giver of the kingdom by an act befitting a loyal liege. He was but to fall down, in oriental obeisance, at the feet of the bestower. That was all. It was the work of an instant. A bow, a prostration, and the world at once was his—that world which he had come so painfully to win. "It hath been delivered unto me," so Satan quite untruthfully asserted; "and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou, therefore, wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine." The tempter got his answer with no pause from the tempted. It came, like the previous answers, in terms of Scripture: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." But in this third case there was a preface. "Get thee hence, Satan," Jesus first said; as if now he inwardly felt sure, and was quite ready to announce, that the tempter had stretched the full length of his tether. Thereupon Satan withdrew, and Jesus was left alone once more. But not long alone; for behold, angels came and ministered unto him. Fitter companionship for this meek conqueror, than the "wild beasts" that had surrounded him before! Luke adds the mysterious clause, "for a season," to his statement that Satan departed from Jesus. Jesus, just before he suffered in

the garden, said pregnantly, "The prince of this world cometh." The "season" during which he should enjoy exemption from the access of Satan was perhaps then, and not till then, concluded. To his announcement that Satan was coming, Jesus added the calm, confident words, "and hath nothing in me." Satan never had anything in Jesus. There was nothing ever in that holy breast that for an instant responded, even doubtfully, to the instigations of the devil. The "temptation," so-called, was wholly from without. It never got entrance—never so much as a hair's breadth of foothold or vantage-ground—on the threshold of the Savior's mind. It was not, therefore, temptation, as we often understand temptation in reference to ourselves. It was simply a putting to proof. Satan did not, and he could not, induce Jesus to waver one instant uncertainly on a razor's edge of indecision between the right and the wrong. That would have been to Jesus failure and sin. To shake, to overthrow, the constancy of Jesus in goodness, was what Satan endeavored and hoped. What he succeeded in bringing to pass, was the furnishing to Jesus of supreme opportunity to show himself proof against the tempter's utmost efforts. It was, Luke says, "when the devil had completed every temptation"—that is, every resource at his command for putting his antagonist to the test—that he departed from Jesus, "for a season."

But we are not to infer that though there was no temptation to Jesus, in the sense of temptation responded to with some inclination on the part of the tempted to yield, there was, therefore, no struggle, no conflict, to the Son of God in the wilderness. A struggle, an agony, there was, and one indescribably dreadful; the more dreadful that the holiness of the tempted was such as to make hopeless the success of the tempter. The agony consisted in having to bear the nearness, the conscious contact, the permitted obtrusion, of the Evil One. The Holy One loathed the Evil One with inconceivable loathing; but he had to endure him—had to suffer his ways with him. It was only by actually overpowering him, in every permitted attempt of his upon himself, that Jesus could rid his hateful enemy away—such was the necessary condition of his office as Savior; and then the relief and riddance was but "for a season." It was perhaps the indelibly branded recollection of his own frightful experience in the wilderness which inspired to Jesus that petition given by him to his disciples, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One." There was a last pathetic echo of the same sentiment in the words of the Sufferer in the garden, then uttered when his "season" of reprieve was over from the

visiting of Satan, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

The great Christian poet, Milton, thought the temptation a part important enough in the work of Jesus on earth to justify him in making that the sole subject of his poem, the "Paradise Regained"—as if paradise were regained for men by the mere successful resistance of our Champion to the efforts put forth by Satan to seduce him from perfect obedience. That is no doubt a view misleading by excess and disproportion. But the temptation of Jesus is in truth a topic of immeasurable moment. It is of the utmost consequence that we do not make the mistake of thinking vitally wrong about it. The narrative of it must have come, in the first instance, from the mouth of Jesus himself. No one else knew the facts of the history. Matthew gives us the fullest account of it all, and Matthew was an apostle. There was to him no motive for telling the story otherwise than exactly as he himself was told it. And, for any capital task like this narration, he was promised by Jesus every assistance needed from that Spirit who should lead the apostles into all truth. The form, therefore, in which the narrative of Scripture exists, is doubtless approximately the same as that in which it issued first from the lips of the Lord. It is not necessary that we should completely understand the story; but it is of the highest importance that we should loyally believe it. Let us not seek to volatilize it away with ingenious explanation. It is far better not to explain, than to explain amiss.

The tempter was a real person—a person of indefinite knowledge, of indefinite cunning, of indefinite power. What he did consisted of real acts; what he "said" consisted of real suggestions intelligibly conveyed. Acts and sayings, both alike, were from without—that is, they did not originate within the mind, or within the imagination, of Jesus. They were not hallucinations; they were not impressions. They were realities of some sort; and realities not self-begotten on the part of Jesus himself. So much is certainly implied in the narrative; unless we explain the narrative in a manner to explain it away. As for the difficulties, magnified or distorted into impossibilities, that the case involves—these, perhaps, are of our own creating. When we know more than we know now of that world which we call the world of matter, then, perhaps, we shall know what we do know—or think we know—very differently. Jesus once said a deep thing to certain men that raised cavils about what he taught. "Ye do err," said he, "not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." Let us not underrate the power of God. And let us not be over sure that we know the Scriptures; we

may, quite unawares, be explaining them amiss. It is safer sometimes simply to believe. We assuredly shall not share the victory which Jesus achieved, and achieved for us, over the devil, if we fail even to believe that he achieved such a victory. Our partnership with him in it must be a partnership of faith.

We know from Scripture that Jesus was put to proof at all points exactly as his human brethren are. And perhaps every form of temptation that can befall any child of Adam was fairly represented in the threefold test with which Satan was permitted to ply the Savior in the wilderness. Fleshly lust, spiritual pride, love of the world—what temptation to sin is there that does not appeal to one or other of these three principles in our sinful human nature? And these three principles are the ones desperately invoked by the tempter, in his three separate assaults upon the invulnerable virtue of the sinless Son of God. Because Jesus was thus assaulted, he can sympathize with us; because he was vainly thus assaulted, he can bring us effectual succor.

A GLIMPSE OF HIS GLORY.

Of what immediately followed the temptation in the wilderness, with the lovely sequel to that, of ministration from angels to the victorious but exhausted Son of Man, all that we know is comprised in a few statements furnished us by the Evangelist John alone. These constitute what we might very well call anecdotes. John's anecdotes of Jesus belonging to this moment of his experience are not only charming in themselves, but highly significant. Still, we shall have to pass them here; merely making note of the fact that the purport of them all is to give the testimony borne by John the Baptist to the person and office of Jesus. It is very noteworthy that one saying of John, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," points unmistakably to the sacrificial or atoning character of the mission which Jesus was to accomplish on earth. It was the image of a suffering Savior, and not the image of an all-conquering Lord, that the pathetic symbol of the "Lamb" must have been intended by John, or by the Holy Spirit in John, to raise in the minds of his hearers. This same touching phrase in characterization of Jesus was, it seems, twice used—once on each of two successive days—by the great forerunner. The second time, at least, his testimony fell upon susceptible ears.

Two disciples of John the Baptist heard it, and they followed Jesus. One was Andrew; the other, John the Evangelist does not name; but we may assume that it was John himself. And Andrew brought his brother Simon to the Lord, who "looked upon him"—a

significant look no doubt it was, to have been thus noted—and recognized him. Not, apparently, as having known him before, but as supernaturally first knowing him now. Jesus even called the new comer by his name; adding the name of his father, John, or Jonah. He at the same time gave him a new name; it was that name by which he has come to be universally known, Peter, or Cephas. "Thou shalt be called Cephas"; a case of prophecy, remarkably fulfilling itself. "Cephas" (Aramaic) means "rock"; "Peter" is the Greek equivalent. On the next day, Jesus "found" Philip, and said to him, "Follow me." Philip was a fellow-townsmen of the brothers Andrew and Simon. Philip did to a friend of his, Nathanael by name, what Andrew the day before had done to his brother Simon—he brought him to Jesus. Jesus repeated, in the case of Nathanael, the wonder of his immediate identification of Simon; with circumstance, in the latter case, to heighten the wonder. Nathanael, who had been very doubtful in coming—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" he said in reply to Philip's invitation to come and see Jesus—was overwhelmed at once into reverent faith. "Rabbi," he solemnly exclaimed, "thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel." Five of his disciples—five whom Jesus would afterward make his apostles—were thus promptly drawn to the side of the Master; five, that is to say, if, as we may suppose, Nathanael was the one also named Bartholomew. These seem all to have come out of the ranks of the disciples of John.

The day following (or perhaps it was the third day after—the note of time in John is here a little doubtful)—Jesus had now reached Galilee, on his homeward way by Bethabara from the scene of his temptation in the wilderness—an extraordinary display of supernatural, indeed, of divine creative, power on the part of Jesus occurred. The manner of the display was as simple, as silent, as beautiful, as is that of the daily display of God's creative power in nature. The story, too, is told by John the Evangelist with an effortless ease, an unadorned simplicity, in majestic keeping with the character and manner of the incident itself. Everybody knows almost by heart John's idyl of the miracle at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. The evangelist was probably himself present; for with Jesus were bidden also his disciples to the feast. "And the mother of Jesus was there." One might almost be tempted to regret, for her own sake, that she was. But, long before John wrote his story, Mary had probably grown willing—more than willing—to let her own errors, whatever these were, appear to all men, in heightening illustration, by contrast, of the glory of her son and her Master. In not un-

natural continuation of the mother's part to a child, Mary ventured on a prompting to Jesus which he thought not fit. What she said may have been a hint to the effect that now was a time for him to exert his miraculous power. Jesus rebuked and repelled her. Why? Not improbably he saw in her words to him something more than mere ill-timed indulgence in the maternal instinct and habit of suggestion to her son. That lovely, but imperfect, woman was perhaps a little over-ready to seem, in some sort, a confidante, a partner, at least by counsel, with the wonderful Being that she hoped her son would now presently show himself to all to be. Her friends should be reminded that she, Mary, enjoyed the mother's intimate privilege at the ear of this majestic man. "Perhaps," we say. We cannot know. But, for some sufficient reason, Jesus met his mother with a distinct rebuff. He made her understand that in the work of life for him now to be begun, he had no human partner—not even in his mother. If this passage between Mary and Jesus was an undertone aside, not overheard by any, then it must have been Mary herself who supplied the information respecting it to John. To suppose this would afford a grateful proof of self-abasing humility in Mary attained by her in later life. Was Mary's direction to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it," an expedient on her part to save herself a little in the eyes of observers under the humiliation which she had suffered? She was probably a special friend of the Cana household, as such known to the servants, and she may have meant only to prepare her son's way with them. But this poor human heart of ours! How many are its devices! Mary might, one would think, have assumed that he who could do what she apparently expected Jesus to do, was not less able than she was herself to procure the necessary obedience of the servants.

How did Jesus convert that water into wine? Of course, by introducing into it, in their just proportion, those elements which wine possesses and water does not. But whence did those elements come? And how were they introduced? Were they then and there created, by so much increasing the quantity of those elements existing in the universe? It is not necessary to suppose this. But could not he who, through visible means, collects the necessary elements from earth and from air and accomplishes this very miracle every year all over the world, collect those elements from earth and from air and accomplish it, if he chose, for that one time at Cana of Galilee, without visible means? How idle our doubts and our questions! How much wiser to believe, whenever God speaks, than, in vain conceit of wisdom, to shake our heads and say, "Impossible!"

At how many points are we liable to err, "not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God!"

John's concluding remark, "This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed," sufficiently indicates the object of this miracle. To supply the needed wine was but incidental. That was not the object, but only the occasion. The object was to manifest his glory, in order that his disciples might at once be confirmed in their faith in Jesus as Messiah—those first five disciples and perhaps no more.

John, looking back through many years—probably fifty or sixty, at least, from the date of the occurrence to the date of the writing—saw the meaning of all more deeply and more truly than he could see it at the time. That deed of his Lord was now transfigured to John. It was, in the retrospect, as if at Cana that day the incarnate God had for the moment a little withdrawn the veil of humanity which hid his proper character, and let shine through, to a few favored eyes, the brightness of the Father's image which he was. It was a glimpse of his glory

CHAPTER V.

FROM GALILEE TO JERUSALEM AND BACK.

AFTER the miracle at Cana, there occurred what at first blush looks like a removal on Mary's part of her family abode from Nazareth to Capernaum. On Mary's part, we need to say, rather than on Joseph's; for Joseph is not mentioned in connection with the removal, as, also, he was not mentioned in connection with the marriage at Cana. The probability is that Joseph had died, at some time not long before. Jesus was still reckoned as of the family; so that it was not yet true of him, as it came to be afterward, when he used those touching words concerning himself, that he had not where to lay his head. Perhaps, indeed, we should correct ourselves again and call it rather a removal on the part of Jesus, than of Mary; for, as if he, in the character of eldest son, were now the recognized head of the household, the narrative reads: "He went down to Capernaum, he and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and there they abode not many days." The disciples were, for the time, joined to their Master. Of those disciples, two, John and James, were first cousins to Jesus; if, as seems probable, Salome, their mother, was sister to Mary. Perhaps they all, temporarily at least, composed one family. But "not many days," John says. This reads as if it were rather a visit, than a removal, that is spoken of. At any rate, the present sojourn of Jesus himself at Capernaum was comparatively brief. He will afterward make that city more permanently his place of residence. Meantime there will be a resort on his part to Jerusalem, and a return, for a short stay only, but memorable, to Nazareth, the home of his infancy, his boyhood, and his youth.

The visit of Jesus to Jerusalem was in observance of the Passover. That visit was to become the occasion of a remarkable—one might almost be tempted to say, an uncharacteristic—demonstration on his part. Those

certainly who find in Jesus nothing but gentleness and persuasion, must do so in forgetfulness of what he now did. It was an action on his part which only an inalienable dignity and elevation of character in him could save from seeming violent, to the degree almost of grotesqueness. Indeed, so astounding was his procedure on the present occasion, that mere dignity and elevation of character in the actor would only serve to emphasize its excess and eccentricity, if that dignity and elevation of character did not rise to majesty distinctly more than human. What other great personage of history could be imagined entering single-handed a crowded place of public resort, as, for example, a great market, and, with a scourge of cords in his hand made by himself for weapon, driving forth a rout of sheep and oxen, pouring out in confusion heaps of coin belonging to money-changers and overturning their tables—what other great personage of history could be imagined behaving in this way, without our experiencing a sense of something derogated from his proper dignity? Eastern ways are, it is true, different from our ways; and we may easily make the mistake of judging this transaction by alien standards not applicable to the case. Whatever is really true as to the degree of eccentricity involved in the conduct of Jesus, it is noteworthy that he met with no active opposition, no challenge, no protest, in his proceeding. Not even was any question apparently raised, until after the fact. Then the Jews took heart of grace to inquire, "What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" Jesus staggered them, scandalized them indeed, with his reply. His reply was, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews had an easy method of disposing of that sign—by simply indicating how impossible it was. The then existing Temple was that known as



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OBEDIENT TO THE LAW.

Herod's. Herod the Great had made it the chief monument of his long and magnificent reign. Besides uncounted treasure, he had lavished unstinted time upon its erection. "Forty and six years," the Jews said, "was this Temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?" They had misunderstood him, and they disbelieved. But they would no less have disbelieved, had they understood him right. And even in the sense which they mistakenly put upon his words, he could have made his words true. So that, however his reply might be taken by them, he did them no injustice by his parable. His disciples seem not to have understood him at this time. But they did not disbelieve. And afterward they understood him. The Jews did indeed violate and destroy the Sanctuary of that human body belonging to the Lord; and in three days, as he said, he raised it up more glorious than it was before.

"Signs," at the demand of unbelief, it was never the way of Jesus to supply. But during his present stay in Jerusalem he seems to have given, on occasions not particularly described, many "signs" in the form of what we ordinarily call miracles, in attestation of his office and mission as Messiah. He thus won disciples in considerable numbers. John, in making record of this, adds an affecting, a somewhat saddening, remark. Concerning those disciples (rather those "believers," so-called), won to him by his "signs," the evangelist says, "he did not trust himself to them." This reserve on the part of Jesus had its source in his knowledge of men. He knew, John says, without being told by anyone, "what was in man." And therefore he withheld his trust. *He* did not think it wise to stake himself on the inextinguishable nobleness innate in human hearts—even if they were the hearts of those who thought that they "believed on his name."

It was during this Passover sojourn of Jesus in Jerusalem, that there occurred the famous interview—an interview as famous probably as ever occurred between two persons—of Jesus with Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a distinguished man. He had the distinction of important office. He was a "ruler" of the Jews. He might have sent for Jesus to come to him, with hope of having his summons considered an honor by the summoned. But he did not do this. He came instead himself to Jesus. Was it a deference intended? Or was it from motives of self-regard? It is noted that his visit was by night. The natural, though not the necessary, supposition is that this was for the purpose of secrecy. Perhaps—nay, probably—the ruler did not wish his visit to be known. Still, it may have been only that

he desired to have his interview quiet and uninterrupted. The opening of conversation, on Nicodemus' part, was highly respectful, even reverent. It seemed to betoken something very like the full conviction of faith. "Rabbi," said he, "we know that thou art a teacher sent from God: for no man can do these signs that thou dost, except God be with him." Jesus will try his faith; will deepen it, will enlighten it, if it be real. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God" is an expression evidently familiar to Nicodemus. The idea of it creates no difficulty for him. But that new birth—what does *that* mean? Manifestly not a second natural birth. Nicodemus virtually puts that interpretation out of the question, by his interrogatory reply. He is docile. It is as if he said, "I see that you cannot mean birth, in the ordinary sense of the word. What is the sense that I am to take?" Jesus was always ready to teach the teachable spirit. John's baptism was a topic in everybody's mind just then, and that baptism was in everybody's mind connected with the announced impending kingdom of God. John's baptism might be regarded as a birth of—that is, out of—water. For the baptized person issued from the water in very much the likeness of a birth. But such water-birth alone was not enough. There must accompany that, another birth. "Except," said Jesus, "a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Jesus had set forth in his teaching to Nicodemus his great fundamental doctrine of regeneration, and the necessity of it. Nicodemus' expression, "these signs," indicates that Jesus had speedily become conspicuous at Jerusalem as a worker of miracles. But John relates none of them. He does not write to gratify a taste for the marvelous.

After the Passover, Jesus, attended by his disciples, made an excursion into Judea. He there "baptized," it is said; which implies that he did a teacher's work and won followers who were willing to obey him. This Judean sojourn of his brought about one more attestation from John the Baptist to the Messianic character of Jesus. John himself was still pursuing his work. The two baptizers were near enough together for quick exchange of news between their respective disciples. John's disciples tell their master of the growing popularity of Jesus. But that great, generous heart was joyful to fade away in the new light, like the morning star before the rising sun. "He must increase, but I must decrease," said John, of Jesus in contrast with himself. It seems strange, but the forerunner and the King do not, so far as the record goes, appear ever to

have met for any conversation, except on the one occasion of the baptism of Jesus.

The stay of the Lord in Judea extended only to the moment when he knew that the envious and hostile Pharisees had heard of his success, surpassing that of John, in winning disciples. He then with his disciples withdrew to Galilee.

Between Judea and Galilee lay Samaria. Strict Jews, going from one region to the other, would make a circuit rather than pass through this detested land. But Jesus took Samaria in his way. So doing, he reached the city of Sychar, now called Nablus, one day about noon. It was an historic spot. There was a well here called Jacob's well, as having belonged to that patriarch. The open shaft still exists, but it is now almost or quite without water. Tourists visit it in great numbers every year; and it is natural for them to wonder that the well should ever have been dug in a place where water much more easily obtainable was nigh at hand in full supply. The fact probably is, that Jacob, who was a man of peace, provided himself thus with water, at so much cost of labor and trouble, in order to avoid occasion of strife with some that laid prior, and perhaps exclusive, claim to the more convenient natural sources. Jesus was weary, and he sat down by the well to rest. A woman from the town came out, led apparently by some preference for this particular water, to supply herself from Jacob's well. Jesus accosted her and asked for a drink. The woman was surprised. She saw that the stranger was a Jew, and she had expected to be treated by him as Samaritans generally were treated by Jews — that is, with reserve at least, if not with scorn. She expressed her amazement. But she was destined to be more amazed. Jesus said: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him and he would have given thee living water." The disciples of Jesus, with the possible exception of John from whom we have this whole story, had gone into the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman showed, like Nicodemus, readiness to learn. She divined a deep meaning in the stranger's words, and asked to have it brought out. Yet she asked, with some reserve of hesitation, "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" Her thought seemed to be, "Jacob was satisfied with the water of this well; hast thou something better to offer?" Jesus pointed out that the water of Jacob's well slaked thirst only for a time; whereas the water of which he spoke was a fountain in the spirit never failing and forever forestalling thirst. The woman was prompt to ask for this desirable water. Jesus seemed to put her off with his reply; but he in reality was preparing her

to receive what he had to bestow. "Go, call thy husband, and come hither," he said. She answered shortly, "I have no husband." Jesus then showed her that he knew the facts of her history. These were remarkable enough. She had had five husbands; and she was living now an adulterous life with a man not her husband. She winced apparently to have the shameful truth exposed. She would change the subject. With complimentary recognition of a prophetic character in this stranger, she would set him talking on a controverted point, which doubtless he could treat at last with something like authority. "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet," the woman complaisantly said. "Now, our Samaritan fathers worshiped in this mountain. But you Jews hold that Jerusalem is the right place for worship." It was as if she had added: "I should like to hear thy views and reasons on this subject." The Samaritans were either a purely heathen, or else a mixed Israelitish and heathen, stock; if the latter, the fruit of an amalgamation that occurred as a result of the Babylonian Captivity, a remnant of Israel left behind in the land coalescing with a colony of Assyrians sent out to repopulate the waste region of what had been known as Samaria. Hence the Samaritans, so-called, of Jesus' time. They themselves claimed to be true children of Israel.

The woman's tactics did not succeed exactly to her mind; but her success was really far greater than she guessed. Jesus at first seemed to brush aside the question of difference between Jewish and Samaritan ideas, as a matter not worth discussing. "Woman," said he, "believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father." It was a solemn glance forward — of course not fully, if at all, understood by the woman — to the historic destruction, now already impending, of Jerusalem and the Temple at Jerusalem, involving also, perhaps, the overthrow of the Samaritan worship. But the Lord will at the same time be faithful to the truth concerned. He stands squarely for the Jewish against the Samaritan claim. He says: "Ye worship that which ye know not; we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews." Still, the great general doctrine of worship independent of place and of form, the doctrine of pure spiritual worship, is what the Lord chiefly insists upon. The woman shows now more plainly the quality in her which made it seem fit to Jesus, who from the first had discovered it, to lavish so rich an instruction on so apparently unpromising an audience as was this poor sinful woman. A chord was touched in her soul that vibrated in response. "I know," said she, "that Messiah cometh; when he is come, he will declare unto

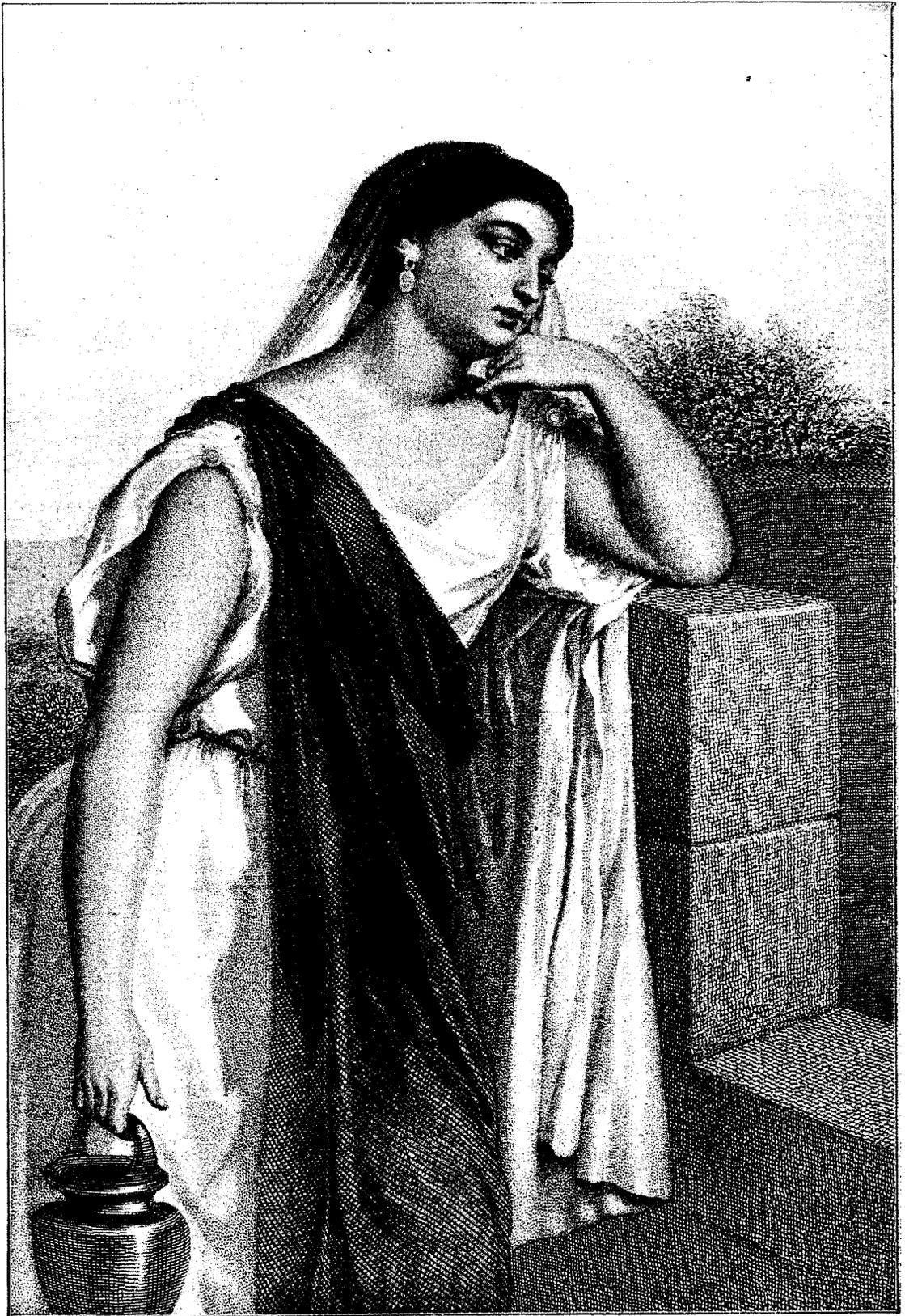
us all things." Her ears were opened, her heart was ready, and Jesus delayed no longer to disclose himself. "I that speak unto thee am he," were his words in reply. At this moment his disciples came up. They had returned from their errand to the neighboring town, whither they had gone to buy bread. They wondered that their Master was talking with a woman; but something kept them from questioning either him or her. The woman was overwhelmed with sudden conviction. She forgot her thirst, or at least her need of provision against future thirst; for she left her waterpot and hastened away back into the city. There she excitedly cried out to everybody she met, so it would seem, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Can this be the Christ?" There was an accent of truth in her words and her manner that won belief. A curious crowd began to stream forth from the town toward Jacob's well. The disciples meanwhile begged Jesus to eat. But he said: "I have meat to eat that ye know not." The disciples were perplexed for his meaning. They asked one another, "Has anyone been bringing him food?" Jesus was aware of what they were wondering, and he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." He added: "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?" This may indicate the season of the year when the incident at Jacob's well occurred, that is, late autumn or early winter; but perhaps, on the other hand, Christ's language was in the nature of a proverb. At any rate, pointing, no doubt, his disciples toward the streams of people approaching from the city, he said, in a striking metaphor, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest." The inhabitants of Sychar were in so far worthy that they begged Jesus to tarry among them; and he did so two days, with the result that many were brought to believe on him as "the Savior of the world."

Meantime Jesus, having now got as far as Cana on his homeward way, was there met by a man who was a personage of consequence in Capernaum. It appears that the signs wrought by the Lord at Jerusalem had spread his fame far and wide throughout the whole land. The Galileans were many of them present in that city at the feast, and they, returning homeward, bore wherever they went the wonderful news of what Jesus had done in Jerusalem. It thus happened that this Capernaum gentleman, in a case of domestic distress that had befallen him, had faith that Jesus could relieve him. His son was at the point of death. Would not Jesus heal him? But Jesus, merging this applicant with the generality of his countrymen, said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye

will not believe." The father simply answered, "Sir, come down ere my child die." That pathetic appeal was profession enough of faith. Jesus would not longer put off the piteous plea. But in answering it, he gave the faith of the father another chance, a harder one, to prove itself. Jesus did not start to come; he did not so much as say, "I will come." Instead, he bade the father go his way, assuring him only that his son should live. The father was equal to the test. He believed; and, returning, was met on his way by messengers sent to relieve him of his anxiety with news that his son was getting well. The moment of the change for the better in the patient corresponded accurately, the grateful father found, with the moment of his receiving those reassuring words from Jesus.

From Cana home to Nazareth once more. But will Nazareth prove a worthy home to Jesus? "He came to his own, and his own received him not." One may imagine that he who was Son of Man as well as Son of God returned from Jerusalem to Nazareth, "where he was brought up," with peculiar emotions. He had gone away an obscure youth, Joseph's son; he returned illustrious, with the fame of his many wonderful works done in Jerusalem surrounding and forerunning him. What would his townfolk say? Would they recognize him in his new character? Would they welcome him as prophet, as Messiah?

He went on the sabbath day into the synagogue. This had been his custom, as everybody knew, but now he stood up to read. Perhaps he had done the same thing before; he had never before done it in quite the same way. There was handed to him the manuscript roll containing the prophecy of Isaiah. He unrolled it and lighted upon a remarkable Scripture. It read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The effect was striking. It is noted that when, having rolled up the manuscript and handed it to the attendant, he took his seat, "the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him." There was, perhaps, obscurely felt to be some singular correspondence between the person and character of the reader and the terms of the prophetic description that he had read. The first sentence only is given of the discourse that followed. That sentence scarcely did more than put into words the thought that probably had already been half expressed by the aspect and action of the speaker as he read the verses from Isaiah. "To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in



G. STAAL.

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

your ears," said Jesus. That is, "Your ears have just heard the voice of the one prophesied of by Isaiah as sent to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The Nazarenes listened with wonder at the words they heard.

With wonder; and yet with unbelief. For Jesus so interprets their spirit. He says, in effect: "I know what you are thinking. You are thinking, Let Jesus do things here at home like what they say he has done in Capernaum. But no prophet is recognized and acknowledged by his own neighbors. Elijah, in the famine, was sent outside of Israel, full of widows as Israel was, to help a needy heathen widow. Elisha passed over the many lepers in Israel, to heal a single Syrian leper, Naaman." Those discriminations on God's part made in former times, it was of course his sovereign right to make, irrespective of individual desert. But the implication of Jesus is that, had their own countrymen been worthy, those prophets of old would not have been sent in preference to foreigners to dispense the favors of God. It was a hint from Jesus to his fellow Nazarenes. Would they take it? Would they burst out with believing and obedient acclamations of, "Nay, but we will show ourselves different from our unworthy fathers. We will accept our prophet. We hail thee now for what thou art, and what thou hast shown thyself to be." If, now, instead of murmuring their incredulous question, "Is not this Joseph's son?" they had, in grateful faith, like the Capernaum nobleman's, brought their sick to Jesus to be healed, there is no reason to think that Jesus would have denied them their desire. That nobleman had been tried virtually in the same way with them. Jesus had said to him, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will in no wise believe." If only the Nazarenes would bear the test as he did!

Alas, but no! The men who had just wondered at the words of grace from Jesus proved themselves now unequal to their opportunity. They were enraged at the idea of a discrimination against themselves made in favor of their rivals in Capernaum. It seems almost incredible, but it was quite in character for those inflammable Jews—they rose in mass; they hustled Jesus violently out of the synagogue; they hurried him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built—the exact spot, by the way, is not now easy to identify—with the murderous purpose of thence hurling him headlong down. That murderous purpose was mysteriously balked. There came a moment when the power of the mob, up to that point unresisted, seemingly irresistible, suddenly failed, failed utterly—no one could have told, or only One could have told, how, or why. Jesus, "passing through the midst of

them, went his way." How majestically it is told! How majestically it was done! No antagonistic violence, no outcry, no demonstration of any sort. It was not escape. It was not elusion. No cloud enveloped him. He was not caught up and borne away. He simply passed through the midst of them and went on. Whither? Probably to Capernaum. For Matthew tells us that "leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum." That city will henceforth be more than any other place his home. Nazareth had missed to know the day of her visitation. She will be given one opportunity more. Will she prove worthier then?

AT CAPERNAUM AND THENCE ROUND ABOUT.

The contrast between Nazareth and Capernaum, in respect of welcome to Jesus, was great. And yet Capernaum—she too, with other cities like herself in being scenes of mighty miracle wrought by Christ—will in the end become the object of dreadful reprobation from his mouth, and of solemn prophecy, long since fulfilled, of dreadful doom. But meantime there succeeds a period of apparent prosperity to Jesus, in a round of preaching and beneficence accomplished by him from Capernaum as a center.

Four at least of those five disciples found by Jesus on his homeward way from the wilderness of temptation, were by vocation fishermen. These men, upon their return with Jesus from Judea to Galilee, seem to have gone back to their former, probably ancestral, employment with the fishing-net. Jesus now, walking by the lakeside, finds two of them there, with their boats drawn up on shore. The Master was deeply engaged in speaking to the multitudes that thronged about him as he went along. He asked Simon to let him occupy one of his boats as a standing-place—a sitting-place rather—from which to speak to the people. And would Simon Peter kindly put out a little into the lake, that he might the better command his audience gathered on the shore? Simon did so, and Jesus sitting there taught the listening throngs. It was a charming picture; but the seriousness of it made it something more, something other, something higher, than merely charming. The Lake Gennesaret, or Sea of Galilee, is a lovely sheet of water. The water itself is sparkingly clear, and, on one side, at intervals along the border, a pebbly and sandy beach slopes gently down to the water's edge; while across the breadth of the lake, about six miles in measure, is seen a range of high hills extending its whole length, and, when the rays of the sun fall right, seeming to beetle over upon the shadowed surface underneath. Behind you, as,

standing on the high ground that rises a little way back from the margin of the lake, you face those opposite eastern hills, are swells of grassy upland retreating into the interior, and with their flocks and herds composing a pastoral landscape once no doubt as fair as the eye could desire to rest upon. The hum of population and the picturesque, lowly, flat-roofed houses, showing sheeny-white amid embowering green along the shore, enlivened the scene with that human interest without which the aspects of nature, however beautiful, soon cease to satisfy the social human heart. An idyl—such as too light-hearted romancers of the life of Jesus have sometimes painted it; an idyl, indeed, the scene and the history alike, save that a shadow of tragedy overcasts it all, reflected backward from the end that was to be, and so soon, in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

When the day's outdoor preaching was done, Jesus had a surprise for the brothers Simon and Andrew. "Put out into the deep," said he to Simon, "and let down your nets for a draught." Simon would do as he was bidden; but he deemed it right to assure Jesus that the prospect of success was poor. They had toiled all night, he said, with no catch whatever. Peter seems not to have delayed complying with his Master's word while he made this explanation; it would not have been strange, however, had the brothers been a little slack-handed at first in letting down their nets. If they indeed were so, they had immediate occasion to change their attitude both of mind and of body and brace themselves to the business in hand. For the finny inhabitants of the deep hastened with such an impetus into the nets spread for them that the weight and momentum were like to break the meshes. The astonished and now anxious brothers summoned to their help their partners in the other boat. Two boat-loads of fishes were the reward of that obedience on Simon's part. The boats, indeed, almost foundered with their heavy lading. It was quite too much for Simon Peter, with his susceptible heart. He fell down at Jesus' feet and prayed a prayer which, happily for him who prayed it, Jesus did not answer literally. "Depart from me," cried Peter, beside himself; but *so* beside himself that his Master heard him for what he meant and not for what he said. Peter was overwhelmed into a sudden conviction of sin. "Depart from me," he exclaimed, "for I am a sinful man, O Lord." That was the uppermost thought of Peter's heart. And that confession made it impossible for the Lord to depart from him. No wonder Peter was "amazed." No wonder the amazement flooded over them all. James and John, their partners, were involved in it.

And no wonder that at Jesus' bidding, they having first got their boats safely to land, the four men forsook all and followed Jesus. This second call to them meant abandonment of their former occupation. They were henceforth to be otherwise employed. How employed, the Lord indicated, when, on this very occasion, he said to them, in his pithy, homely phrase, racy of the "sea," "I will make you fishers of men."

Jesus first went with his disciples into Capernaum. There he entered the synagogue and taught. Of course, it was the sabbath day. The hearers noticed how different was this man's tone in teaching from the tone of the scribes. The scribes quoted other men, they weighed this opinion against that, they made fine distinctions, they hesitated, they left their hearers ultimately in doubt. Jesus taught with authority. He did not say perhaps. He said verily.

While he was thus teaching, a startling incident occurred in the synagogue. Jesus had a certain hearer there (certain hearers, possibly we should say), who knew him better than did the rest of those present. This hearer had secured for himself a lodgment in which he was invisible. It was lodgment within a human breast. A man had been seized, and forced against his will to give this alien hearer quarters inside himself. It was a hideous invasion and usurpation. For the invader and usurper was a demon from the abyss. Out burst on the ears of all a sudden and alarming cry. "What have we to do with thee," the words were, "thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God." The cry issued from the lips of the man that had been invaded and usurped by the demon. It was the demon's cry with the man's voice. It was a cry of panic and of agony. It was perhaps wrung from the demon, as it were against his own will, not less than against the will of the man. The nearness of Jesus may have compelled the demon thus to cry. Or perhaps it was a desperate device, on the demon's part, to discredit Jesus; attestation impudently rendered from such a quarter might well be supposed to discredit any person or any thing that was the object of it. At any rate, the attestation was unwelcome to Jesus. He bade the demon hold his peace and come out of the man. The poor victim of this possession was not relieved without first suffering pangs of deliverance. His evil inmate came out, but he tore his way out, at the same time uttering, still with the man's voice, demoniac yells. The people in the synagogue were amazed; as well they might be. "A new teaching!" they exclaimed. "With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits and

they obey him." The fame of what had happened went like the wind forth into every part of Galilee.

"Demonic possession," as we have learned from Josephus to call this affection of the human soul, is a mystery. It is part of the mystery of evil and of sin. Not indeed primarily that it is so difficult to understand how an inhabitant from hell may, if permitted from on high, take up lodgment, along with the man himself, in a human bosom. That, to be sure, is difficult to understand. But equally difficult it is, when we think of it, to understand how *one* spirit (the man's own even) can be lodged within a body of flesh. Why not two spirits as easily as one? Nay, why not a legion? There is no more impossibility, no more difficulty, in the plural case than in the singular. We are familiar with the fact of one spirit lodged in the body. The Jews of Jesus' time were familiar with the fact—the occasional fact—of more than one. That is the simple truth. The difficulty involved is not the difficulty of understanding the mode of the fact. The real difficulty is all in understanding how God could permit the fact in any mode. But then how could God permit sin? There is nothing for us but to bow and say, It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good. Many other instances of encounter on the part of Jesus with demons in possession of men and women, occurred subsequently in the course of his career. It was natural that One whose mission in the world was to destroy the works of the devil, should be confronted by that adversary, not only in his own person, as in the wilderness, but also in the persons of his emissary demons, spawned upward into the world from the abyss. This consideration sufficiently accounts for the swarming incursions from hell into this mundane sphere of evil spirits, occurring at the time and in the place of Christ's advent and activity. The Apostle Paul warns us to be not ignorant of the devil's devices. And one of his favorite devices, one of the most successful and most dangerous of them all, is the device of what we may call a universal alibi—the trick, that is to say, of pretending not to be at all. That falsehood once imposed upon men, Satan can work with all freedom, as unsuspected.

Out of the synagogue into the house of his disciple Simon, was the next movement of the Lord. There lay a sick woman, the victim of a fever—an alarming fever. It was the mother of Simon's wife. They interceded with Jesus on her behalf. Jesus "stood over her"—what a benediction was that leaning form!—and "rebuked the fever." So Luke, the physician, describes what Jesus did. The other evangelists say that he "touched" her hand; one, that he "raised her up," as if with his

hand. They all say that the fever left her, and that she then "ministered unto them." "Unto him," Matthew says; which no doubt indicates that, as would be the natural instinct of love, of gratitude, and of reverence, she made her Healer the special object of her ministering attention. The sabbath evening drew on, and the house of Simon stood a siege such as no human dwelling ever stood before. People brought demoniacs to it in great numbers; they brought all the sick of Capernaum, a motley and miserable throng; in short, "the whole city," as Mark strongly states it, "was gathered together at the door." The sick he healed, not, as it seems, in masses, but with those blessed hands of his laid individually "on every one of them." "With a word," Matthew tells us, he cast out the demons from their robber-haunts in human bosoms. Those wretched, wicked beings cried out upon him, as they obeyed his irresistible word. They said, "Thou art the Son of God." Strange malice theirs, to testify thus to his true character! But Jesus forbade them; and for a reason that at first seems strange—it was that they knew him to be the Christ. He was not ready yet to be proclaimed abroad in his Messianic office; or he did not wish to be so proclaimed. We know that the unbelieving Jews in fact charged it upon him that he cast out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. Perhaps such testimony to him as that which he this day forbade, was subtly meant by Satan to suggest collusion with himself on Jesus' part. It is to be noted that all this concourse of people desiring relief took place as the sun was setting. The sabbath then was ending, and, besides that, the fervors of the Syrian sun were overpast for the day.

The next morning Jesus rose very early, indeed before it was fairly day, and went out into the open air. He went alone, and he sought a solitary place. He there prayed. The extraordinary occurrences of the day preceding were, we may well suppose, not without extraordinary cost to the Son of God, who was also, let us bear ever in mind, the Son of Man. His puttings forth of virtue had in some sort exhausted him; and there was one way, one way only, of replenishment. He must pray. And did it not belong to his human nature to need a steady, a tranquilizing, a restoring, interval of contact through prayer with the great peace of God, after the perturbations, the agitations, of spirit which must have been the day before reflected upon himself from his own triumphantly successful exertions of power against the kingdom of evil? Simon and others had a reason for seeking the Lord in his retirement. The house, it seems, was besieged again, as it had been the previous evening.

Indeed, not only Simon, with a few friends of his, but crowds of people surged like a tide of the sea into the place whither Jesus had retired. Most naturally the citizens of the town desired to keep Jesus in Capernaum. But his purpose was calm, and firm, and clear. He had put himself afresh into conscious communion with God, and he knew, from the highest source of knowledge, what it became him to do. He said, "I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent."

So from Capernaum Jesus went forth throughout all Galilee, teaching and preaching, casting out demons, and healing the sick. His fame swept the land like a conflagration that could not be stayed. He was obliged to cease visiting cities, so unmanageable grew the crowds; he went apart into uninhabited places. But the throngs found him out even there; such was the popular eagerness to hear him, and such the faith of the sick that he could heal them. The "teaching and preaching" seem to be first in the purpose of Jesus, the healing works second. So, also, the people, on their side, respond with an appetite for hearing, not less marked—perhaps more marked—than their desire for physical good. Luke says, in an *order* of mention that deserves to be noted, "Great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed of their infirmities." Jesus, in speaking himself at this time of his mission, does not allude at all to his works of beneficence; but only to his teaching and preaching. It was spiritual good chiefly that he felt himself called to dispense; temporal good, only as incidental and tributary to that.

The incidents related by the evangelists of this tour of the Savior in Galilee are all of them so interesting, that it is difficult to omit any of them here. Returning, perhaps for an interval of needed repose, to Capernaum, he was yet again besieged in his house; this time by throngs of people more numerous apparently than ever before. "And he spoke the word unto them." One man was present that day whose case was peculiar. He was palsied. His friends brought him stretched on a bed. Alas, there was no chance for one so helpless and one needing so much room, to get even near the door! The crowd was impenetrable. But those four friends of his were not so easily beaten. They climbed with him to the roof of the house (perhaps reaching it by a passage from roof to roof of neighboring houses closely adjoined), and, making for themselves a kind of trap door in that, they let down the poor palsied man on his bed into the midst before Jesus. It was an eloquent, an irresistible, appeal of faith. It is not expressly said that the sick man's errand was to be healed. We are permitted to suppose

that his chief motive may have been a spiritual one, to hear the word of God. This would account for the unexpected, the extraordinary, way in which Jesus met him. Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." Consider what must have been the sense on Jesus' part of transcendent superiority in himself, to justify or to prompt that young Galilean's addressing a man very probably his own senior in age by the affectionate word, "Son"! True, it is explained by the evangelists that the Savior was thus graciously inclined as "seeing their faith." There was faith then on the part of those who brought the sick man, as well as faith on the part of the sick man himself. But the blessing was to him, and it was the spiritual blessing of forgiveness for his sins. Of course, there must have been discerned by Jesus in the man a fitness to receive this blessing.

But the spirit excited in certain observers present was one of criticism rather than of sympathy. Those observers were scribes and Pharisees. Some of them had come from far; some even from as far as Jerusalem. They were probably official observers—spies and informers, in fact. They perhaps said nothing, they perhaps guarded even their looks; but Jesus saw what was going on in their hearts. "Why doth this man thus speak?" they were saying to themselves; "he blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone?" "Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" Jesus said to them, with a sureness of aim which must have filled them with surprise. Jesus had a method ready of meeting their cavils. "Which is easier," he asked, "to say to a man sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or, to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" In the immediate presence of a man imprisoned, as that man was, in a body to all purposes of voluntary motion dead, the question had the force of demonstration. Whoever could release that man's body from the bonds of palsy, could release that man's soul from the bonds of sin. Now, it is not told that the palsied man expected or sought any blessing beyond that which he had already received. But he must have listened to that question from Jesus with a strange agitation of hope. Was he to be healed as well as forgiven? Healed in body, as he had been healed in soul? He had not long to wait in pleased suspense. He heard further sounds that shot through his withered members a long-forgotten thrill of life. They were these words from the lips of Jesus: "Arise,"—the sick man, of course, knew that the words were spoken to him—"Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." The obedience was as swift as had been the bidding. However much the poor delighted man may have wished

to linger in the presence of his Savior, he had no impulse but to do as he was told. He rose, he took up his bed, which, perhaps, consisted of little more than a blanket or two, and walked out before them all. There had been difficulty of ingress for him, but there would be no difficulty of egress for a man healed as that man had been. Awe on the part of all would open the way before him through the press. "So from amid them forth he passed." He went, "glorifying God." One would like to have heard his exclamations of joy and thanksgiving as he walked along! Amazement took hold of all that were there; amazement mingled with fear. "We have seen strange things to-day," they said.

One more incident, an important one, and our story of this little section of the Savior's brief, laborious life is done. Jesus again walking by the lake, again drew about him crowds of eager listeners to his discourse. He seems to have talked as he walked. Thus walking and talking, he passed by a place where taxes were paid. A "receipt of custom," our old familiar Bible calls it. Here sat a man whose business was that of a tax-gatherer; or of a "publican," as the Bible otherwise names it. Very unpopular the followers of this business naturally were, especially if they were Jews. They then seemed to be renegades, as well as oppressors, wringing from their own brethren taxes for those brethren's foreign masters. Of this peculiarly odious class was the man now in question. Matthew his name was, but he was also called Levi. Jesus would almost seem to have taken delight in surprising men, in scandalizing them, in acting directly in the teeth of their natural expectations. He now said to publican Matthew, "Follow me!" So far as from the narrative itself appears, this was in no special way prepared for. Nothing more is reported as said

by Jesus than just the two words, "Follow me." Matthew, on his part, is not recorded to have made any reply in words. From such silence, however, in the narrative, it is not to be with confidence inferred that the interview between Jesus and Matthew was as abrupt and as brief as in the Gospel account it appears. Matthew's place of residence and employment was where he could hardly have failed to become familiar with the claims and the teaching of Jesus. He was already, perhaps, when he received this decisive call, an undeclared disciple of the Lord. At any rate, now he arose, forsook all, and followed him.

The incident of the calling of Matthew drew after it a sequel. Matthew made his Master a great feast in his house. It is a curious fashion in the East for the general uninvited public to enjoy the freedom of being present on such festival occasions, as interested spectators, although not partakers, of the cheer. But at this banquet, besides the multitude of such made up from classes of persons not in high social esteem, there were many invited guests, too, that Jews of condition would look down upon as "publicans and sinners." Jesus' presence in such a company was a fresh scandal to the critical scribes and Pharisees. "Your Master eats with publicans and sinners," they murmured to his disciples. Jesus himself answered on behalf of his disciples, in those memorable words of his: "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." If we are right in placing, as we do, the visit to Jerusalem mentioned in the beginning of the following chapter, the arduous and eventful first great preaching tour of Jesus in Galilee was interrupted by that episode.

CHAPTER VI.

AT JERUSALEM AGAIN.

IT is right to say that some good authorities place quite differently this visit of the Lord to Jerusalem. The time of it cannot be fixed with certainty. A feast drew him thither. What feast? No one knows. Some make it the feast of Purim. This feast was a joyous one; not religious, as were most of the other feasts of the Jews; a feast kept in commemoration of the great national deliverance from utter extinction, experienced in the time of Esther. Other careful students think the feast was a passover. The choice perhaps lies between these two views; though arguments are adduced in favor of several other feasts.

John alone among the evangelists makes distinct mention of this visit of Jesus to Jerusalem. He mentions it for the sake of reporting one incident in particular by which it was marked, interesting and significant in itself, but more memorable still as giving occasion to certain sayings of Jesus to be ranked among the profoundest and most characteristic that ever fell from his lips. The incident now referred to is the following:

One of the pools or reservoirs of water with which Jerusalem abounded, perhaps beyond any other city ancient or modern in the world, bore the musical name of Bethesda. This pool

seems to have been covered with a pavilion; at least, it is said to have had five porches—structures here probably to be conceived of as belonging to an edifice in the nature of a pavilion—erected over the pool for shelter to those visiting it against the heat and light of the sun. In these porches lay a multitude of persons sick, blind, halt, withered. Anyone who has visited an Eastern country can easily imagine the distressful scene. Among the sufferers there was one man in a case peculiarly pitiable. His infirmity was one of thirty-eight years' standing. Jesus saw him lying there helpless and hopeless, and he took pity on him. "Wouldst thou be made whole?" said he. "Sir," the man replied, "I have no one to help me down into the water at the right moment. I start when the water begins to stir, but someone else quicker than I always steps in before me." The pool may have been fed from a spring subject to intermittent agitations from interior causes, like, for example, the escape of gas of some sort generated underneath. The explanation given in our old Bible to the effect that an angel came down at intervals to trouble the pool, is now considered by all good scholars to be an interpolation in the text; something, that is to say, not belonging to the Gospel as John wrote it. The sick man shows no sign of expecting any help from Jesus. He does not even manifest curiosity. Much less does he exhibit faith. But Jesus, with apparent abruptness, says to him, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." Healing followed instantly, and, upon healing, obedience; for he took up his bed, and walked. He was presently to be given a chance to show whether or not he had that best kind of faith, the faith that felt neither fear nor shame in consequence of having obeyed.

It was the sabbath when the incident took place. And the incident had a sequel. For the Jews saw the man carrying his bed, and they challenged him. "Thou art breaking the sabbath," they said. The man answered them, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." Fairly good warrant for his behavior, one would say. But the Jews seemed not to think so. Their next question was not, "Who healed thee?" but, "Who is the man that told thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" The man could not tell, for he did not know. He had obeyed without knowing whom. And Jesus meantime had passed out of his sight among the thronging multitude. Afterward, the same day probably, Jesus found the man—not, "was found by the man"—in the Temple. There Jesus spoke to him. "Behold," said he, "thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." Whether this imported that the

man's disease was due to some sinful indulgence on his part, we cannot know, and it is idle to conjecture. The man somehow learned now that his healer was none other than the celebrated Jesus of Nazareth. He went and told "the Jews," by which expression of John's we are here, as elsewhere generally, to understand the Jewish rulers. He perhaps felt pleased at the distinction of being healed by the man that at the moment was everywhere talked about. In his simplicity, he may have supposed that the Jews would themselves now be won over. On the contrary, they assailed Jesus bitterly. They were offended because he did these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them to their yet greater offense, "My Father worketh," he said, "even until now, and I work." August and awful association of himself with God! It would either overawe the Jews, or it would incense them. It incensed them. They were mad against him, even to the point of murder. He not only broke the sabbath, but he called God in a peculiar sense "his own" Father, making himself equal with God. Why should this claim on Jesus' part have been such a mortal offense to the ruling Jews? The offense of it lay in its threatening to be so profoundly and so widely acknowledged by the people. Jesus was breaking down their own—the rulers'—authority. He was carrying away the nation from themselves. What he was gaining they were losing. He was in the way of becoming popularly accepted for what he claimed to be. Should that come to pass, there would be an immediate end of their own influence and high consideration in the Jewish world. It was, as we know from the express statement of John, this spirit of "envy" in them that led finally to the arrest, condemnation, and crucifixion of Jesus.

It is a special feature—indeed a characteristic feature—of John's narrative that it incorporates somewhat more at large than do those of the other evangelists difficult discourses of Jesus, together with certain passages of sustained controversy arising between himself and the unbelieving Jews. On the present occasion, the Lord exasperates his enemies by putting forth claims for himself that grow more, rather than less, in degree as they are challenged and rejected. "You plot against me," he in effect says, "because I healed a man on the sabbath. That was an exercise of power on my part very insignificant in comparison with what I shall yet effect. I have healed with a word." He added: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." Then, as if he saw rejection written on the faces of his enemies before him, he spoke to that

spirit in their hearts: "Marvel not at this; for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." The higher towered the wrath of his hearers, the more this speaker supplied his hearers to be occasion to them of wrath. He refers to the deputation of inquiry concerning John the Baptist that they had sent to John the Baptist himself: "Ye have sent unto John, and he hath borne witness unto the truth. But the witness which I receive is not from man." Then, for one moment, the stern judicial tone relaxes and relents. "I say these things," he tenderly assures them, "that ye may be saved. He [John] was the lamp that burneth and shineth; and ye were willing to rejoice for a season in his light. But the witness which I have [the credentials which I bring] is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." It is sometimes said nowadays, even by Christian teachers, that miracles, so-called, are a burden to Christianity. The Founder of Christianity, at least, did not, in his days, so regard them. To his own wonderful works (that is, "miracles")—his wonderful works, observe, not his wonderful words—Jesus here makes confident appeal as sufficing proof of his own divine mission. As evidence, miracles may no longer be necessary; but as historic facts they are not to be explained away. There was something, apparently, in his hearers' demonstrative expression of countenance that indicated their obstinate unbelief. Jesus resumes a grieved, and at length an indignant and denouncing, tone. "Ye will not come to me," he said, "that ye may have life. . . . I know you that you have not the love of God in yourselves. . . . How can ye believe?" The breach was final and complete between the ruling Jews and Jesus. For the time at least, Jesus will now presently shake off the dust of his feet against rejecting Jerusalem, and return to Galilee.

One or two striking incidents, however, related by the three other evangelists, and not by John, belong perhaps to this part of the history. It was the sabbath day again, and Jesus, with his disciples, was walking through the fields of ripening wheat. (This we may suppose to have been at some point on the return way from Jerusalem to Galilee; or it may have been near Capernaum, after the arrival there.) There would naturally, according to the usage of the country, be here and there trodden paths never broken up by the plow, traversing such fields. These paths would, by

immemorial prescription, be open and free to the public. The hungry disciples plucked off ears of wheat, and, with their hands rubbing them free of their husks, ate the grain as they went along. This also would be quite in accordance with the manners of the country. No one would criticise such a proceeding as in itself unlawful or improper. But that it should be done on the sabbath day—that, the Pharisees complained of. Jesus answered them with instances out of Scripture. Did not David once in a case of need eat the shewbread, David with his companions? And do not the priests in the Temple profane the sabbath without blame? "But I say unto you, that one greater than the Temple is here. . . . The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath; so that the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath." This language of high assumption on the part of Jesus, instead of abolishing the sabbath, ordains the sabbath anew. It is not a national, not a temporary, institution. It was made for man. As long as man exists the sabbath exists for him. But he who made the sabbath—not, be it observed, he for whom the sabbath was made—is lord even of so sacred, so inviolable a thing as that.

Yet another sabbath day, and now a synagogue scene once more—most likely in Capernaum, at which place Jesus, we may assume, had now at least arrived. Jesus was teaching. A man sat before him whose right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees were in waiting, not to hear the word of God, but to see whether Jesus would break the sabbath again. They were watchfully making up an indictment against him. Jesus knew their thoughts, and he treated them accordingly—after his manner. That manner was never to conciliate an obdurate enemy of the truth. Nothing was more invariable with Jesus than to meet opposition in a way to inflame it rather than to placate it. Of course, his *object* was not to produce this result. His object was simply to bear witness to the truth. If his hearers were of the truth they would hear his voice. It was always within their choice to resist or to yield. But at all events *he* must abide faithful. He could not deny himself. He would not, he could not, abate one jot or tittle of his claim. On the present occasion, he furnished his enemies what they wanted, which was matter of accusation against him. He did this, and he did more. He accompanied his action with words addressed to them that additionally excited their anger. But first, to the man with his right hand withered, he said: "Rise up, and stand forth in the midst." This man also had, so far as may be learned from the record, done nothing, said nothing, to exhibit faith, or to indicate even a thought on his part of being

healed. But he was ready to obey, and he obeyed. He rose and stood forth in the midst. There he was, in plain sight of all. What was done should be done openly—no chance of doubt or gainsaying. One can imagine the hush of expectancy, the tension of eyes to see all that might happen. The man thus standing, all eyes vibrating to and fro between him and the Master, Jesus speaks; but it is not to the man. It is to "them," that is, to the spies and informers present there. He says: "I ask you, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good or to do harm?" This was a retort, a telling one. The Jews had asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" Jesus will transfix them with a perfectly just, but to them a fatal, alternative. He in effect asks: "Which of us, you or I, can more fairly be charged with now breaking the sabbath? You are plotting to destroy my life. I, you think, am on the point of making this man's life more complete. Tell me, which is lawful on the sabbath day, to save a life or to destroy it?" It must have been a trying moment for those convicted—self-

convicted—hypocrites and murderers; a moment made more trying by being prolonged. For Jesus paused—a pause with weight in it like the weight of a millstone. The pause was still more oppressive by virtue of the gesture of Jesus. Jesus "looked round about on them all." That look! Mark says he looked "with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts." Then he said to the man in his helpless, but no doubt awed, as obedient, suspense, "Stretch forth thy hand!" A yet harder test of his faith! Will he obey? For can he? He can, for he will. His hand was withered, but he "stretched it forth, and behold it was restored whole as the other." Nothing is told of the subsequent behavior of the man. He is not the center of the present narrative interest. That center consists of the enemies of Jesus. They, alas, instead of being willingly convinced and ashamed, "were filled with madness." They consulted one with another what they might do to Jesus. But Jesus' hour has not yet come for suffering the extreme of outrage at their hands.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

OF course much that is of great interest in the material existing for the present biography, must here, for want of space, be passed over with very inadequate notice. Our Gospel records seem themselves to break down under the impossible weight of all that they have to tell concerning this part of the life of Jesus. Before giving, as they do, a few illustrative incidents, they mass the Lord's present activities together in the suggestive general statement that he "went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people."

But the distressed did not wait for him to find them where they were, nor even for him to come into their neighborhood. His fame went everywhere throughout Syria, and from everywhere were brought to him the sick to be healed, and the variously afflicted to be relieved. Not only from Palestine itself, but from beyond the limits of Palestine, they came. It was as it were an upheaval and a setting in motion of the whole population. From Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond Jordan, from the regions of Tyre and Sidon, the concourse flowed, like a tide of the sea, about Jesus' feet. He was overwhelmed with the rising and swelling surge of popular importunity. Some expedient had to be adopted

to ease the actual bodily pressure of people upon his person. He had a "little boat" provided—we may suppose it a boat too small to hold any but himself and one or two helpers, who should manage it—for his own special accommodation. The eagerness of sufferers to come into physical contact with him, to "touch" his person, forced him to this. Jesus was experiencing the inconvenience of fame, and especially of his peculiar kind of fame. His popularity was premature, was excessive. He deprecated it. It might hasten on the inevitable catastrophe too soon. So he insisted strongly that those who were healed should forbear to make him further known. The unclean spirits he charged—he charged them "much"—to abstain from proclaiming his true character.

Not far withdrawn from the margin of the Lake Gennesaret, there rises gently to some height a hill, conjectured only, but with much probability, to have been in Jesus' time the scene of quite the most famous, the most fruitful, the most influential, historic occasion of public discourse that ever occurred in the annals of mankind. The discourse referred to has acquired a name from the nature of the place where it was delivered. It is called the "Sermon on the Mount." The hill on which it was pronounced has itself reciprocally received a name from association with the sermon.

The opening sentences of that sermon all of them begin with the word "Blessed," which in the Latin is "*Beati*." From this circumstance, the unidentified hill is often spoken of as the "Mount of the Beatitudes." To this hill, Jesus, at about the time which we have now reached in his history, retired, probably at the close of a laborious day, for a season of solitary prayer. The season prolonged itself till it had outlasted the night. There was reason. Jesus was about to take a step that would vitally affect the fortune of his cause; and this not only for the immediate future, but for all time to come. Such a crisis demanded special preparation on his part, an interval of isolation from the world, with profound abandonment of himself in communion with his Heavenly Father. There must be a nightlong vigil of prayer.

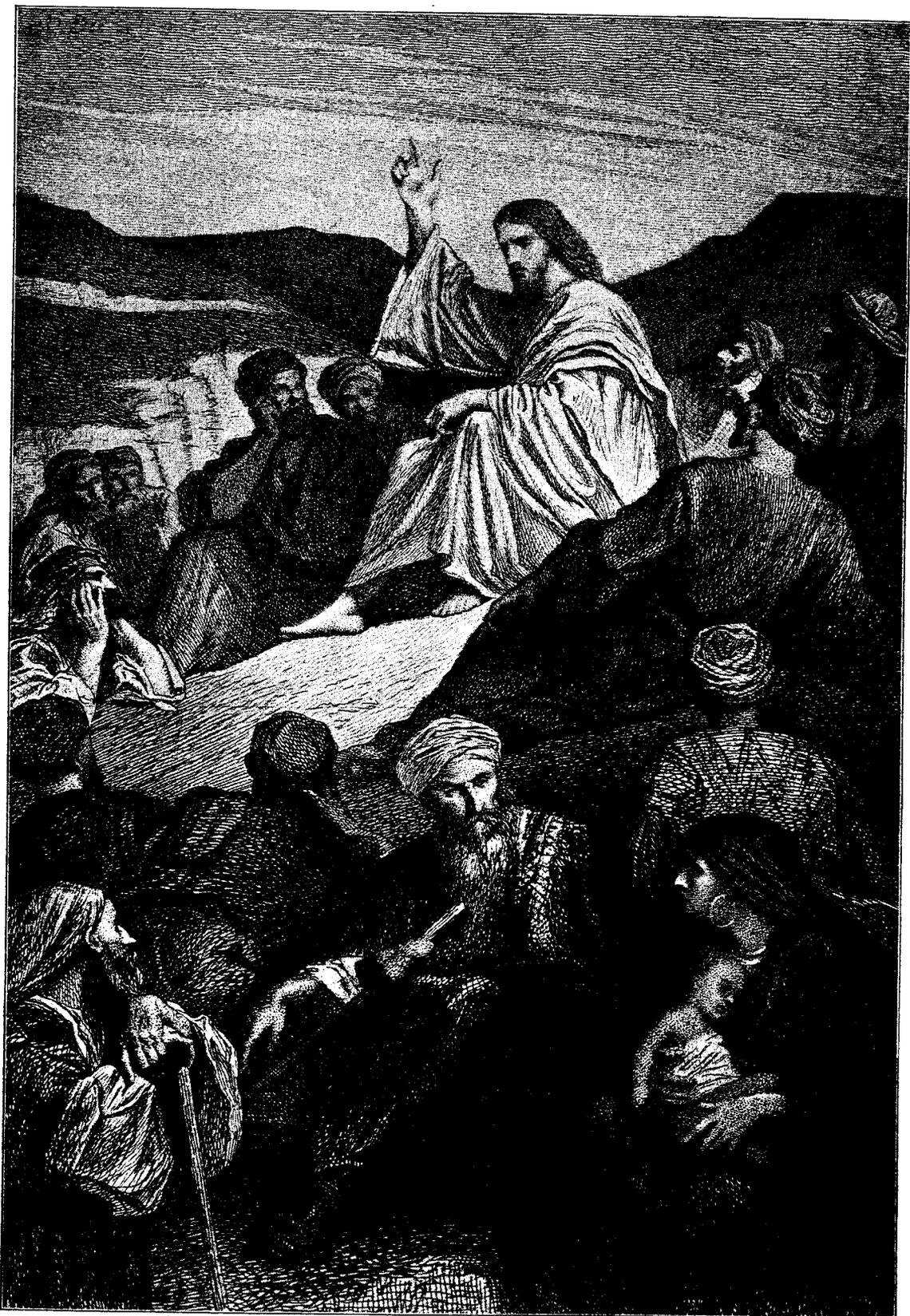
With the dawning of the day, he called together his disciples and out of their number chose twelve, to be thenceforth in peculiar relation to himself, whom he styled distinctively, "apostles." The names of those twelve obscure men became, by that simple outdoor act of oral appointment, not even recorded at the time—some of them by that act alone, for nothing further is known of them—dedicated to universal and immortal renown. They were Simon Peter and Andrew his brother, James and John, also brothers, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, another James (son of Alpheus), another Simon, called also Zelotes (or the Zealot), two Judases, one, son of James, the other, Iscariot. To this last name on the roll, is always added the sad clause, "who also betrayed him." The list thus given is that of Luke. Matthew and Mark give the same list, in the same order, with use, however, in some cases, of alternative individual names.

Jesus, after this solemn setting apart of the twelve apostles, seems to have descended from the summit of the mount to a lower level, or terrace, on its slope, there seating himself for an address to the people in general, who surrounded him in great numbers. The discourse which he pronounced is so familiar to all, that it would be superfluous to make anything like a full report of it here. It is by far the longest and most formal-seeming of all the Savior's popular discourses. Its apparent prevailing ethical character has commended it to many who are willing to take Jesus as teacher, while not owning the duty of obedience to him as Lord. But Jesus everywhere claims for himself, not simply respect paid as to a teacher, but obedience rendered as to a Lord; and he does this explicitly in the present discourse. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" is one form of expression occur-

ring here in which he makes this claim. Such language from Jesus shows that he accepted from men the appellation, Lord, in the full sense of all that the word implies. It was not a term of respectful, of reverent, homage. It was acknowledgment of duty to obey. Jesus does not found his teachings, in this sermon or elsewhere, on their own inherent self-evidencing character simply, but on the authority also of the teacher. He solemnly glanced forward to a day approaching—"that day," he called it—when he himself as Lord would sit pronouncing judgment on men, saying to some, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The discourse is in fact profoundly religious as well as practically moral.

It has been seriously questioned whether the morality of the Sermon on the Mount is a practicable, and so really a practical, morality. For instance, "Resist not evil," or, as the Revised Version renders, "Resist not him that is evil"—is that a practicable precept? The precept is stated broadly, comprehensively, in a form apparently admitting no exception. Can it be obeyed? Ought we to obey it? Would not obeying it abolish human government? Would it not introduce anarchy into the world—anarchy pure and simple? Would it not dissolve human society?

The question thus raised is, first of all, one of interpretation. What did Jesus mean by the precept? Did he mean all that his language, taken absolutely, can be made to include? Let us see. What was Jesus' method in teaching? It was, to a remarkable extent, probably beyond the practice of any other teacher in the world, the method of paradox. That is, he adopted the teaching expedient of stating the truth in a form chosen as if for the purpose of challenging dissent, of provoking contradiction. This way of teaching aroused attention. It set people to thinking. It startled them. The impressions made by it were immediate, striking, strong, rememberable. How is one to understand a teacher whose method is such? Evidently, by inquiry, by reflection, by study, by comparison of one saying of his with another, by teachably entering into his spirit, by invoking light to be shed on his doctrine from his own practice. Now, although Jesus himself did, for the most part, refrain from resisting evil with force, he constantly resisted it with words—and sometimes, as we have already seen, and as we shall yet further see, with very vehement words. On one occasion—an occasion described in a previous chapter—we have even witnessed the author of the precept, "Resist not evil," arming himself with a scourge, and thus with noble violence resisting and chastising the wicked behavior of men. By and by, we shall come to a case in which the



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Lamb of God, about to be laid unresisting on the altar of sacrifice, yet, for a moment at least, rouses to such withstanding of evil that those who have come to arrest him are thrown hopelessly prostrate before him on the ground. He also at about the same moment bids his disciples sell their cloaks that they might buy themselves swords. Did he mean this last bidding literally? We instinctively think not; though (strangely, as would seem) the disciples—some of them, at least—carried swords that night with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

If he did not mean literally the injunction to exchange cloaks for swords, no more did he mean literally and absolutely his contrary injunction of non-resistance to evil. What he meant by, "Resist not evil," was something practicable. So, also, he meant something practicable, when, in this same great discourse, he said, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." He could not have meant that we should always give to every applicant whatever he might demand. Literally and absolutely taken, this would oblige parents to give to a child of theirs anything that that child, whatever his age, might capriciously ask for, though to his certain and perhaps serious hurt. It would oblige us to give money to a drunkard asking it, though we might well enough know—nay, though he might himself at the very same moment tell us—that he wished it to spend in drink, to his own ruin.

What, then, is the interpretation to be applied to these and other like paradoxical precepts of Jesus? How are we to arrive at his own real meaning in them? As has been said, it must be in large part by comparing one precept of his with another. If we did not "resist" a robber, for example, we might sometimes through him lose everything that would enable us to "give" to one asking us for help and really needing it. And we should at the same time be injuring, rather than benefiting, the robber. There is one precept—a key-precept—in the Sermon on the Mount, which furnishes us our required solution of all the rest. It is that precept which has received the name of the Golden Rule: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them." This precept stands in an instructive relation to what pre-

cedes it. Jesus has just been teaching religion, in its profoundest act and spirit—the act and spirit of prayer. He has told his disciples to ask from God, in perfect confidence that God will bestow what they ask. He draws a parallel between God as Father, on the one hand, and earthly parents on the other. Do not earthly parents give when their children ask? But do not earthly parents give with care, with exercise of judgment, with discrimination? If a hungry child asks for a stone, thinking it a loaf of bread, does the parent give him that stone? "If ye, then," Jesus says, "being evil, know *how* to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things [perhaps not the precise things desired—such being not "good"] to them that ask him?" Then immediately follows the Golden Rule, but with a "therefore" in it: "All things, therefore"; "all things," that is to say, in a way of such thoughtful discrimination (exercised according to our less measure of judgment) as God himself exercises on our behalf in his bestowing, so we are to do as we would be done by. The principle of unselfish discrimination exercised by us on behalf of all the interests involved in any given case—this is the master-key to the difficult problems met with in the paradoxical precepts of Jesus, as it is the master-key to the ethical doubts and perplexities of our daily social life. We are to practice non-resistance within the limits thus prescribed; within the same limits we are to practice a free-handed benevolence.

Obedience to Jesus is a practicable, and, therefore, a practical, morality. But it is more and better than that. It is the height, the depth, the length, the breadth, of religion. Jesus closes his sermon with an impressive figure, designed to show the contrasted ends resulting to two contrasted classes of his hearers, the obedient, on the one hand, and the disobedient on the other. And the obedience and the disobedience are both represented by him to be toward himself. "These words of mine," is the phrase in which he makes his august, overawing assumption of authority. No wonder the evangelist added, that when Jesus "ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." It was a new voice in the world. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

CHAPTER VIII.

AT CAPERNAUM AND TO NAIN.

AFTER delivering his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus apparently returned for a short stay, perhaps in pursuit of needed rest, to his abode in Capernaum. But he was followed as usual by multitudes. On his arrival in the city, he was met by a noteworthy fresh application for help. It came from a centurion. The centurion may have brought it himself in person; but he strengthened his appeal with influence from without. He got certain elders of the Jews to intercede for him. They were willing to do this, for the reason that, as they represented to Jesus, he, though a Gentile, was friendly to the Jewish nation, and had shown his generous good will by building them a synagogue. What the centurion wanted, was relief for a servant of his. This would naturally be a slave; indeed, the Greek word means bond-servant. It speaks well for the humane spirit of the centurion that he was thus warmly interested on behalf of his slave; for the slave-owners of that old Roman world were as a rule hardhearted toward their human chattels. This suffering slave was "dear" to his master, and he now lay at the point of death. Jesus promptly said, "I will come and heal him." The Lord's very different ways of meeting different applicants for help, must, it is instinctive to suppose, have been nicely discriminated in adaptation to their different characters. In the present case, the centurion had a chance to show himself a man of rare quality. It was not a perfectly obvious chance. He might have missed it without serious blame. But he did not miss it; for he made in substance this remarkable reply: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst thyself come. Say the word, and my servant shall be healed. I am accustomed myself both to obey and to be obeyed. Obedience is a familiar thing to me. All that those over me bid, I do; all that I bid those under me, they do. Thus let it be now. Speak only, and thou shalt be obeyed, in whatever thou wilt." It is recorded that Jesus "marveled." Taken literally, this seems to imply that the centurion's answer was unforeseen by him; that it took him by surprise. Perhaps indeed the Lord's supernatural knowledge was at command only as he needed it; so that his potential possession of it left his natural human experience in the main quite undisturbed. He turned to the multitude and exclaimed with admiration, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." He added what was well adapted to excite jealousy in narrowly Jewish hearts, but

what was of a purport to be good news indeed to all the world besides to the end of time: "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Then followed words that would tend to inflame selfish jealousy, if that sentiment existed, into resentment and rage: "But the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." Dreadful words, to issue from those lips! During this aside of Jesus to the multitude, the centurion had waited; but he now heard his own gracious dismissal: "Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." And the servant was healed in that hour.

From Capernaum to Nain the distance is about twenty-five miles. Jesus, soon after what has just been narrated, perhaps the very next day, made an excursion to Nain. His disciples accompanied him, and the usual "great multitude." As he neared the city gate, behold, a procession was coming out. It was a funeral procession. The dead was a youth, the only son of a widowed mother. This case of bereavement had excited much sympathy; the procession was a numerous one. The sight of that disconsolate mother touched the heart of the Lord. She was weeping as only such a mother knows how. Jesus said to her, "Weep not." With those words, he drew nigh and touched the bier. The bearers stopped and stood still. It was a moment of hush, no doubt, to the loud lamentations that had preceded, and of excited suspense. Jesus must have been known to those whom he met, and uncertain expectation of the strange thing that might now happen, we cannot doubt, filled all hearts. But probably no one was prepared for what actually did occur. Jesus spoke to the dead youth on the bier, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" Then occurred a fulfillment of that prophecy of Jesus, uttered not long before to the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem: "The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." For "he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." And Jesus gave him to his mother.

Nothing equal in wonder to this had as yet anywhere before happened in the history of Jesus. The fame and rumor of it went abroad not only throughout Judea, but beyond into the region surrounding. It penetrated into the dungeon in which John the Baptist was

confined. That unconquerable spirit, though unconquered indeed, was depressed enough by his imprisonment to be in need of reassurance. His heart was full of public zeal, which his personal sufferings could not extinguish. He sent some of his disciples to inquire of Jesus, "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" "Go your way, and tell John," said Jesus, "the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me." We may confidently hope that this message was by the Holy Spirit made effective to comfort and strengthen that great generous heart. The closing sentence of it especially must have been felt by John as a spur to his spirit. When John's disciples were gone, Jesus took occasion to pronounce that eulogy on John which has already been given in these pages—brief, but the most magnificent eulogy ever pronounced on any of the children of men.

A touching and beautiful incident occurred at about this time—it is uncertain where, but probably at Capernaum—which contributes a pathetic charm, quite beyond the reach of human art, to the wonderful variety of picturesque stories told in the Gospels illustrative of the endlessly many-sided character and behavior of Jesus. One Simon, a Pharisee, desired Jesus to be his guest at a meal. The openness to the public eye, the freedom even of public access, with which the domestic life of the Jews was conducted, has already been commented upon. This trait now receives a curious illustration. A woman expressly marked by the evangelist as "a sinner," that is, an unchaste woman, made her way unhindered into the house. She came to the place where Jesus sat at the table. It was not a chance intrusion of hers. She had learned that Jesus was there, and she came prepared to do him honor, with her love and her tears. She brought with her a cruse of ointment, an alabaster cruse. She did not present herself to Jesus; she did not stand before him; but behind him, "at his feet." Here, apparently without a word spoken, she stood and wept in silence. Her tears fell in a stream that wet the Savior's feet. She bowed and wiped those feet with the flowing hair of her head. She kissed them with passionate fervor, kiss after kiss. Beautiful dumb demonstration of love, with sorrow—love such as, though dumb in humility and shame, must yet somehow express itself! And what eloquence beyond words did that love with sorrow achieve! Alas, Simon! His heart was not equal to his opportunity.

He missed to see what was there to be seen. The poor foolish man, in his self-blinding conceit of sagacity, was saying within himself: "This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is which toucheth him, that she is a sinner." Though Simon had only thought these things, not spoken them. Jesus showed himself indeed a prophet by perceiving very plainly "who and what manner" of man *he* was. "Simon," said Jesus, "I have somewhat to say to thee." Such an offer of remark would prepare special attention. "Master, say on," was Simon's token of readiness to hear. A little parable, the first one recorded from Jesus' lips, was the form under which the great teacher by parable now gave Simon his lesson: "A certain lender had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him most? Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

Up to this point, the application of the parable could not have been apparent, perhaps to anyone present. The Lord now turned toward the woman; but he still spoke to Simon. "Seest thou this woman?" He spoke thus of her in her own presence; but it was with a tenderness that emptied the seeming discourtesy of any disrespect. The disrespect was all to be toward him who deserved it; for Simon deserved rebuke, not only by his personal character, but also by his conduct on that occasion as host. He had failed in due customary attention to his guest. Apparently he had invited Jesus, either out of a mere supercilious curiosity to see, at dignified leisure for himself, a man so much talked of; or else, perhaps, also out of a covert hostility to him. At any rate, he seems to have discriminated against Jesus, by omitting in his case the usual little preliminary offices of hospitality which Eastern manners accord to a guest. "I entered," said the Lord, "into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many [this would show the Lord's full knowledge of her character], are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is given, the same loveth little." Simon's secret thoughts have thus been openly answered, in a manner as self-evidently just, as it must have been both unexpected and unwelcome to him. The woman now is for the first time addressed: "Thy sins

[to *her* not spoken of as 'many'] are forgiven." This seems to have offended more than Simon alone; for Jesus' fellow-guests began to say within themselves, perhaps also in undertone among themselves (the Greek may mean either), "Who is this that even forgiveth sins?" If this question was possibly overheard by the jealous ears of the woman, to her momentary discomposure, her fears must have been effectively allayed, when Jesus added, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." But the evil spirit of unbelief in those who criticised was no doubt confirmed. The same

thing may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. It is as we ourselves choose.

Will the woman thus forgiven attach herself thenceforth to her Savior? Our next chapter opens a new and remarkable epoch in the Lord's history. Perhaps among the "many others,"—that is, many other women, there to be spoken of—this loving penitent, with something of an unconscious poet-heart in her bosom, may be supposed namelessly included. The supposition would be grateful; and her possession and devotion of that alabaster cruse of ointment are in favor of the conjecture.

CHAPTER IX.

A CYCLE OF PARABLES.

SOON after the incident last related, Jesus seems to have set out from Capernaum on another preaching tour in Galilee. This time a new feature marked his progress. It was a feature as beautiful as, to us of the West, it appears foreign and singular. Besides the twelve apostles, a select different following attended him. This was a band of women; women who, grateful for services rendered them by him, thus as a way of testifying their love and their thanks attached themselves to his train to go with him in his journeys. They seem not to have been poor women; but women able to defray their own charges in traveling, and besides to contribute, as we are told they did, out of their private resources to the comfort of their Master. Their ministration they doubtless found to be its own exceeding rich reward. Mary Magdalen is named first among these ministering women. Of her, it is said that she had been delivered from a sevenfold possession of demons. There is no good reason to suppose that this Mary had previously been, according to the slander of the current tradition concerning her, a woman of lewd life.

In the course of his various circuits starting from Capernaum, Jesus may not improbably have made somewhat frequent returns for rest—such rest as he could command—at his abode in that city. On one such occasion the concourse of people thronging him in this refuge of his was so great and so eager that "they"—that is, he and his household—could not so much as take their ordinary meals. We cannot be surprised that Jesus' "friends"—his kindred perhaps may be meant by the word—were concerned on his behalf; that they even thought it time to interfere. They interfered, and with zeal. They used or sought to use, a gentle violence in restraint of him. "For they said, He is beside himself." A fresh instance of exorcism at his hands, taking place at this

time, in concurrence perhaps with these forcible attempts of his friends to save him from himself as one not perfectly sane, gave somewhat plausible occasion to certain scribes come down from Jerusalem, to apply their interpretation to the phenomena presented in the highly eccentric case of this notorious man Jesus. "He hath Beelzebub," they said; "by the prince of the demons he casts out the demons." Jesus was excited to an unusual pitch of indignation by this blasphemous charge, laid against him, of collusion on his part with the kingdom of evil. "All their sins," he said, "shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." The Evangelist Mark expressly adds, "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Maliciously attributing to Satan the authentic work of the Holy Spirit, is the "unpardonable sin." It is "an eternal sin." It reproduces itself forever; or perhaps we should understand that dreadful expression, "an eternal sin," to mean that it entails consequences of penalty which endure forever. "Ye offspring of vipers!" so Jesus addresses those blaspheming opponents of his. Vengeful words! They were like a drawn sword of flame from his lips. They burn yet on the printed page. One can easily imagine that, when uttered, they seemed hot enough to consume their objects with the breath of his mouth.

The insolent scribes and Pharisees present, although they probably had just witnessed that casting out of the demon, said they would like to see a "sign" from Jesus. Jesus indignantly refused them their request. "An evil and adulterous generation," he sternly said, "seeketh after a sign." He said that there should be no sign given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah. Then came from Jesus the

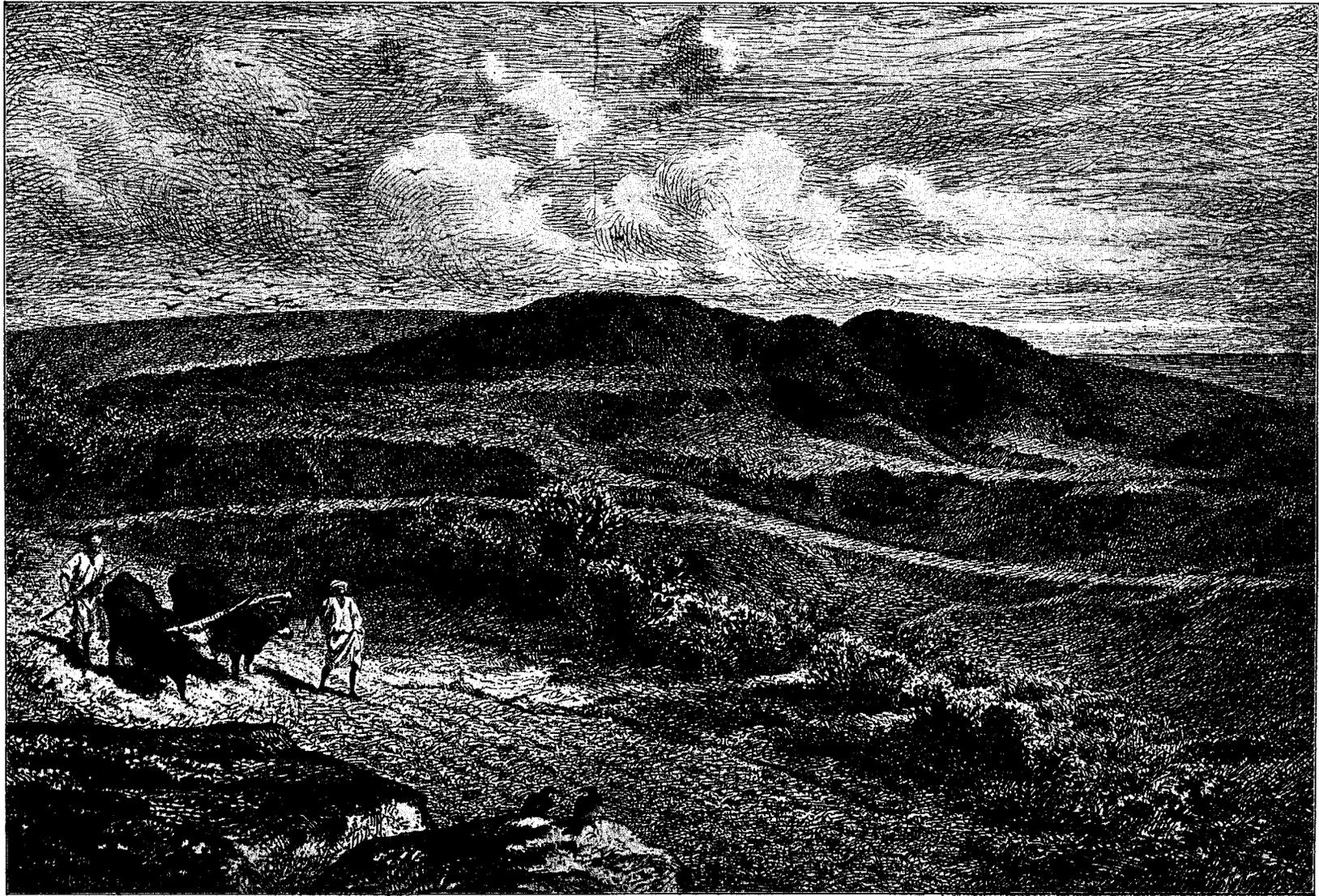
second of his many allusions, allusions growing ever more and more distinct toward the end, to his own impending death and resurrection; the first allusion was more closely veiled, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it again." "As Jonah," he said, "was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale [rather, sea-monster]; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Both these first two allusions were addressed to unbelievers who demanded a "sign"; and it was in accordance with the Lord's usual manner toward such hearers, to speak darkly in a parable. Jesus, in so paralleling Jonah's case with his own, seems to give the weight of his authority in favor of that interpretation of the Old Testament story in question which makes it not only historical but literal.

In the midst of the discourse following the request for a sign, or immediately upon the end of it, a strange exclamation addressed to Jesus came from the ranks of the multitude. It was a woman that uttered it. "Blessed," she cried, "is the womb that bare thee and the breasts which thou didst suck." This admiring and affectionate congratulation, spoken of Mary, but meant for Jesus, Jesus turned aside from his mother to bestow the benediction of it elsewhere. "Yea, rather," said he, "blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." It may be that the emotional woman who spoke up as narrated, had just had pointed out to her Jesus' mother herself, at that moment, with her other sons, seeking access to Jesus. For "while he was yet speaking," so it is said, "his mother and his brethren stood without seeking to speak to him." Word to this effect passed on from one to another till it reached Jesus. Whether or not Jesus gratified the wish thus conveyed to him, is not expressly stated. The probability seems to be that he did not. He said, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" Then he looked round on them that encompassed him, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren. For whoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother." It is likely that the mother Mary, with her younger sons, had come on a second errand of interference to Jesus, to dissuade him from the work that he was doing. They may have feared for his personal safety, seeing the enmity he excited among the Jewish ruling classes; possibly they were desirous to have it openly appear that they were influentially related to a personage so conspicuous as Jesus had become. Whatever was the case, their aim was frustrated. Jesus took the opportunity to declare himself independent enough of ordinary earthly relationships of kindred, to

disregard them entirely. But in doing so, how endearingly near to himself he draws every soul, in every time, in every clime, that simply and sincerely does the will of God! This caressing embrace in words from Jesus of all obedient hearts did not exclude anyone because it included everyone. Mary, too, and each one of his earthly kindred as well, might, if they would, find a home in that capacious bosom of love thus opening wide, and equally wide, for the welcome of us all.

Jesus found the seaside, or as we should say, the lakeside, highly favorable for his purposes in teaching. It offered him an easy escape from the too importunate pressure of the crowd. It was apparently on the same day with the incident of his mother's coming to seek him, that he went out again to the waterside, and there, withdrawn a little way in a boat, taught the people standing in thick ranks on the shore. If one could see a photographic picture of the scene! At this time he first entered fully upon his method of teaching by parables. Why at this time? Why at all? It is a mistake to suppose that it was solely, or even chiefly, to make his instructions easily understood. That was not the Savior's object in uttering parables; and it certainly was not the result that followed. Indeed, on this very occasion, we learn that his more immediate disciples, those closest in his confidence, sought to have his parables explained to them. They also asked him, "Why speakest thou unto them [the multitude] in parables?" Jesus' reply should be deeply pondered: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. . . . Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not." Mark and Luke make the Lord's words even more solemn: "Unto them that are without, all things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand." The main first purpose, then, of the parable, in the Lord's use of it, was not to make clear, it was rather to veil, instruction. But that, we may well believe, was far from being its only purpose. It has, in fact, proved a marvelously fruitful form of wrapping up, or enfolding, for future use, instruction which, at the time when it was first given, was beyond the capacity of intelligence, above the reach of moral elevation, existing in those who received it. This has turned out to be the actual utility of the Lord's parables; and such utility in them was no doubt foreseen and intended by their author.

But there may be discovered a call for teaching by parable, peculiar to that particular stage which Jesus had now reached in the



BIDA.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

fulfillment of his Messianic mission. His miracles had excited universal attention; they had commanded for the worker of them a very general popular belief. But this belief was for the most part very superficial, very unsatisfactory. It did not rise, except in a comparatively small number of cases, to the faith of true discipleship. It created for Jesus a popularity indeed, but a useless popularity; a popularity that might even be worse than useless. There was danger of its forcing on the end prematurely. Jesus had now, by a somewhat extensive canvass of the field, come "to his own," in a sense a few degrees wider than had been the case at Nazareth; and although he had not yet been, in this wider sense of his coming, decisively rejected as he was there, still it was again true that "his own received him not" — that is, received him not as was necessary that he should be received, in order to the establishing of his kingdom. He had given the Galileans their chance, their day of visitation; and they had not known it. There might be a small remnant of them to be won; but the heart of the great mass was waxed hopelessly gross. The Savior would now teach in a way to sift his hearers. Those of his hearers who were rightly disposed, would be drawn to him; and as for the rest, his sentence on them was like that sad sentence of old on reprobate Israel. "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." There is this melancholy undertone to be discerned in the first of the present cycle of parables, that of the Sower — the purport of which is, that only a sifted few among his hearers heard him to profit and to salvation. The parable and the explanation are both of them too familiar to need any repetition of their lesson here. The same may be said of the parable following, that of the Tares and the Wheat. "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear," is the warning from Jesus, intended to sift his hearers. The rightly disposed among them would be found out by such teaching, found out not so much by him, the teacher, as by themselves, the taught. It would be like the action of a magnet on a mangled mass, composed of particles of iron, few in number, lost amid innumerable grains of sand. The iron particles feel the attraction of the magnet and respond; the grains of sand abide inert and dead. So the susceptible, the obedient, hearts, few in number amid the multitude, would know the Savior's voice, masked though it were in parable; the rest would hear as if they heard not.

It has needed nineteen Christian centuries to furnish that commentary and explanation which we now enjoy, for the parable of the Mustard Seed as symbol of the growth of the kingdom of God. That parable, together with

the rest, Jesus explained to the inner circle of his disciples. This particular explanation, however, has not been recorded for us in the Gospels. The parable of the Tares and the Wheat was impressively explained by its author, in terms which we may still read with awe. It was a parable of the "end," as well as of what should precede the end. The "end" meant by the Lord was not, as it is most natural for us to understand it, the end of the world, in the most inclusive sense of that expression, but the end of the order of things then existing; an end, as some suppose, that was reached at the coming of Christ for the destruction of Jerusalem with its Temple, and the final abolition therewith of worship according to the ritual of Moses. Others postpone the "end" in question to a time still remaining future. But in any case the sense of the expression, "end of the world," is not, end of the material universe, nor even end of mankind's possession of the earth; but end of the then current age or dispensation. The parable of the Leaven in the meal, that of the Treasure hidden in the field, that of the Pearl of Great Price, and that of the Net cast into the sea, follow one upon another in immediate succession, devoted, all of them, to setting forth the nature of that invisible kingdom of heaven which it was the Lord's work to establish in the earth — the nature of that kingdom, and the relation to it of individual men and women. The effect of all was to make the spiritually prepared search themselves deeply and become disciples indeed; but to leave the unsusceptible, the obstinate, and the rebellious, in the darkness they loved more than the light.

It is pathetic rather than otherwise to read that when Jesus asked his hearers, those chosen hearers who were closest about him, "Have ye understood all these things?" they easily answered, "Yea." At least, judging by their subsequent exhibitions of slowness to apprehend, one cannot but suspect that their apprehension now was very imperfect at the best. But the patient Lord must content himself with what his disciples had; he would not require of them what they had not. Yet it would be strange if some sadness did not often invade his heart, did not invade it now, to feel how far short they stopped of the full height and depth of his meaning.

A CYCLE OF MIRACLES

The cycle of parables was succeeded by a cycle of miracles. That crowded day of teaching done, in which the parables already referred to were spoken, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over unto the other side." That meant the other side of the lake. The going would, of course, be by water. The voyage was to

prove one that those disciples would never forget. They started at once, without preparation. The boat in which he had sat teaching was the one that bore Jesus; but there were other boats to accompany that. Jesus must have been in a state of extreme fatigue and exhaustion from his labors, not only of that day, but of many days preceding. This is not expressly told us by any one of the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, synoptists so-called, who all of them relate the incidents of the voyage. But they unite in saying that Jesus fell asleep on the way. There was a cushion in the stern of the boat on which that sacred head, how weary, pillowed itself to this grateful rest. While he lay sleeping, the boat was brought suddenly into the most imminent danger. A storm of wind poured down through the gorges in the mountainous eastern shore of the lake, and instantly wrought the water into billows that overswept the little craft and threatened to founder it. The commotion did not disturb the profound repose of that divine-human sleeper. His companions were thoroughly terrified. Their terror for their lives was too much for their awe of their Master. They come to him where he lies sleeping, cradled on that stormy sea like an infant gently lulled by the breathing of its mother to slumber on her breast.

But let us imagine him still sleeping undisturbed, while we listen for a moment to another writer than the evangelists, a man of our own time, telling us what he has himself experienced of just such a sudden violent storm as that described in the Gospels, occurring on the same lake. Doctor Thomson, in his interesting and instructive volumes,¹ says: "I spent a night on the mountains east of the lake. . . . The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to blow towards the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence; so that when we descended to the shore the next morning the surface of the lake was like that of a boiling caldron. . . . To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low — 680 feet below the sea; that the mountainous plateau of the Jaulân rises to a considerable height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Haurân, and upward to snowy Hermon; that the watercourses have worn or washed out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of this lake; and that these act like great funnels, to draw down the cold winds from the mountains. . . . Such winds are not only violent, but they come down suddenly, and often when the sky is perfectly clear. I once

went in to swim near the hot baths; and, before I was aware, a wind came rushing over the cliffs with such force that it was with difficulty I could regain the shore."

The disciples awake their Master. One evangelist makes them say, almost upbraidingly, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus rises, but not until he has said to his trembling companions, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Then he rebukes the roaring wind and the raging sea. "Peace, be still," he calmly said. The deaf winds heard, and the deaf waters too had ears for that voice. The winds ceased blowing, the waves ceased rolling and there was a great calm. The poor disciples were afraid now with a different fear. "They feared exceedingly, and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

From a lake whose present calm was as full to them of awfulness as had been its storm, they stepped ashore, these rescued voyagers, in the country of the Gerasenes. Whether that same night, or not till the next morning, is uncertain. Whichever the time, they were fiercely and startlingly welcomed to land. For two violent demoniacs met them, with excited outcry and with menacing gesture. These wretched creatures had come out of the tombs which like wild beasts they made their lairs. The mountain-side was pierced then—it remains so now—with excavations in the rock, made for burial-places. Here dwelt these two demon-ridden human beings, who made the neighborhood so dangerous for passers-by that it was avoided by all. But stress of weather had driven thither those who now landed at the spot. The clamor of the demoniacs was directed to Jesus. "What have we," they cried, "to do with thee, thou son of God? Art thou come here to torment us before the time?" For Jesus had bidden the unclean spirits forth. One of the two invading demon forces was spokesman for both. This one was perhaps much more truculent than the other; so that Mark speaks only of him. "What is thy name?" said Jesus. "Legion; for we are many," was the reply. The demons seem to have had a shuddering horror of being banished back to their "abyss." They preferred to Jesus a singular request, which Jesus, with a singular complaisance, granted. Perhaps, it was in part to show the absolute power that he wielded, for sufferance also as well as for prohibition. The demons pleaded that they might be allowed to go from their dwelling-places in men to lodgment in swine. There was a herd of these unclean beasts feeding on the mountain-side. Jesus said, "Go." They went; and for proof not to be gainsaid that they indeed went, and that they actually existed to go, the

¹ "The Land and the Book," II, pp. 351, 352.

swine, so invaded, instantly start and with a headlong rush plunge impetuously down the steep slope of the mountain. They cannot stop at the bottom; their impetus carries them over the narrow ledge of level shore into the deep water of the lake, where they are all drowned, to the number of about two thousand. The swineherds were frightened at the irreparable catastrophe; they fled, scattering the news of what had happened. People flocked from city and country to the spot, that they might see for themselves what was there to be seen. They came to Jesus, he having been described to them perhaps, or being in some way now recognized by them, as the responsible author of the miracle; and there they find the man that had been so afflicted sitting at his Savior's feet. He had been for a long time too savage to wear clothes; but he was clothed now, and in his right mind. Those who had seen what occurred report their observations to the new comers; and then a thing that was hardly to have been looked for resulted. Those unaccountable Gerasenes commenced beseeching Jesus to depart! They obtained their desire; for Jesus reëntered his boat and crossed back to the other side of the lake. The relieved victim of that evil possession desired to go with Jesus. But no; Jesus replied: "Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." This was a deviation on Jesus' part from what had previously been his course in similar cases. Perhaps the deviation was due to a compassionate wish that he had, not to let that region of country, so inhospitable to him, remain utterly without witness of the salvation that had just visited it in vain.

Objection has sometimes been made against this miracle of Jesus that it was a wanton destruction of property; in effect, a wrongful infringement of proprietary rights. The objection has no force whatever that does not lie as strongly, nay, more strongly, against the suffering of demoniacal possession in general. If God could permit a man to be deprived of himself by a demon, much more might God permit men to be so deprived of property; especially if that property were of a questionable sort, as was the case with those swine. The simple fact is, that, as against the Creator, there is no right whatever of property vested in any creature. If God was working there, in what Jesus did or Jesus permitted, then who are we to argue against God? Or who are we to say, This was unworthy of God, and therefore God did not do it? We may easily be more ingenious than judicious in criticising God's ways, and finding reasons, whether for or against. A brilliant agnostic writer has recently made himself very merry laughing at

this story of the Gerasene swine as a thing quite too ridiculous for sober belief. He was more witty than wise in doing so. It would be a quite adequate justification of the Lord's conduct, in according to the demons their whimsical request, if his object in so doing was only to furnish an irrefutable evidence of the reality of such evil beings; and of the reality of their power, under sufferance from God, to take violent possession of alien animal organisms, human and other, and wield them to their own perverse will. Without this evidence against such unbelieving explanation of the phenomena involved, it would be much more easy than it actually is, to maintain, as some do, that demoniacal possession in Jesus' time, was simply a superstitious name for epilepsy, catalepsy, lunacy, or other like commonplace disorder. It may properly be noted that alternative names for the region in which this incident occurred are employed by different evangelists. Of course, the locality may anciently have had duplicate, or even triplicate, designations; but the name which, in native use on the spot, has survived, under some modification, to our day, is approximately the one here given, "the country of the Gerasenes."

The Savior was now again by the sea on its western side, where a multitude was already assembled to welcome his return. He no doubt resumed his teaching, but his teaching was presently interrupted. One Jairus, a man of consideration in the community, for he was a ruler of the synagogue, came to him with a petition for help. His earnestness was extreme, and it made him both importunate and humble. Jewish magnate as he was, he fell at Jesus' feet, and besought him "much." His daughter was dying, "my little daughter," he piteously and affectionately called her. One evangelist has Jairus say, "My daughter is even now dead." After his first plea to Jesus, the father did, indeed, get word, brought him from his home, that all was over with his little beloved. His hope of succor was not even so quenched. "Come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live," he said. It was a beautiful triumph of love and faith over despair. Jesus went with Jairus, and the multitude followed. They followed so close that they pressed upon the person of the Lord. In the midst of the multitude, was a poor sick woman, victim of an incurable disease that had drained not only her strength but her purse. Twelve years long she had been suffering many things under the hands of many physicians, and all that time had grown steadily worse rather than better. But she had heard of Jesus and said secretly to herself, "Here yet is hope for me, even me. I cannot expect to attract his attention,



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JESUS ASLEEP DURING THE STORM.

I may not get near enough to him to take hold of his hands or his feet; if I can but touch the hem of his garment! He need not know it; no one need know it; but it will cure me, if I succeed. I will try." She tried and she succeeded. O gladness! that instant "the fountain of her blood [which for twelve years had never ceased draining her life] was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed." But she was also found out in this her successful attempt at larceny of life and health! Jesus perceived that the peculiar power which was his had gone forth, and, staying his steps, he turned round to the throng and said, "Who touched my garments?" The woman was frightened. Happily for her momentary relief, when one and another had denied and she thus stood increasingly in danger of being exposed, Peter spoke up in unintended, unconscious defense and concealment of her. "Master," said he, "the multitudes press thee and crush thee." Perhaps she would escape detection after all! But no; Jesus insists: "Some one did touch me." It was the vital touch of faith that he had felt. The woman saw there was no use in trying longer to remain concealed. She came tremblingly forward, and, falling down at his feet, confessed her secret touch, and declared aloud to all how with the touch she had at once been healed. Then these words fell like a dew of healing benediction from those holy lips, words paternal in benignity though addressed no doubt by one junior to one senior in age: "Daughter, be of good cheer; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Now it is that the final, fatal message, already alluded to, comes from the synagogue-ruler's house, "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master." The Master speaks, and says to Jairus, "Fear not; only believe." And on they move, Jesus perhaps at every step, we know not, dropping balm of healing on his way. Arrived at the house, Jesus stays the multitude, even the apostles—all but Peter, James, and John—outside the door. The customary loud lamentation over the dead had already commenced. Jesus calmly says, "Why make ye a tumult and weep? The child is not dead, but sleepeth." They stopped their lamentation enough to laugh the speaker to scorn, "knowing that she was dead." But Jesus put them all forth—no question of his right or of his power!—and taking with him the father, the mother, and those three chosen disciples of his, goes into the room where the child lay. There all was simple, all majestic; for omnipotence was there. Jesus took the dead child by her little cold, white hand and said, "Maiden, arise." She immediately arose and walked. "And he commanded that something should be given her to eat!" The age of the damsel is

recorded. She was twelve years old. The Lord gave strict charge that nothing be told of what had thus been done. But the fame of it went everywhere abroad. How could it be otherwise? And why did Jesus impose a command that he no doubt knew would not be obeyed? Yet the obedient would obey; and such would not miss the reward of having triumphantly endured a test of obedience so severe. Meantime the apostles would gradually be prepared to understand that their Master did not build his hopes of success in his mission mainly on miracle-working; much less on the notoriety that miracles earned for their author.

Miracles were the largess that this Prince in his progresses through his land—progresses accomplished on foot, and with such a following!—scattered everywhere with prodigal bounty. He was passing from the house of Jairus on his way, when two blind men took up a pursuit of him. "Have mercy on us, thou Son of David," they cried aloud as they went. This is the first mention of Jesus' being called by that royal title of his, "Son of David." He reached "the house," perhaps his own house, perhaps Peter's, and the blind men find him there. "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" he asked them. "Yea, Lord," they said. The measure of the faith that they had, not the measure of the faith they professed, should be the measure of the blessing bestowed. Jesus answered, "According to your faith be it done unto you," at the same time touching their eyes. Their eyes were opened and they saw. Jesus was strict in enjoining it upon them not to tell what he had done. But they went forth and spread his fame abroad. These men, joyful perhaps rather than grateful, since they were not obedient, were no sooner gone out of the door, than there were brought to Jesus a demon-ridden wretch who was dumb. His evil inmate had the malicious whim to keep his victim from the use of his vocal organs. The demon was cast out and the dumb man spoke. There was much marveling on the part of the multitude, but the marveling, it is to be feared, was that of idle and gossiping curiosity, rather than that of reverence and faith. The Pharisees, for their part, applied again their easy, their blasphemous, explanation, "By the prince of the demons he casts out demons." It was a sad, but a fit, conclusion to such a display of power to save as had thus been made by Jesus apparently to so little permanent spiritual result, when he now for the last time returned to Nazareth once more, to be there finally and decisively rejected by his fellow townspeople. Poor benighted souls! "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" Thus they thought

and talked. "And they were offended in him." "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them." And Jesus "marveled," as it is

noted that he had marveled once before. Before, he marveled at the faith of a foreigner, a heathen. This time it was at the unbelief of Jews, his own neighbors.

CHAPTER X.

THE FAREWELL TOUR IN MIDDLE GALILEE.

OUR Lord's laborious circuits of cities and villages have thus far been confined almost wholly to that district of country which we may venture to designate as Middle Galilee, with Capernaum for center. He will soon transfer his activities elsewhere. But the present chapter has still to deal with work done in the same circle of territory. It will describe the Lord's farewell tour of preaching in the region that had already been favored, beyond what had been any other or would be any other in the world, with the words of his mouth and with the works of his hand. Preaching is, as it had been before, the object; but miracles, as they have done before, will attend incidentally—for the most part, miracles of healing; but in one case, a miracle of beneficence, creative, and wrought on a colossal scale; and in another, an exceptional case, a miracle of what might seem almost like pure demonstration.

The thronging of the multitudes, seen to be so needy, and in the main so unconscious of that need in them which was deepest, filled the heart of the Lord with pity of their plight. There was far more to be done in supply of the popular wants than one person could do, though that person were the Son of God as well as the Son of Man. Jesus determined on sending out his apostles to preach and to work wonders of exorcism and of healing. The country was populous beyond what we readily conceive. The contracted little region of Galilee, scarcely so large as the State of Delaware, only a trifle larger than the English county of Lancaster, is said by Josephus to have contained 204 cities of not less than 15,000 inhabitants each. The central portion was at least as densely peopled as any other. To visit so many swarming towns with the Gospel, was a great undertaking. Jesus gave his twelve apostles instructions for their guidance which he afterward in large part duplicated to "the seventy" of his disciples whom he despatched on a similar errand of itinerant evangelism. He bade them restrict their ministry to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel"—these, as distinguished from the Gentiles, on the one hand, and even the Samaritans, on the other. It was not time yet for the predestined mission to the world at large.

The missionary apostles were to go from city to city; if persecuted in one city, fleeing to another. It seems as if the directions given them went beyond the requirements of the tour immediately in prospect, and took in by anticipation the work which they would have to do after their Lord should be crucified. He said, "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come"—language most naturally referred to Christ's coming for the destruction of Jerusalem. He faithfully forewarned them that they would encounter hardship and suffering. "Fear not," he said. Men would threaten, men would persecute, men would put to death. "Be not afraid," said Jesus, "of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Somber exhortation! But the exhortation was supported by promise. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered.

. . . Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven." Strict, even stern, is the claim that this unique Teacher advances on his own behalf to paramount, to supreme, allegiance on the part of his followers—allegiance overriding every other, the most sacred, tie of obligation that can hold between one human being and another. "He that loveth father or mother more than me," said Jesus, "is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." That, for his sake, a disciple of his should "hate" "his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also," was another form from Jesus' lips of the same enormous claim for himself. When ever was other such teacher as he? The accompanying promises were as large and as confident as the claims; and both claims and promises were often put in that language of paradox which this Teacher loved. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;" "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me;" "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward;"—such were some of the

assurances given by Jesus to sustain the hearts of the disciples under the staggering weight of responsibility and danger thrust upon them. One cannot but imagine that, when the foregoing last thing was said by Jesus in sending his apostles forth, some outside hearers had drawn near; and that to those outside hearers, as well as to the apostles themselves, that last thing was partly addressed. The Lord softened with prophetic compassion and sympathy toward his disciples, thus about to go out as lambs in the midst of wolves, and tenderly, with a kind of affectionate diminutive, he called them "these little ones"; at the same time bespeaking for them, at the hands of any and all, offices of kindness, which for their sake he promised, and promised "verily," should, down even to the gift of a cup of cold water only, not be suffered to go without grateful reward. Strange and beautiful mingling of magisterial severity with graciousness ineffably thoughtful and sweet!

The undertone of pathos that, from a point a little earlier than the one now reached, the susceptible ear hears moaning in a gentle crescendo throughout the whole subsequent history, breaks for a moment here into a clear note of tragedy, with the record of the death of John the Baptist in prison. To think of that greatest of the prophets, that willing, that generous, that joyous, self-effacer, that morning-star forerunning the Sun—to think of him beheaded in prison, just to meet the prompted whim of a wanton dancing-girl at a royal feast!

When news of the fate of John was brought to Jesus, it seemed to him a warning that he must heed. He withdrew by boat to a place of retirement. But there was no place of retirement for Jesus. Wherever he went, he drew the tide after him as the moon draws the sea. Poor weary footfarers, the people took the circuit of the lake shore and found him out where he was. Indeed, they had made such speed in running, that they were on the ground before him. He could not resist the eloquence of such importunity. He had compassion on them and healed their sick. But there was more need to be provided for than that which consisted in cases, comparatively few, of sickness seeking relief. Evening came on and that inconsiderate crowd were without food in the desert. The disciples saw the state of the case, and they begged the Master to send the multitude away that in the cities and villages round about they might buy themselves food. "Give ye them to eat," said the Lord. The disciples were dumfounded. He had commanded an impossibility; and they virtually told him this. He bade them find out and report to him the resources actually in hand. "Five loaves, and

two fishes" — a ludicrously inadequate supply. This supply seems to have been in the hands of a boy present there, who probably, with a forecasting eye to business, had brought it thither for sale to the highest bidder. We gather this from John's account, who tells that Andrew said: "There is a lad here with five barley loaves and two fishes." Little, but enough for seed, in the hands of a husbandman like Jesus! He bade his disciples make the multitude take seats on the grass, which was plenty in the place, arranging themselves in groups of hundreds and fifties. This arrangement made counting easy. The number of the multitude proved to be about five thousand souls; and there were women and children not reckoned in this summation.

Jesus took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, lifting his eyes homeward toward heaven, first of all gave thanks. (There must have been something peculiarly impressive in this giving of thanks by the Lord. John refers to it incidentally afterward in a manner that indicates this, when, in simply identifying a particular spot, he calls it "the place where they ate bread *after the Lord had given thanks.*") He then broke the loaves in pieces and gave to the disciples for distribution. He afterward divided the fishes, and dispensed to each as much as each desired. They all ate and were filled. It was a miraculous feast; but, well considered, the feast that God multiplies to mankind in every year's harvest is not one whit less miraculous. This latter miracle is annually wrought before our eyes, and yet so out of our sight that we blindly do not wonder at it. That miracle of the 5,000 fed plenteously from but five barley loaves and two fishes, seems to have been wrought with as little demonstration as is the yearly miracle of seeding and harvest. It is not told at what point the multiplication of quantity took place. Probably no one could have told; probably no one saw. We may conjecture that, in a manner not attracting attention, the loaves continued to furnish pieces for distribution, as long as those heavenly hands continued to break them; and similarly the fishes lasted for division to the people. There was some overflow and surplus of creative beneficence; but nothing was wasted. The Lord had all gathered up, and twelve baskets were filled with the fragments of remainder. The evangelists, all the four uniting here, tell the story and make no comment. The true comment is the story.

The immediate effect of this prodigious work was threatening in character. It incited the populace to a movement which would compromise Jesus, and precipitate a catastrophe. They said, "This is he; let us make him king." Jesus at once accordingly hurried his disciples

into the boat to return without him, or before him, to the other side, while he should himself disperse the multitude. These two things accomplished, the Lord went up into the mountain apart to pray. It was a crisis again. There night overtook him.

Meantime the disciples had trouble in making their transit by boat. They had head winds and there was a heavy sea. While they struggled with their oars, making little progress, they peered through the darkness and saw what alarmed them. It was the appearance of a man walking on the waters. It was an "apparition"! They cried out with terror. That moving form approached them. But a voice answered their cry. It was a well-known voice, and the words were words of peace. "Be of good cheer," it said; "it is I; be not afraid." Peter responded: "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee upon the waters." "Come," said Jesus. Peter ventured—a noble venture of faith. But his faith failed and he began to sink. "Lord, save me," he cried. Jesus gave him his hand and they went both of them up into the boat. Therewith the wind ceased, and "straightway the boat was at the land whither they were going," namely, Gennesaret. This, at first blush, might seem, as suggested, almost like a mere miracle of demonstration. But wisely considered it was not such. There was reason why the disciples should be sent on in advance of their Master, and there was reason why the Master should be left for that night season alone. Then there was reason why he should rejoin his disciples; and the way he took was the one practicable way. Yet once more in Gennesaret (where Capernaum was situated), the familiar scene is repeated of the Lord besieged with multitudes in need of his healing hand; and once more with lavish bounty he showers round his gifts. His very garments dripped medicinal balm whenever they were touched—if it was the hand of faith that touched them.

The feeding of the 5,000 had its sequel in a teaching occasioned by it. This John only reports. The multitude that had been filled by the dispensations from that miraculous hand, came back on the morrow and, finding the wonder-worker gone, took boats that had just been brought from Tiberias to the place, and hastened in them across to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. "Rabbi," they wonderingly said to him, "when camest thou here?" They had seen the disciples go away the evening before, without their Master, in the only boat then available; and the flotilla from Tiberias they themselves had used, and that certainly had not brought him. It was a question of idle, perhaps half-ashamed, curiosity, to cover the real motive with which they had now sought

Jesus again. His answer did not gratify them; but it laid bare in their souls what they would willingly have concealed. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves and were filled. Work not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life." It was not the purpose of Jesus, or it was only a subordinate, a tributary, purpose of his, to bring material comfort into the world. His feeding of the multitude was, in his own view, less a work of beneficence, than a "sign." They missed the true advantage, who took, indeed, the food provided but failed to take the meaning. It was spiritual, it was eternal, not bodily, not temporal, good, that the Son of Man came chiefly to bring.

The people caught at Christ's word, "Work," and asked a sanctimonious question: "What must we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus' reply was a point-blank surprise and rebuke to their spirit of unbelief in himself: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." With incredible insensibility to the implication bound up in what Jesus had thus said, they pressed their prurient plea for a fresh wonder from his hand. One almost blushes for them now with involuntary shame, to read with what open effrontery, with what flagrant impudence, they hinted at a repetition by him of his miracle of the day before: "What then dost thou for a sign, that we may see, and believe thee? what workest thou? Our fathers ate the manna in the Wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat."

It was hopeless to deal with such a spirit as that. Cavilers, not learners, were before him, and Jesus would drive them away, rather than vainly try to win them. He propounds his hardest doctrines, and he propounds them in the most repellent form: "I am the bread of life. . . . The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." It was the miracle of the feeding that suggested the figure under which he thus taught; but what he thus taught was the profound, mysterious truth of his own bloody sacrifice of himself for the life of mankind. He was to be believed in, as constituting such a vicarious sacrifice; so was he to become, not to the body, but to the soul, a food nourishing the partaker to eternal life. It was a stumbling doctrine, a rock of offense. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" murmured the Jews, in stubborn unbelief. Jesus did not make it easier for these hearers. "Except," he said, "ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves." By this time, the scene had got itself transferred to the synagogue in Capernaum. The sifting effect of

such teaching from Jesus made itself felt even among his disciples. "This is a hard saying," many of them murmured to themselves, "who can hear it?" Jesus knowing this, condescended to intimate to them that his words were not to be taken literally, but were spirit and were life. "But there are some of you," he added sadly, "that believe not."

What he had manifestly aimed at in these teachings, came to pass. His following was diminished in number. So many, indeed, of his disciples went back to walk with him no more, that the Lord turned to his twelve, and said, "Would ye also go away?" One cannot help feeling the question to be full of pathos. Did a sense of despondency weigh at that moment too heavy on the human heart of the Lord? If so, it must have been a relief when Peter made his noble reply: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know thou art the Holy One of God." If ever words from man were welcome succor to Jesus, welcome and needed, it must have been then. But there was a hidden pang in his bosom that no words from any could cure. What that pang was, Jesus testified when he said, "Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Only twelve, they *chosen*—they chosen by *himself*—and one a devil! Searching words! Well for Judas had they gone to his heart, had they even sifted him then and there out of the number of the disciples! But the admonition, meant to save, if he would be saved, did not reveal to Judas his own true self; or not so as to make him savingly recoil.

The Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes seem to have been in a chronic state of mental disturbance concerning Jesus. They had delegations of their number in constant, or in frequent, attendance on this Galilean teacher, to watch

him, to gather evidence, and to make report. Such a delegation now finds occasion of cavil in the fact that Jesus' disciples neglected certain ceremonial washings enjoined by tradition. Jesus pointed out that the inside of a man was the true seat of that man's purity or defilement. The disciples, in their simplicity, tell their Master that this teaching of his has offended the Pharisees. Their Master startled them by saying, "They are blind guides; let them alone." But even Peter, though not like the Pharisees offended, had, like them, not understood. "Declare unto us the parable," he said. The Lord was for an instant cast down. "Are ye also," he asked, "even yet without understanding?" And then he explained what to us now needs no explanation, saying, "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings: these are the things which defile the man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not the man."

It was fully proved that not by "signs," and not by teaching, could that generation be redeemed from themselves. The Wonder-worker, the Teacher, must become Redeemer by blood, if the world was to be saved. It was only by being "lifted up" on the cross, that Jesus could "draw all men unto him." Still, the hour was not yet come for that; and the Lord will meantime, forsaking finally the familiar field of his labors in Middle Galilee, visit the regions to the north, skirting the borders of the Gentiles. This will interpose an interval of comparative rest, rest by retirement and change. And there must be at least a few souls there who will know the day of their visitation. Yes, and one of those few will be a heathen woman, to whom it shall be given to contribute an incomparable lesson of humility, of faith to all coming generations of mankind.

CHAPTER XI.

TWICE NORTHWARD IN PURSUIT OF SECLUSION.

A CERTAIN portion of Upper or Northern Galilee early acquired the name of "Galilee of the Gentiles." This was from the fact that, having in Solomon's time been ceded to Hiram, king of Tyre, as a consideration for services rendered by that monarch to the Jewish sovereign, it drew to itself a comparatively large population of Gentile origin. Into this region Jesus now repairs.

From beyond the borders of Israel, a Canaanitish woman—"a Syrophenician," one evangelist calls her—made her way to Jesus. She, of course, had a request to prefer. She preferred it in terms betokening some knowledge

on her part of Jewish ideas. "Have mercy on me," she cried, "O Lord, thou Son of David!" It was mercy on herself that she invoked; and yet it was for another than herself that she pleaded. It was for one dearer than herself. She was a mother; and she prayed on behalf of a child, her daughter. That daughter, a "little" daughter, was grievously vexed with a demon. Jesus met her as there is no record that ever he met other before. He met her with absolute silence.

But the suppliant was not so to be baffled. She had recourse to the disciples, who seem to have been by themselves at this moment, apart

from their Master. She clamored so that they, for very weariness of her, took up intercession in her behalf. They could not bear the din of her supplications. They came to Jesus, she probably following hard after them. "Send her away," they said. This was not so heartless on their part as it seems, for they used a Greek idiom which meant, Grant her request that we may be rid of her. "She crieth after us," they complained. "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," was Jesus' reply. Whether the woman heard this, does not appear; but she flung herself down at Jesus' feet, in the worship due from an inferior to a superior, and said, "Lord, help me." Importunate prayer may be very frugal in words. The Lord's reply, for he spoke now, was in form very repellent, even hardhearted. "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." That seemed to rate this suppliant woman with the outcast dogs. There must have been a quality, discernible to faith, in the tone and spirit of the speaker, that graciously belied what he said. The woman was happily equal to the occasion and to her own need. "Yea, Lord," she began. This did not assent to the Lord's apparent repulse, gently gainsaid it rather. "O yes, it is meet," it seemed to plead; "for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables." It was as if she had said, "I am willing to take my place with the dogs, if thou wilt have me; but even so, drop me a crumb as to a dog crouched under its master's table." The Lord was fairly overcome; surprised, one might almost say, into a burst of glad admiration. He had carried his test to its utmost bound, and the woman had borne it triumphantly. "O woman," said Jesus, "great is thy faith: be it done unto thee, even as thou wilt." "And her daughter was healed from that hour."

Jesus had aimed at retirement in making this northern excursion. Mark says, "He entered into a house [some hospitable friend's house, probably], and would have no man know it. And he could not be hid." The case of the Syrophenician woman's daughter no doubt became known, and the fresh notoriety resulting drove the Savior to withdraw still farther northward. He made a wide circuit. He visited Sidon first; then, in his roundabout homeward way, traversing the district called Decapolis, he came back to his favorite Sea of Galilee on its eastern side. Here, the customary scenes of healing repeat themselves, in number too great to be separately described. A multitude was fed again, the circumstances being much the same as on the former occasion. Four thousand (instead of 5,000) men, besides women and children, were this

time supplied with food by a multiplication of seven loaves (instead of five) and a few small fishes. The fragments remaining over filled seven baskets (instead of twelve). These details of difference are interesting as attesting the sobriety and the careful truth of the two narratives.

As on the previous occasion of miraculous feeding of the multitude, Jesus took care to dismiss and disperse the throng. He then, in a boat with his disciples, went to the opposite side of the lake. Here the Pharisees harried him with their insulting demand of a "sign" from heaven. They perhaps wanted a "sign" given them under conditions which they should themselves prescribe; a sign that would satisfy their unbelieving tests—that is, the tests of the scientific spirit of that day. Jesus sighed deeply in his spirit and declared that there should be no sign given to that generation. And once more he retreats to refuge in his boat, and vibrates back yet again to the other side of the lake. On the way, he warns his disciples against the "leaven" of the Pharisees. Those strange disciples misunderstood him. They took him literally. They said, "It is because we have no bread—they having in fact but a single loaf on board. "Do ye not yet understand?" wearily asked the Lord. He finally made them perceive that he meant the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

It is noteworthy that both Matthew and Mark, in recording the Savior's return, after his encounter with the Pharisees and Sadducees, to the eastern side of the lake, say "he left them,"—that is, the Pharisees and Sadducees. What with the persecutions of these enemies, on the one hand, and the dangerous enthusiasms of the people on the other, he was in sore need of escape and relief—till his "hour" should come. This escape and relief he sought in another excursion to the north.

A public man of our time needing retirement and rest has always open to him some available recourse. He can take ship and flee across sea; or he can take a train and in a few hours penetrate to some recess of country withdrawn from popular approach and observation. Far otherwise was it in his day with Jesus of Nazareth. There was no accessible refuge for him from the persecuting pursuit of his own notoriety. He might travel, but he must travel on foot; and he could not travel fast enough or far enough to outrun the people that would spring up everywhere at his heels to follow him with their importunities for help. He had no sooner set out once more, his face turned northward again, in recoil from the contact and offense of the Pharisees and Sadducees, than he was met at Bethsaida by the case of a blind man to be healed. Jesus cannot resist the pathetic appeal

of that need and that faith. He, however, takes the blind man by the hand, and, in the way of such precaution as is possible against the publicity that he seeks to avoid, leads him out of the village. He there spat on his eyes and asked him, "Seest thou aught?" That was as if the Healer did not expect the cure to be at once perfect. The blind man said he beheld men as trees walking. Next came a touch of the healing hand on his eyes, which completed the restoration of sight. Jesus then sent the man, no longer blind, away to his home, with the charge, "Do not even enter into the village." He thus did what he could to keep the man from temptation to publish his experience and his cure.

The Bethsaida here meant is the village so named on the eastern side of the lake. There was a village of the same name on the western side. But Jesus was now on his way northward to Cæsarea Philippi, where was the Fountain of the Jordan. The spot is picturesque, the fountain itself being one of the most striking features of Palestinian scenery. But no note is made by the evangelists to warrant our supposing that the Savior paid particular heed, here or elsewhere, to the romantic or beautiful aspects of nature. In mere sentiment, æsthetic or other, Jesus seems to have indulged very sparingly.

But while they fared along, he and his disciples, he asked them a question such as, from any other than he, might seem to savor of a somewhat morbid self-consciousness, even vanity. He asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" They reported; and then he asked them, "But who say ye that I am?" True to his character, Peter was the one to reply. "Thou art the Christ of God," he said. This no doubt was what the Lord wished to elicit; and it was in preparation for eliciting it that he had begun with the question first asked. He however, strictly "charged them" and "commanded them" to tell it to no man.

To Peter he now spoke words that have been made the subject of unending discussion. Jesus saw that Peter must have got his perfectly clear discernment of the true person and character of his Master by direct revelation from God himself. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah!" he impressively said; "Bar-Jonah" meaning Son of Jonah, or of John. He then added: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

What do these words mean? Roman Catholics say, That Jesus made Peter prince of the

apostles and head of the church, in fact, vicar of God. On this interpretation for its corner stone, the institution of the papacy is founded. Protestants explain the words variously; but always, of course, in a sense not admitting the claim of Roman Catholicism. In seeking the truth on this topic, one ought to consider that the binding and loosing power, whatever that is, here given to Peter, is elsewhere given by Jesus in the same words to all the apostles in common. "Binding" and "loosing" are customary Jewish expressions for "prohibiting," on the one hand, and "permitting," on the other. The thing, therefore, that Jesus here meant was, to bestow on Peter (and, with him, on all his fellow-apostles) the privilege and the responsibility to teach authoritatively in his name what was right and what was wrong; in other words, what was "loosed" or permitted, and what was "bound" or prohibited. Peter's name, meaning "rock," naturally suggested to Jesus the figure of building, when he spoke of his church. Peter had just made the first absolutely clear and positive confession of Jesus as Christ that ever was made by man. He, therefore, might well be represented as beginning the Church of Christ; in other words, as constituting, in this sense, its corner stone, that stone being the one first laid when a building is erected. On Peter, therefore, as on the first stone laid in it, Jesus would found and rear his church. Such seems to be the obvious, the natural, the sufficient and exhaustive, meaning of the figure in which Jesus here expressed himself, when he declared that on the rock Peter his church should be built.

The giving to Peter of the "keys of the kingdom of heaven"—what does that import? Perhaps no more than a repetition, in a kind of Hebrew parallelism, of the idea already conveyed. But let us inquire. And first, What is to be understood by the expression, "kingdom of heaven"? "Kingdom of God" is an alternative expression of the same idea. To begin with, it does *not* mean a place; in other words, it is not equivalent to "heaven." The chief element in the idea of any kingdom is a community of persons who are subjects of a king. Human souls obedient to God as King constitute the "kingdom of God" on earth. It is the earthly counterpart of what exists above; it is, in this sense, the "kingdom of heaven." Of this kingdom, anybody becomes a member who simply obeys God as King. This community of souls obedient to God, constituting, as such, God's kingdom, may be conceived under the figure of a city with gates. Whoever possesses the secret of obedience to God, has, simply in virtue of that qualification, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Is there good reason to believe that the keys of the

kingdom were given to Peter in any other sense than that in which they are given to everyone who does as Peter did, namely, sees and acknowledges Jesus in his character of the Christ of God? Peter, however, by his *prior-ity* in confession, might, in the important sense of first example, be accounted the one to open the gates of the kingdom of heaven to all who should afterward enter, as he entered, by the way of obedience to Jesus Christ the Vicegerent of God. If we were to seek any sense for the words different from that already proposed, we should find a very natural one in understanding that Jesus meant to accord to Peter the privilege of opening the Gospel dispensation; as in fact he did, for the Jews on the day of Pentecost, for the Gentiles in his interview with Cornelius.

The saying is a remarkable saying; but the foregoing interpretation is submitted in full conviction on the part of the writer that it fairly meets the demands of the language employed by the Lord. The allusion to hades is too noteworthy to be overlooked. The meaning probably is that the kingdom of heaven shall continue to exist, undisturbed by the circumstance of death, whether the death of its Founder or the death of its subjects; in short, that it takes in not only this world but, not less, also, the world to come.

This whole passage of conversation between Christ and his disciples seems so mark a transition in the direction and aim of his teaching. From this time onward, he addresses himself, not exclusively, but mainly, to the task of intimate instruction to the inner circle of his followers. The understanding between himself and them is assumed to be complete; and he now begins to unfold to them certain of the truths more difficult to receive concerning himself. Of these, chief was the fact that he must go to Jerusalem, must there suffer many things at the hands of his enemies, and finally be put to death. He always added that the third day he should rise again. Matthew, himself one of the twelve, says that he "*from that time began to show*" these things to his disciples. This language implies that he foretold his own death and resurrection—not simply once, or twice, or thrice, but repeatedly. We have the record of many repetitions of this momentous announcement; but the repetitions were evidently far more numerous than are the separate notes of them. Jesus, therefore, fully committed himself to the prediction, not only that he should be killed, but that in three days he should rise from the dead. Indeed, he may be said to have staked everything upon that future fact. If the fact failed, if he did not rise, as he said he would rise, from the dead, nothing could possibly save his credit among men. He

would necessarily rank, and he would well deserve to rank, as, at the best, a weak and misguided enthusiast; as, at the worst, a conscious and incredibly foolish impostor—an impostor who needlessly himself provided an inevitable, speedy exposure of his own false pretensions.

Peter, alas, seems to have been lifted up unduly by the extraordinary things that Jesus had just said to him in the presence of his fellow-apostles. He prepared for himself a prompt rebuke and humiliation from his Master as signal as had been his late commendation. Peter took it upon himself to give his Master a point of advice and remonstrance! The idea of the Lord's suffering shame and death, and of his announcing this future as in store for himself precisely at the moment when he, Peter, might fairly be expecting great things to his own profit from his new dignity in holding the keys of the kingdom soon to be established—such an idea was too great a downfall of ambition and hope. Peter "took" Jesus and "began to rebuke him." The misguided man must have made a somewhat formal thing of it. He meant to have it impressive. It became, indeed, impressive, but in a way, and in a sense, that Peter little expected. Jesus turned and gave a significant look toward the circle of waiting disciples. It was a crucial moment for Peter. But the suspense could not have been felt so severely as were the words that followed. The Lord said to Peter: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." This, to the apostle that had lately been so distinguished with praise! It was a cruel fall—all the more cruel that it was so richly deserved—to the pride and presumption of Peter. Mark makes no mention of the extraordinary praise addressed by Christ to Peter; while the terrible reproof thus visited upon the offending apostle is spread out at large on his record. This circumstance becomes remarkable to us, and most instructive, when we consider that Peter was probably himself the source and authority to his nephew Mark for the writing of his Gospel. Peter had at length grown such in character that he was not careful to have his own glory commemorated, while willing to let appear his own folly and pride, and therewith the awful rebuke that these earned for himself from the Master.

Thus far the conversation has, on the present occasion, been strictly between Jesus and his apostles. Now Jesus calls the multitude near, and to them, together with the apostles, says: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself [this doubtless was a further rebuke to Peter, besides being an admonition to

ali who, as Peter had just done, regard, instead of disregarding, self], and take up his cross, and follow me." "To take up the cross," must, to those who had just heard Jesus foretell his own death, have meant nothing less than to be willing to incur crucifixion — as the Master himself was. Hard terms of discipleship? Yes; but there were gracious promises in paradox annexed: "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it"; "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds." These were astounding

assertions. Jesus added still another not less astounding: "Verily I say unto you," he declared, in his own solemn manner, "there be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." There was to follow soon an event which those three favored apostles who were permitted to witness it would find well adapted to confirm their faith, if their faith had, perhaps, been in any degree staggered by sayings from Christ of such incomprehensible, such magnificent, such momentous import.

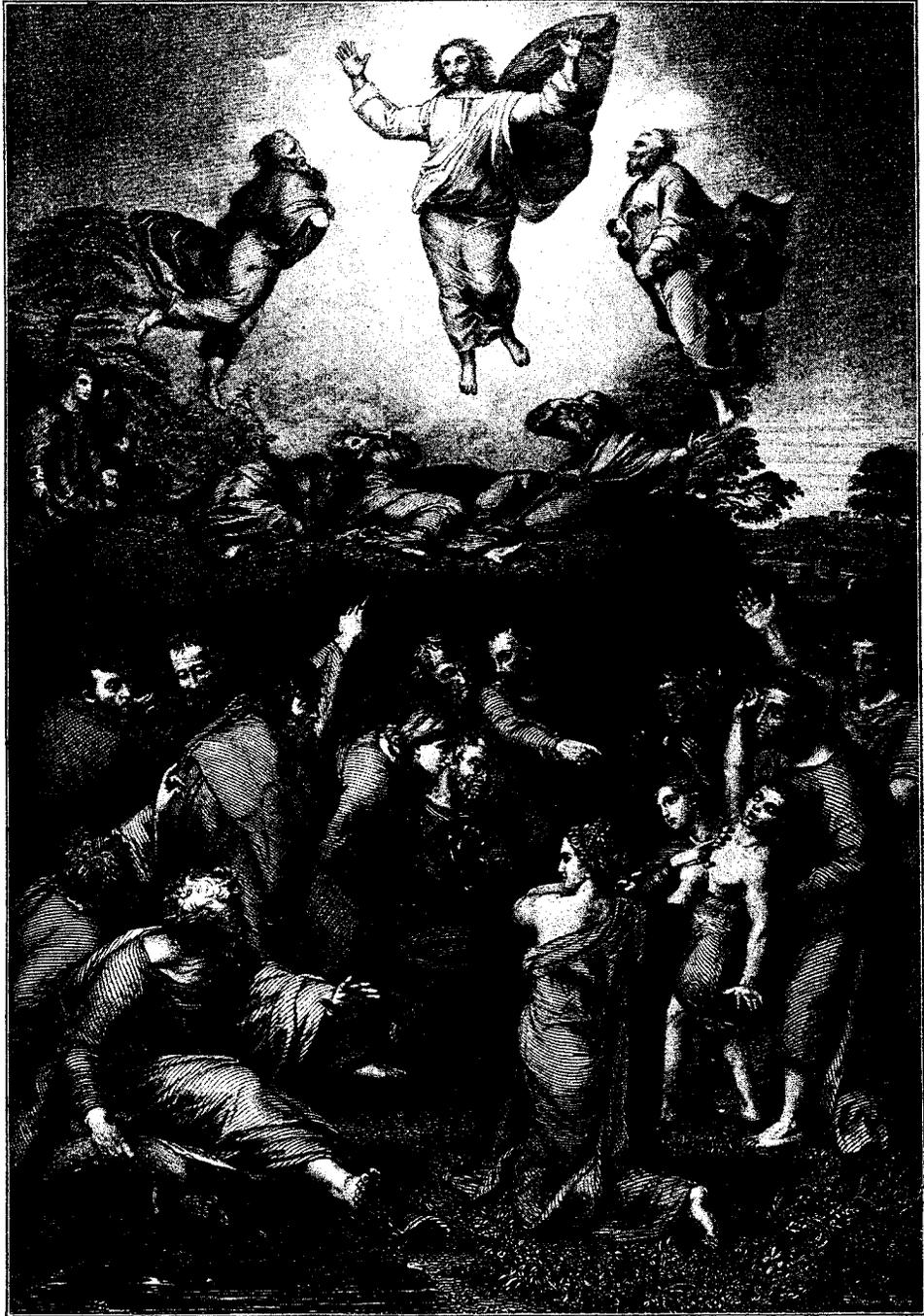
CHAPTER XII.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THE event just alluded to occurred after an interval of six days. The three chosen apostles present to witness it were Peter, James, and John. These Jesus takes with him, and goes up into a solitary mountain of great height. What mountain this was, we cannot with certainty determine. The fact that Jesus, with his disciples, was apparently still in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi, makes it probable that it was a part of Mount Hermon rising directly from this point. In that lofty and lonely spot, there was shown to those witnesses a spectacle such as they could see, indeed, with dazzled eyes and minds in ecstasy; but such as neither they, nor any mortal, could describe. It was a momentary glimpse on earth of heavenly glory. Jesus prayed; and as he prayed he became a different person in appearance. He was transfigured before the apostles. His face shone as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistening, like apparel of pure light. He was "robed in dazzling immortality." Nothing could be imagined better adapted to convey to those beholders an idea of the proper majesty of that veiled incarnate God, with whom, not knowing him, they had walked and talked so long.

It was not addressed to the eye alone. Two glorified visitors from the unseen world appeared and held audible converse with the transfigured Son of Man. They were Moses the giver, and Elijah the restorer, of the law. Many ages before, they had each of them passed away from the world of men in a mystery; and now in a mystery they both returned again, to show themselves for a moment, and disappear. We know what was the subject of their conversation. It was the decease which Jesus was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. The three apostles were all of them bewildered and afraid; but Peter felt that he must say something, and not well knowing what it ought to be, nor

indeed what it was when he said it, he ventured on this: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." This was at the point of time when the two visitants to Jesus were in the act of parting from him. While he was yet speaking, a tabernacle not made with hands, a tabernacle from God, overshadowed them. It was a shadow, not of darkness, but of light; a "bright cloud," it is called by Matthew. But it no doubt had the effect of darkness upon those unaccustomed eyes, which must have been blinded by the glory. Already afraid when the cloud, "dark with excessive bright," enveloped them, the disciples fell on their faces quite overcome with fear when out of the cloud came a voice, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Jesus came and touched the fallen disciples and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." What reassuring words from One so attested from heaven! The disciples suddenly looked round about. They saw no one any more, save Jesus only. Luke tells us that the three apostles were heavy with sleep during some part of the time occupied by this incident. This, with other indications, suggests that the Transfiguration occurred at night. The occasion was perhaps one more of those night vigils of prayer which the Lord so frequently observed. We are at liberty to suppose that the conversation between Jesus and his visitors may have been somewhat prolonged. Perhaps those immortalized human brethren of his were commissioned from God to make more clearly known to the Suffering Messiah what awaited him at Jerusalem. Jesus charged Peter, James, and John not to reveal what they had thus seen and heard. They obediently held their peace — "in those days"; the silence enjoined need last only till the resurrection of Jesus. While



RAPHAEL.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

they were coming down from the mount, the Master spoke again of the rising from the dead which was to follow his suffering and death in Jerusalem.

From the mind of one at least among the witnesses of the Transfiguration, the vividness of the vision never faded. Long after, Peter, in his so-called Second Epistle, wrote thus in allusion to what on that occasion he saw: "We did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice we ourselves heard come out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount." Such language is proof, if proof were needed, of the confirming effect produced on his faith by that experience of Peter's. But not on Peter alone did the impression of the transfiguration of Jesus thus deeply and brightly abide. John doubtless had this revelation in mind when he wrote: "We beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father." Such testimonies well deserve a high place among the still-living and ever-imperishable evidences of Christianity.

From the mount of transfiguration to the

levels at its foot, was a descent and transition; but it feebly symbolized the abrupt difference between the glory of what the three disciples had just beheld, and the sorrow of what was awaiting their return to the plain. This was a case of human misery in one of its most distressing forms. The disciples had tried and had failed to relieve it; and the scribes were pressing them with questions. Jesus cured the sufferer, who was a boy, and gave him back to his father. "All were astonished at the majesty of God." This descriptive note from Luke stimulates the imagination to conceive that some peculiar transfiguration still remained in effect, to make the port and appearance of Jesus majestic, after his experience on the mount. It would seem also as if the glimpse of his native heaven enjoyed by him there, made the renewed contact of earthly imperfection and sin unusually hard to endure. He had perhaps never before evinced a spirit so nearly approaching impatience, as when now, upbraiding his disciples for the lack of faith that had occasioned their failure, he exclaimed, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear you!" If he felt so concerning his disciples, what must have been the trial of spirit endured by the sinless Redeemer in encounter with his unbelieving, gainsaying, persecuting, murderous enemies!

CHAPTER XIII.

INTERMISSION.

AFTER the Transfiguration, with its sequel and contrast in that scene at the foot of the mountain, there intervened a period, of uncertain length, during which the preaching activity of Jesus was intermitted. It was apparently a time of comparative retirement and rest to the Lord. He had, in a measure at least, succeeded in veiling himself from the public. It may well be that, after such innumerable cures effected by him, there did not remain in the land cases enough of crying physical need, accompanied with the requisite faith, to keep up popular enthusiasm of importunity and of curiosity to the height of excitement that now for many months had prevailed. Jesus could devote himself to the quiet instruction of his apostles.

The first thing mentioned in the course of this private instruction, was another return, on the Teacher's part, to the topic of his own impending sufferings, death, and subsequent resurrection. It is pathetically noticeable that he taught these things to his disciples much as if he felt that he would be teaching in vain.

He said: "Let these words sink into your ears: for the Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men." And indeed he did teach to a great extent in vain. Concerning this very communication, Luke says: "They understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it: and they were afraid to ask him about this saying." And yet how explicit he had made it! Mark gives it more fully than does Luke, adding: "And they shall kill him, and when he is killed, after three days he shall rise again." What could be plainer? And they did understand enough to be, as Matthew says, "exceeding sorry." But it needed the actual accomplished fact to make the Lord's meaning fully clear. If the fact had not followed, the prediction would of course never have been understood; nor, also of course, would it ever have been recorded. It testifies to the unalterable sanity and sobriety of spirit, steadfastly maintained at this time by Jesus against the naturally exalting effect of an experience on his part like the Transfiguration,

followed by that easy and absolute triumph of his over the powers of evil at the foot of the mountain, that, while the awe of astonishment at him was still casting unbroken its spell on the minds of observers, he himself, on the other hand, was capable of calmly discoursing on the subject of the unspeakable agony and shame that awaited him.

Another proof of the same equipose in him was his conduct when the question of the "half-shekel" came up. The half shekel was a tax for the Temple, payable in Hebrew coin only, and due from every male Israelite of age. The collectors asked Peter, "Doth not your Master pay the half-shekel?" Peter said, "Yes." But when he came into the house, Jesus was beforehand with him in speaking on the subject. Claiming to be justly exempt on the ground of his divine sonship, he yet at the same time paid the tax, and so paid it as to show his own inherent right to be free. He bade Peter go to the lake—he was now at Capernaum—and cast a hook for a fish. In the first fish's mouth, Peter should find a shekel, which would discharge both the disciple and the Master.

The twelve disciples were human. They were at once slow-witted in things of the spirit, and ambitiously eager, each one for preëminence. The idea of "kingdom," about which they heard so much and understood so little, turned their heads. They disputed among themselves which of them all was to be greatest in that kingdom. Jesus knew what was going on in their hearts, and he gave them a lesson, which, as effective as it was simple, has become immortal and universal in fame. He took a little child and set him by his side, and said, "Who-soever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Those disciples had been childish in their contention; they were to be childlike instead. Jesus took the little child up in his arms as he said this, making a picture forever dear to the imagination, the memory, and the heart of mankind.

The instructions given by Jesus to his confidential disciples, during this period of comparatively secluded sojourn in Galilee preceding his final withdrawal from that region, must here for lack of space be left to be studied in the text itself of the Gospels where they are recorded. The object of this biography is narration, rather than interpretation or commentary. Priceless instructions they were, so simple in form, so profound in meaning, so sententious, so brief, but so dense with suggestion—inexhaustible fountains of practical wisdom for the nurture and culture of the life of the soul. The eighteenth chapter of Matthew, for example, contains a rule of conduct from Christ for cases

of disagreement arising between brother and brother, which, it may safely be said, would, if carried out in life, do more to transform the face of society than all the ethical and social wisdom of the world beside. And that instruction to Peter on the duty of forgiveness! "How often shall I forgive?" asked Peter. "Until seven times?" he added; seeing already perhaps in Jesus' eyes a meaning which he made haste to meet by putting the requisite number, as he thought, high, at "seven times." "Not until seven times, but, until seventy times seven," said Jesus. He then, by way of enforcement, added his parable of the debtors, with that solemn conclusion: "So [that is, in strict, stern justice, devoid of mercy] shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

John tells us Jesus' reason for his sojourn in Galilee. "He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews [the Jewish rulers] sought to kill him." The same reason influenced him to lead his life as much as might be in quiet. He would not hasten on prematurely his "hour." The Feast of Tabernacles was approaching and Jesus' own brothers, then not believers in him (strange, and yet not strange!), prompted him to visit Judea and work miracles there. Judea was "the world" to those Galilean provincials, and Jesus ought to manifest himself to the world. Jesus calmly said, "My time is not yet come." He went, however; but in a quiet manner, to avoid publicity. The city was full of talk and rumor about Jesus. At the height of the feast, the Lord went into the Temple—that is, into the Temple inclosure—and there taught. Some said, "Is not this he whom they seek to kill?" The rulers were non-plussed. They sought to take Jesus; and they did not take him, though there he was openly before them. John explains why. "His hour was not yet come." That strange man, bearing that strangely guarded life, went on teaching. And officers, it seems were sent to arrest him. They came back without their prisoner. "Why did ye not bring him?" the rulers disappointedly asked. "Never man so spake," was the officers' only reply. The story of the woman taken in adultery is not now regarded as belonging in the true text of the Gospel of John. This does not necessarily indicate that the story is false; but it is sufficiently doubtful for us to pass it here, though it teaches a lesson that seems characteristic of Jesus.

To this part of the life of Jesus pertain those passages of discourse—discourse become, by reason of human perverseness, almost altercation—between Jesus and the hostile Jews, which are recorded in the eighth chapter of John. The paradox under which Jesus now obscured his instructions to these resisting

hearers, constitutes a striking example of his use of this method in teaching. Most majestic were the claims that he made for himself. They should have overawed the listeners; but the listeners were only exasperated by them. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad," said Jesus. "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" caviled the Jews. They,

of course, put his age at the extreme limit of possibility, probably almost a score of years beyond the truth. Jesus said to them, with that divine phrase of his, confirming his words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." The Jews made their last reply by taking up stones to cast at him. But Jesus was hidden; and veiled from them he went out of the Temple.

CHAPTER XIV.

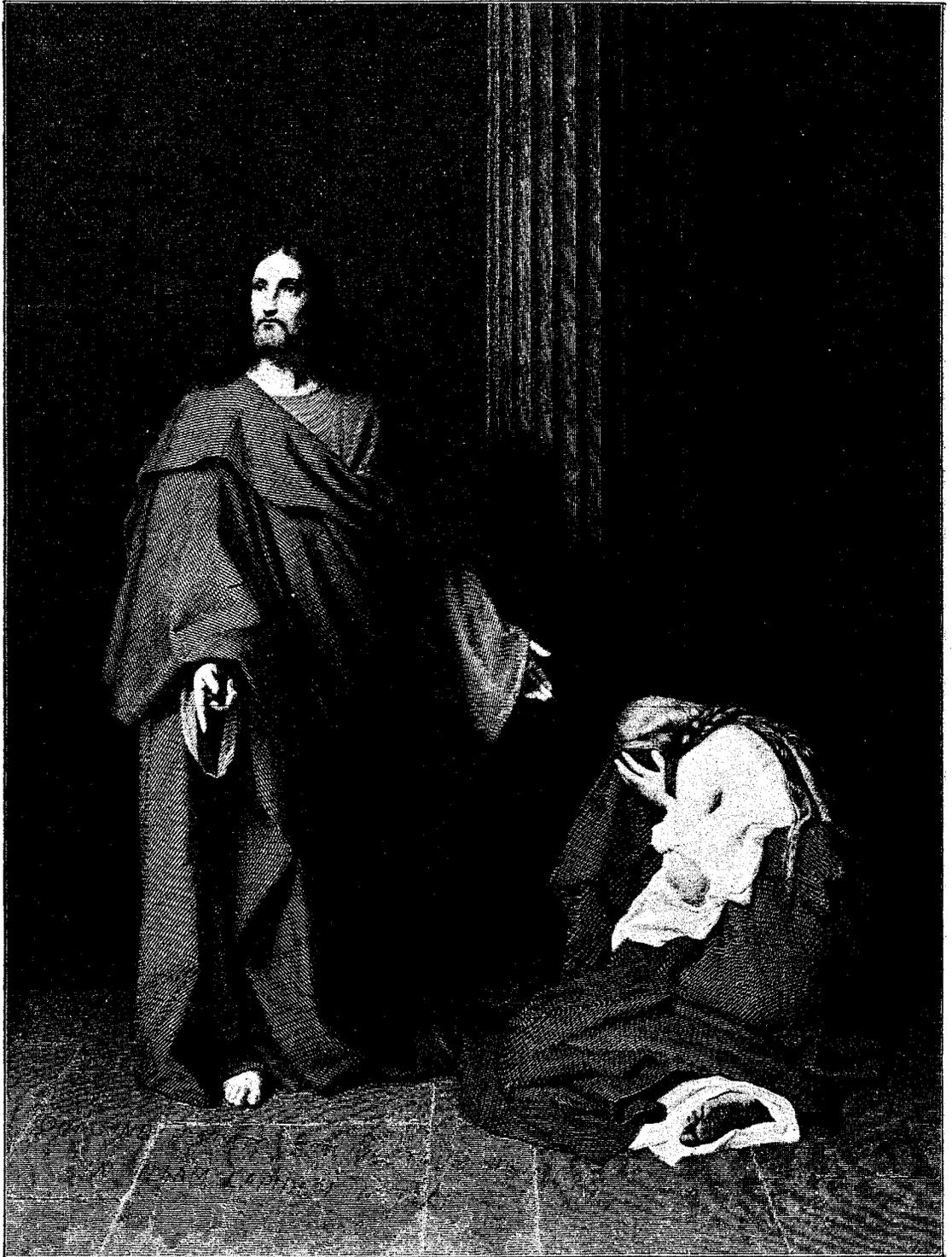
TO GUESTSHIP AT BETHANY.

THE time at length arrived for the last farewell from the Lord to his home in Galilee. Jesus had perhaps returned thither from the Feast of Tabernacles; but if so, it was only to take leave of it now forever. A yearning prophetic spirit in him, a spirit of welcome for his end, urged him irresistibly on to Jerusalem and to the cross. "When the days were well-nigh come," Luke says, "that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." Great multitudes followed him, and once more, according to his former wont, he taught them. He also healed the sick along his way. It seems to have been at first in the Savior's mind to take his way through Samaria. In pursuance of this purpose, he despatched to a certain Samaritan village that he would naturally pass in his journey forerunners to prepare entertainment for himself and his disciples. The villagers refused him hospitality, for the reason that he was obviously bound to Jerusalem — as we here assume, for the observance of the Feast of Dedication. James and John had been styled by Jesus "Sons of Thunder." They now showed their fitness to bear the name. They said, "Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven to consume them?" They got a rebuke for their answer. The Lord went with his disciples to another village. Not to have received such a guest was in itself a sufficient punishment for not receiving him. The "other village" was perhaps one on the Galilean border, not in Samaria. If such was the case, Jesus may now have taken a course on the line dividing Galilee from Samaria, traveling east till, having reached the Jordan, he crossed it into Perea. This furnishes a possible explanation of that expression in Luke, "he was passing through the midst of [that is, on the border line, between] Samaria and Galilee." It is right, however, to say that this conclusion is doubtful. Some painstaking students of the life of the Lord think that Jesus, notwithstanding this first repulse, continued his journey through Samaria; and that

there was a subsequent general tour of ministry made by him "through the midst" of both Samaria and Galilee. It is a case in which no certain conclusion is possible.

The Lord, with his train, was walking along the way, when a scribe offered to be of his company. Then it was that Jesus, having now forsaken his home in Capernaum, and being without prospect of other home to be his anywhere on earth, uttered that pathetic saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Perhaps the spurning that he had suffered from that inhospitable Samaritan village heightened in his human heart his sense of utter homelessness. The saying seems to have been meant to give the scribe warning how little was to be hoped for of earthly gain from following such a teacher. To another man, Jesus, with discrimination not accounted for, and perhaps not to be accounted for save by the supposition of sovereign choice on the speaker's own part, said, "Follow me." This man seemed to hesitate. "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," he said. "Leave the dead to bury their own dead," said the Lord, in his way of paradox; "but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God." *Nothing* was to take precedence of a call to duty coming from Christ. This principle was enforced a second time on the same journey by a similar reply given in a second similar case. His own absolute lordship over human souls could not have been more emphatically insisted upon than it was by Christ.

It was probably during the journey now in progress to Jerusalem that Jesus selected out of the number of his disciples seventy in addition to the twelve apostles, and sent them forth to preach. They were to visit in advance of himself the cities and villages through which he was about to pass. In the course of the instructions, resembling those to the twelve apostles, which he gave to these seventy missionary heralds of his, he entered upon a remarkable strain of retrospect and denunciation.



EMIL SIGNOLE.

CHRIST AND THE ADULTERESS.

He must have been reviewing in his own mind the cycle on cycle of wonderful works, ended at last, with which he had favored those cities of Galilee now left behind him perhaps forever. With the review, there swept over him the thought how little all had profited them. He began to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin!" And there follows that dread succession of "Woes!"—thrice dread, as issuing from those lips of grieved and indignant grace. "And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in thy name." "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven," the Lord, as in a trance of prophecy, replied. A glorious vision, to gladden the soul of the Redeemer—a vision of the future blending with the present; he saw the shaken principality of this world cast out its prince. The joy of the seventy was responded to by joy also in the heart of the Master. It is like seeing a beam of pure light shot out of a gathering cloud that parts for an instant to let it forth, when one reads this record: "In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." That Son's joy was toward his Father; it turned into thanks. Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes." He was perfectly well content, he was sympathetically glad, he was obediently thankful, that God had seen fit to give him his disciples of the lowly and the humble. And what encouragement still it remains to the lowly and the humble, that to them, not less than to the great of the earth, God through Christ loves to reveal himself and the wonders of his ways!

"Come unto me," so runs the rhythmic invitation from the lips of the Lord, making itself a lovely tune in whatever human language—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This follows immediately upon his giving of thanks to God that God's chosen were such as they were. "Take my yoke"—the yoke that I place, or the yoke that I wear, they are one and the same, it is the yoke of obedience—"take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." When ever did any other "meek and lowly" one so claim that grace of spirit? The claim itself would, in any other than Jesus, be its own refutation; but in him, it is so fit and so true that we have to rouse ourselves with an effort even to notice it as strange; and the result is that it does not seem strange after all. The great Teacher by paradox was himself the greatest of paradoxes. And what additional paradox is this fact concerning him, namely, that his paradoxical

character (as well as his paradoxical method), indisputable as it is, yet so little appears! And—still another paradox!—the Meek and Lowly in heart is the same that majestically says, "I am the light of the world"; "No man cometh unto the Father but by me"; "I and the Father are one."

We do not know where it was, but at about this time, a lawyer, not named, stood up and asked the Master a prepared question. The lawyer's purpose was not teachably to learn, but captiously to test. "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" It was a good question, however ill asked. Jesus replied with a question in turn. "What is written in the law?" The lawyer made an excellent answer: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Nothing could be better as a summation in small of the whole law of God. Jesus accepted it, and told the lawyer: "This do, and thou shalt live." The caviler was not satisfied to leave the matter in that state. He was a bright-minded man; and he saw a possible way to what he wanted in a little more cavil. "And who is my neighbor?" he asked. Jesus answered with the famous parable of the "Good Samaritan"; in which he taught that anybody near enough to us for us to help, is, in the spirit of the law of God, to be reckoned our "neighbor."

The Lord has now reached, not Jerusalem, indeed, but a suburb of that city bearing a familiar name, name dear by sacred association to every Christian heart; it is the village of Bethany. Here a woman received him into her house; by that act of hospitality commencing perhaps a relationship to Jesus which has made her one of the best-known women in the world. The woman's name was Martha; and she had a sister called Mary, of whom it is said that she now "sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word." A glimpse most unexpectedly comes to us here of the inner domestic life of that household. Martha is so put about with her cares as hostess, that she is fain even to make appeal for relief to her Guest. Mary, her sister, did not help her so much as Martha thought she should! In her distraction of spirit, Martha almost blamed the Master himself. "Lord, carest thou not that my sister left me to serve alone?" How tenderly the Lord at the same time soothed that ruffled mind and chided her as in error and fault! There was an affectionate admonitory repetition of Martha's name—one can almost hear through it the sympathetic undulation of the voice—"Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things." "Many things"—what does that expression mean?

That Martha had a divided mind, oscillating uneasily between care for what was less important and attention to the chief matter of the soul? Or does it simply mean that Martha had too much housewife's bustling desire to make various provision for the table—to have a good assortment of different dishes to tempt the appetite? Jesus added: "But one thing is needful." If we adopt the latter of the foregoing interpretations, then Jesus will appear to be assuring Martha that a single dish would be ample provision. But Jesus added again: "For Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This favors the higher, the allegorical, interpretation of the Savior's language. It seems to teach that Mary's posture as learner at the Lord's feet was better than Martha's excessive zeal to furnish that Lord with material hospitality. Perhaps Jesus saw, though delicately he refrained from saying, that Martha's ambition was in too great part self-regarding, animated with overmuch desire to appear well herself in her character of hostess.

Jesus will find here, in this home at Bethany, that comfort of love which his human heart will full sorely need during the days of trial for him now so near at hand. And he will richly overpay for all, not only with such society as no other guest ever brought to a human habitation; but also with a work of wonder in repair of bereavement, surpassing anything that even he before had anywhere wrought.

It is impossible, from the records supplied to us in the Gospels, to follow with any exactness the movements of Jesus belonging to this time in their true relative order of occurrence. On some occasion, we know not what, perhaps it was while passing in one direction or the other between Bethany and Jerusalem—John simply says, "as he passed by"—Jesus saw a man blind from his birth. The disciples were prompted to ask a deep question. "Rabbi," they said, "who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus told them, "Neither"; and then, declining all speculative consideration of the point raised, addressed himself to a practical purpose befitting his character. His method, however, of procedure in the case—did that befit his character? Probably no one of us, antecedently, would, on his own judgment, have thought of choosing for Jesus such a mode of procedure as he here chose for himself. But whatever he did became, by the mere fact of his doing it, fit. He spat on the ground, and making clay of the spittle anointed the man's eyes with the unguent so produced. He then said to the man, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." The man did so, and came back seeing. A healing virtue in that earthen unguent, the blind man

might have easily trusted. But why the pool of Siloam as a place for the bathing? The direction was at least a test of his faith. The cure was wrought on a sabbath day. It made a great stir among the Jewish rulers. Some officious persons seem to have taken the man to those self-appointed guardians of tradition, the Pharisees, as a testimony against Jesus. There was much bandying of words between the man and his Pharisee inquisitors. He seems to have had a good share of mother wit and withal some true courage and faith. The final issue was both ill and well for the man. On the one hand, he believed in Jesus as the Son of God; but "they" "cast him out," that is, thrust him out of their company—a social exclusion that may, or may not, have been followed by the severer sentence of expulsion from the synagogue.

John reports for us various discourses of Jesus that must have been spoken at about the time of this healing; among these, that one in which he represents himself, now as the door to the sheepfold, and now as Shepherd of the sheep. In the course of it, he teaches the truths of his own vicarious death, and of his own victorious resurrection, saying, "I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." These words worked, no doubt, their intended effect; they sifted his hearers. Some believed, and some rejected; but more rejected.

It was winter, the winter before the spring that should see the end of that heavenly life on earth. Jesus, walking in the part of the Temple which bore the name of Solomon's Porch, was assailed by his enemies with a question which they evidently meant should precipitate an immediate issue. "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." Probably they put their emphasis on the word "plainly." This implied that they had already well enough understood him to claim Messiahship. But they wanted something more unequivocal in form, something that would better serve as technical witness against him. Jesus said, "I told you, and ye believe not." He then appealed from his words to his works: "The works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice." Another sifting sentence! The hostile Jews were stung to madness. Again they took up stones to stone him. This was on his uttering the words, "I and the Father are one." Jesus calmly said, "Many good works have I showed you from the Father; for which of these works do ye stone me?" But the

Jews insisted it was not for his works, but for his blasphemy in making himself God. And the strife went on, till they once more sought to take him. "And he went forth out of their hand." *How*, they, although eyewitnesses, could not have told; and it is not explained by John. Still, Jesus seems to have thought it

the part of wisdom to withdraw himself again for the present from these contacts with enemies. He retired beyond Jordan to the place where he was baptized by John the Baptist, and there took up his temporary residence. But he was not left to himself; for many came to him there. And many believed on him.

CHAPTER XV.

DISCOURSES UNDATED.

LUKE is alone in gathering together a number of discourses from the Lord, the exact place or the exact time of which he furnishes us no clue for determining. By comparison, however, with the accounts of the other evangelists, we conclude that they belong to the journey through Perea (or through Samaria) to Jerusalem. "Journey," we say; for Luke in effect reduces to a single one the two or three journeys apparently indicated by his fellow-historians. This is no real conflict, but only a difference of representation. Luke simply regards the grand purpose with which Jesus set out, for the last time, from his Capernaum home for Jerusalem as unifying all the Lord's movements following that, up to the moment when he finally entered the Holy City, not to go out again except to Calvary and the cross. The teachings now referred to, for the preservation of which we are indebted exclusively to Luke, we may call "discourses undated"; and under that title group them here for such notice as our space will allow.

One of them is a kind of parable. Regular parable it is not; it is rather a question with a supposition. The design of the instruction in it is to impress the importance of importunity in prayer. A man is represented as roused at midnight by application at his door from a friend who requests the loan of some loaves to entertain a guest of his unexpectedly arrived. The sleeper is lazily reluctant to get up, but he does so at last, rather than be dinned with continued beseeching. The argument is, that much more will indefatigable continuance in prayer prevail with God.

Again. Jesus is called by a Pharisee to dinner. The host of the occasion is scandalized to see that his guest neglects the customary ceremonial "washing" before the meal. The Pharisee must, one would suppose, have said something to invoke the severity of rebuke that he experienced from the Lord. For the Lord, guest though he was, opened a volley of indignant denunciation against the Pharisees as a class. He expressly involved his own host among them, his form of words being, "Woe unto you, Pharisees!" The language to which

this forms at once prelude and refrain is fearfully condemnatory. It is, in short, such language as is not reconcilable with the comity ordinarily required by the relation of host and guest. One justifies it only on the ground of a character in Jesus quite transcending the limits of common humanity. One of the lawyers present drew down the avalanche of rebuke on his own head with a deprecatory remark, "Master, in saying this, thou reproachest us also." Jesus launched thereupon into an almost heavier reprobation of the lawyers.

The alternative presented by such conduct on the part of Jesus was a rigorous one. Either those who were thus denounced to their face would be overawed into submission, or they would be maddened to murderous hatred. The latter is what resulted. Jesus' enemies waited only for a suitable occasion to bring the power of the law to bear upon him. They had for months been exerting their ingenuity to entrap him in some overt expression that should make him liable to the penalty of death. They now did so with energy redoubled, in sequel to those stern utterances of his at the Pharisee's table. But the people crowding round him seem for the moment to have choked off, with mere multitude, these adversaries of Jesus. The Lord made, as it were, an appeal from the Pharisees themselves to the mass of the people. For he now denounced the Pharisees publicly. This at least seems to be the case; although Luke does indeed say that he addressed himself "to his disciples, first of all." "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy," he said. "Hypocrisy" is the acting of a part. The Pharisees were acting a part. They pretended to be moved by zeal for religion; they really were moved by zeal for themselves. That last calamity of the hypocrite, they succeeded perhaps in imposing upon their own consciences! A man of the crowd spoke up most inopportunistically. He wanted this all-powerful Teacher to intervene on his behalf in a matter of disputed inheritance. "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" severely asked the Lord. The emphasis is not on "me";

but on the words "judge" and "divider." The function of Jesus was not such as those words would imply. But the inopportune interruption was in a sense opportune. For it became the occasion of a parable from the Lord to illustrate the futility of worldly wealth. It is the parable of the poor rich man who was not "rich toward God." There followed those precious teachings to the disciples concerning a life freed from care through trust in God. These seem to be in part repeated from the Sermon on the Mount. A forewarning strain intermingles. The Lord looks forward to that crisis for Jerusalem which after his own death would involve in the general ruin many surviving from that very generation. "Be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not, the Son of Man cometh," was the solemn closing word.

Peter asked concerning this, whether it was for the apostles, or for all. We are thus warranted in conceiving that what the Lord from time to time said was occasionally meant for the special benefit of the circle of disciples immediately about him, though spoken openly in the hearing of the promiscuous multitude. Jesus did not answer Peter, except in terms to leave the point in some salutary doubt. The disciples, however, were given to understand that their own responsibility would be great and peculiar. "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required," the Lord said. The somber shadow of his own agony to come is cast by anticipation backward upon the Savior's spirit. He welcomes it with a tense and solemn joy! "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He is divided between two opposite inward constraints, one, a constraint to hasten on the coming inevitable hour; the other, a constraint to wait patiently till that hour was fully come.

It was by an impressive coincidence that, "at that very season" when he was occupied with such foretokenings at once of the doom overhanging himself and of the later doom overhanging Jerusalem, he should be told of certain Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. With that tragical incident, he associated another like it in melancholy character, namely, the recent killing of eighteen persons by the fall of a tower. "Think ye," said Jesus, "that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusa-

lem? I tell you, nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Not "also" perish, but perish "likewise"; that is, with a similar violent destruction. It was a prophetic glance forward to that dreadful destruction of Jerusalem which was to occur less than forty years after. That actually did involve the whole population of the land crowded together within the city walls—*except* those who "repented," and heeded betimes the warnings of Jesus. No Christians perished in that unparalleled cataclysm of national calamity. On the same occasion, and with the same purpose, Jesus gave his parable of the barren fig tree, which was later to receive that striking enforcement by the parable in act of the fruitless fig tree blasted by a word from his mouth. Thus faithfully forewarned in vain, the sentenced Jewish nation would rush headlong and blindfold on its dreadful doom!

It will of course have been noticed that, in these later days of the Lord's earthly career, there seems to be a diminishing number of miracles to record. But his discourses were not wholly unaccompanied with the working of beneficent wonders. He was teaching in "one of the synagogues," and of course on a sabbath day. A woman was there whose body was so bowed together that she could not straighten herself. The Lord saw her and spoke to her: "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." He was not willing that it should be a word alone; it would be an added grace if he touched her. He touched her and immediately she was made straight. She glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant. He rebuked the Lord, indirectly, over the heads of the multitude—with a special aim, no doubt, at the woman. "There are six days in which men ought to work," he said; "in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath." The Lord, in his turn, was indignant. "Ye hypocrites," he said, "doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to the watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath?" What eloquence there was in the use of these words, the words "bound" and "bond," to link together the case before him and the illustrative case supposed!

CHAPTER XVI.

INCIDENTS OF JOURNEYING.

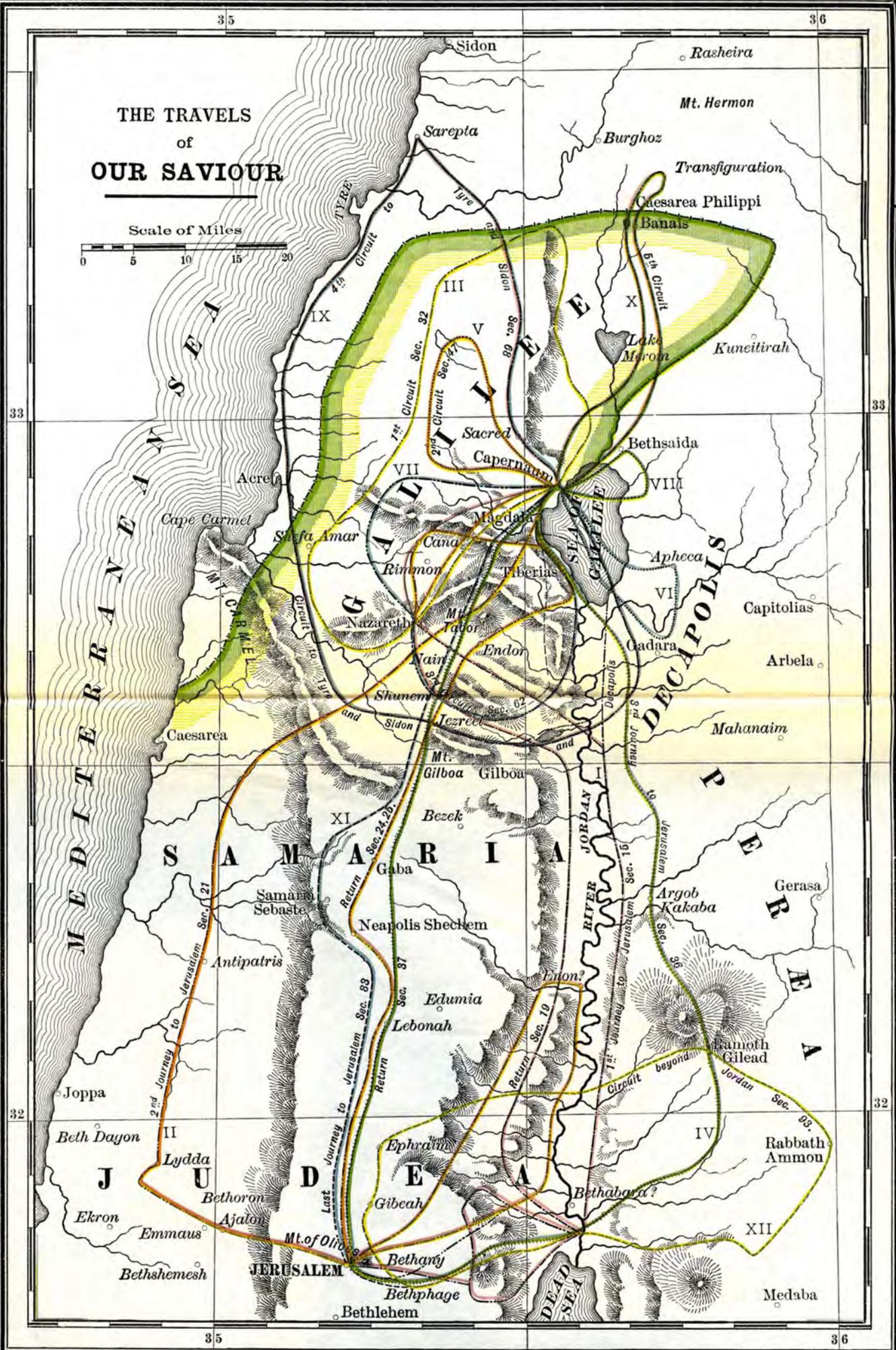
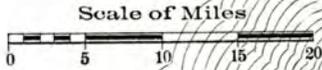
IN the absence of times and places assigned for many of the incidents and many of the discourses recorded by the evangelists, it is, as has before been said, impossible to be sure of the true order and succession in which they occurred. We cannot determine with certainty how often, during the concluding twelve months of his life, Jesus went to Jerusalem and then withdrew from it to greater or less remove, before he entered the city for the last time. What here immediately follows from Luke occurred, we know, on some journey of Jesus toward Jerusalem as a goal. It may have been in Galilee, or it may have been in Perea; as will presently be seen, it was somewhere within the bounds of the jurisdiction of Herod.

"Are there few that be saved?" asked one. This inquirer was evidently a man whose conscience was alarmed by the solemn warning words of Jesus. Jesus replied in a way to keep that man's conscience wholesomely alarmed. But he made his reply general, by using the plural number. Indeed, the evangelist tells us that the reply was directed not to him, the inquirer, but "to them," the Lord's hearers in general. The purport of it was, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door." Salvation is not to be had without striving, and the way to it is narrow. It is a salvation not chiefly of this world, or of the present state; for the Lord expressly names Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, as sharers of it. To see these patriarchs and "all the prophets" safe within the kingdom of God, and "yourselves cast forth without"—that, Jesus awfully forewarns his hearers, will be a doom to excite "*the* weeping and gnashing of teeth"—a lamentation, and a fruitless gesture of malignant despair, compared with which no other were worthy of any mention. "And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last," is the cadence with which this teaching dies away on the awe-stricken ear of the hearer of whatever time. At this moment there come up certain Pharisees who perform an ambiguous office of friendship to Jesus. They tell him that he had better leave that part of the country, for Herod Antipas, the ruler, was bent on taking his life. The probability is that Herod used these Pharisees as his tools in the task of ridding his territories of the unwelcome presence of Jesus. That presence was felt as a disturbing power. The Lord's miracle-working threatened, so the tyrant doubtless thought, to foment sedition, to make Jesus the hero of a popular revolutionary movement that might

unsettle his throne. Jesus saw through the subtlety of Herod. "Go and say to that fox"; he replied, "Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I finish my course." This is perhaps to be understood quite literally, as meaning that Jesus would go on three days longer and no more, doing his wonders of blessing in Herod's dominion. He had no fear of perishing either before his time, or in any other place than the one appointed to him. It could not be, he said, that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. The city had had, it should continue to have, the melancholy distinction of being by eminence the great slayer of prophets. Then follows the first of those famous laments from the Lord over guilty and doomed Jerusalem. It is paternal, like the lament of David for Absalom.

Those machinating enemies of Jesus laid their snares for him in unexpected places. A ruling Pharisee asks him to dinner on a sabbath day. This is a second recorded occasion of the sort, and there were probably others, not recorded. The Pharisees were "watching" Jesus. There was present, perhaps by provision of the Pharisees as an occasion of test to the Lord, a man afflicted with dropsy. Jesus asks his enemies, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath or not?" They made no reply. He then, having healed the man and dismissed him, applied again that unanswerable argument, used before but appropriately modified now to suit the modified conditions, the argument of the ass or the ox found in need on a sabbath day. On that same occasion, observing the unseemly competition rife among the persons bidden, to secure each for himself a place of honor at table, Jesus drew from his observation a parable, which, with remarkable plainness of speech for a guest to fellow-guests, he applied directly to the company before him. It is, however, to be remarked that Jesus, perhaps by way of softening his lesson a little, speaks not of a dinner, not even of a banquet in general, but of a wedding-feast. If Jesus, at any time of which there is record in the Gospels, indulged himself in delivering instruction not religious, not even directly ethical, in character, the present might seem such a case. It was at all events sound worldly wisdom that those self-asserting guests heard propounded that day from the Lord. The maxim deduced, "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," has its fruitful application in the realm of the spirit. But one who

THE TRAVELS of OUR SAVIOUR



humbles himself in order to be exalted, does not really humble himself. The fact is that in the spiritual sphere the self-humbling is itself the exaltation.

The Pharisee, his host, was also remembered by the Lord in the way of instruction adapted to his case. Perhaps Jesus noticed that the bidden guests of the day were persons of worldly condition such as not to stand in need of the social entertainment they were enjoying; while there were outside spectators present, like the dropsical man, for instance, to whom invitation to a bountiful feast would be boon indeed. "Bid to thy feast," he in substance said, "such guests as have it not in their power to recompense thee with return of invitation. Thou wilt so be earning recompense to be bestowed in the resurrection of the just." Upon hearing these things, a fellow-guest of the Lord sanctimoniously said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." This gentleman perhaps thought that he had thus very happily fallen into chord with the special peculiarity of Jesus as teacher; Jesus made much of the "kingdom of God" in what he had to say. Possibly the remark was even intended by its author to ease the tension of the situation at table. If so, he was probably surprised with the response that he evoked. It came in the form of a parable. The purport of the parable was to teach that guests bidden to the feast celebrated in the kingdom of God ran the risk of forfeiting in various ways their privilege of being present there; while many outcasts not thought of by them would come in to occupy their vacant room. It was a veiled hint, whether or not at the time understood to be such, of the rejection that the proud, unbelieving Jews were incurring, and of the predestined substitution for them of the despised and lowly — nay, even of the Gentiles — as final inheritors of the blessings of the Gospel. It went home to the case of the Pharisee "watchers" of Jesus there present; but we have no reason to suppose that it went home to their conscience or their heart.

Where it was that the incident of this Pharisee dinner to Jesus occurred, we do not know; but there is indication of its having occurred in the course of the Lord's journeying to Jerusalem. The multitudes that accompanied him were now great, and he addressed to them teaching adapted to diminish their number: "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." He was resolved that there should be no misunderstanding as to the terms on which, and on which alone, discipleship to him could be maintained. Jesus was the most exacting of masters. Indeed, mastership cannot even be conceived of more exacting than his. Hear him speaking

now to these multitudes: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," was his final sifting word. Sifting it was; but not repelling. "If you have now some susceptibility of heart to entertain and understand what I say, use it; it will grow by use; but it will perish by disuse"; such was the sense of his language.

Publicans and sinners seem to have felt encouraged by the tenor of the teaching of Christ. They thronged to him in such numbers that Luke says they "all" were coming. This, of course, shocked the scribes and Pharisees. Their sanctimonious horror called out in succession three parables from the Lord, one of which, the last one, that of the Prodigal Son, is perhaps entitled to be pronounced the most famous and the noblest of all Christ's parables, and therefore the most famous and the noblest parable in the world. The parable of the Lost Sheep, and the parable of the Lost Piece of Silver preceded this. The visitor to Palestine may to this day see the picture realized in act, of that shepherd bearing the recovered sheep on his shoulder. The present writer remembers to have read somewhere what, if it be true, throws an interesting illustrative light on the parable of the Lost Piece of Silver. According to that statement, if it be rightly remembered, the ten pieces of silver were in the nature of a wedding gift, received by the wife from her husband. To lose one of them would be accounted special ill fortune, as foretoking some calamity about to befall. The recovery, therefore, of even a single one lost would, notwithstanding its trifling intrinsic value (less than twenty cents), constitute an occasion of rejoicing important enough to be celebrated in company with invited friends and neighbors.

Out of the enormous mass of Rabbinical literature, or out of the equally enormous mass of the so-called sacred scriptures belonging to other religions than the Biblical, the student may occasionally bring to light some story worth reproducing for the admiration or even the instruction of men. But it is the unique character of the Gospels that to every one of its recorded parables belong an individual interest and an individual value that put it permanently among the treasured literary possessions of the human race. That story of the wayward prodigal son, at last repentant, and then more than forgiven — how it has mastered human imaginations and human hearts in all climes and all times! The beauty of it, the simplicity of it, the pathos of it, the power of it, the hold of it on the primal and universal instincts of human nature! Let some great

artist in writing try his hand now in producing a parable like it. That artist would, after experiment, be of all men the loudest in praise of the inimitable, incomparable, unapproachable, easy supremacy of the parable of the Prodigal Son. And it seems to have been struck out at one stroke, in its unimprovable lines of perfection, with the mere voice of the teacher, and so trusted, unwritten, to the keeping of the impalpable and fickle air—thence to be gathered and fixed for us in form of written words by a man of whom we know almost nothing, except that he wrote this, and a few other records such as this! Was there not a power here at work, not only in the speaking, but in the recording, other and higher than simply human? And consider the inexhaustible fecundity of producing power implied. For parable followed parable, as if from a fountain that could never run dry. And the fragments of such discourse that survive are to be regarded as only meager specimens of the volume of this mellifluous teaching that flowed day after day from that mouth like the river of God which is full of water.

The parable of the Unjust Steward followed. This shows how the shrewdness may be separated in thought from the fraud of dishonest worldly dealing and made to teach a useful lesson. We are all of us so to use worldly wealth, in whatever measure it may be ours, as to earn ourselves a welcome at last to "the eternal tabernacles." That worldly wealth is called by Jesus the "mammon of unrighteousness"; probably as being conceived to have acquired always more or less taint of evil in passing to our hands through the "corrupted currents of the world." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," said the Lord. Luke tells us that the money-loving Pharisees scoffed at him, when they heard these things. Jesus responded by point-blank reproof. "You," he in effect said, "make a fair show before men; but God is not deceived." He added these words: "That which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God." Praise from men is, according to Christ, an illegitimate object of human pursuit. And perhaps the pursuit of wealth is, with the most of those engaging in it, only a form of seeking praise from men. "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself," the Psalmist said, long before Jesus, and the saying holds yet. The consideration thus suggested may be the link in thought that connects with what has just been given the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, next following. This parable also, like so many other of the teachings of Christ uttered during his last journey to Jerusalem, dealt with that subject of which his heart was now so full, namely,

the doom of woe that, by their rejection of him, his hostile countrymen were invoking upon themselves. The Rich Man (or Dives, as he is often called from the Latin), was a type, primarily of the unbelieving Jewish nation.

Doubtless there were instances, not recorded, of mutual difference and quarrel arising from time to time among the disciples, as they journeyed in company; the chances of joint travel are proverbial for producing such results. It was very likely on the occurrence of one of these that the Lord said, "It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come," and taught the remedy: "Take heed to yourselves; if thy brother sin, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying I repent; thou shalt forgive him." We are not to brood in silence over a wrong done us; we are not to talk about it resentfully with others; we are to "rebuke"—of course tenderly—the wrongdoer, and give him a chance to express regret. It is noticeable that Jesus changes from plural to singular in giving these directions: "Take heed to *yourselves*; if *thy* brother sin." He would make the particular practical duty enjoined fit as close as possible to the individual conscience and heart. The apostles were staggered. "Forgive like that!" thought they, with wonder, as if feeling an impossibility in it. "Increase our faith!" they exclaimed aloud. The Lord will astonish them, will stagger them, yet more. "Why, if you had any faith at all," he in substance says, "if the principle of faith within you were even as a grain of mustard seed for size, so far from your finding it hard to forgive thus, you would be able to bid this sycamore tree here, Be thou torn up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, with the certainty of its obeying you. Do not imagine that you will be earning any special thanks by doing what I have now commanded. Regard yourselves still as unprofitable servants, even after having rendered the fullest obedience." Jesus thus describes the attitude of mind to be maintained by all his disciples toward themselves. He does not describe thus the attitude of mind which he himself will maintain toward them. He will be gracious, we may be sure; but we should be severe—not one toward another, but each toward himself.

At about this point in the journeying and teaching of Jesus, an incident occurred of comparative importance enough to receive treatment by itself, and so to arrest and close the present chapter; as it arrested and closed the stage then in progress of the Lord's activity in Perea.

CHAPTER XVII.

"INTO JUDEA AGAIN."

"LET us go into Judea again," said Jesus to his disciples. The occasion was one of sad interest—sad to the Savior himself for his own sake, and the more sad to him as likewise so sad to the friends whom he loved. That hospitable home in Bethany, the home of Mary and Martha, had been invaded by sickness; sickness so serious that word was sent to Jesus informing him of it. The sisters sent the word, and they couched it in terms of exquisite simplicity and pathos. It was a peculiarly eloquent appeal; for the sisters' love for the sick seemed to lose itself in love for the Lord. It was as if it were for his sake, and not for their own, that they mourned and were anxious. The message ran, "Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick." That meant their brother Lazarus.

Jesus replying said—to his disciples we may presume, though it may have been to the messenger for his report in return to the sisters: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." We should miss much, if we failed to observe how this form of expression associates Jesus in equality, almost in identity with God. The glory of God would be promoted by the glory of his Son. Jesus made no immediate motion to act upon the news he had received. He stayed two days longer where he was, before proposing to his disciples, with use of the words quoted at the beginning of this chapter, a return to Judea. "To Judea!" thought the disciples. They said: "Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" This carries us back to the occasion described in our fourteenth chapter. What has been narrated in the chapters succeeding that may be assumed to have occurred during the interval of retirement in Perea upon which the Lord then immediately entered as a temporary refuge from the murderous hatred of the Jews.

No wonder the disciples expostulated with their Master against the suggested fresh exposure of his life. But Jesus serenely replied: "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" His own appointed "day" had in it its unalterable measure of twelve hours—which could not be made less. He afterward explained the object of his intended return to Judea. "Our friend Lazarus," he said—with ineffable divine condescension he, in that word "our," had equaled himself with his disciples, as to their common bond with him of friendship to the sick man of Bethany—"Our friend Lazarus,"

he said, "is fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." In his expression of purpose to "awake" the sleeper, he separates himself from his disciples, and says "I." The disciples did not understand their Master's gentle euphemism. Sleep was a good sign, they thought. He will get well, they innocently said, if he have fallen asleep. They really meant perhaps, Thou wilt not need to go to him. Jesus now plainly told them, "Lazarus is dead." It was undoubtedly his supernatural knowledge that enabled him to impart this information. He also told them he was glad for their sake that he had been absent from Bethany; the result for them would be a needed deepening of their faith—a faith soon to be so desperately tried. This seems to imply that, had he been present in Bethany, Lazarus should not have died. But it would, to the disciples, be far more striking and impressive if Lazarus should be raised from the dead, than it could have been had he only been prevented (of course, this must have been beyond anybody's actual observation) from dying. "Nevertheless, let us go unto him," the Lord added. Thomas then said something that ought to be well considered by those who would form a just idea of this disciple's character. "Doubting Thomas," he is often called; but loyal Thomas he likewise assuredly was. To his fellow-disciples, he said, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." Thomas was sure that Jesus' going to Judea would end in the death of his Master; and that death, in the fullness of his love, he was minded to share.

When Jesus reached Bethany, the end, the seeming end, to Lazarus had already come. Four days before, they had laid him in his sepulcher. "Now, Bethany was nigh Jerusalem," so John says, in the past tense; for Bethany had probably already ceased to be, when John wrote his Gospel—the predicted dreadful destruction of Jerusalem, with of course its suburbs, having intervened. The sisters' friends from the neighboring city were present in considerable numbers, on a visit of consolation to the house. Martha got early word of Jesus' approach, and she went out to meet him; while Mary still kept her place and her posture, sitting, at home. Martha's first burst of speech was exquisitely natural and touching; one still feels the effect of the tears in her words: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." So much for love and lament; with faith enough mingling to make the anguish complete. Then this: "And

even now, I know that whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give thee." Faith there is a note so strong that the anguish has almost died out of the language. Jesus met her with, "Thy brother shall rise again." Did he mean, I will raise him to life? Martha would not be over-hasty to take the Lord in this sense. She said, touchingly, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." There was question, there was appeal, in the pathetic inflection of the voice. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." Astounding paradoxes to be so calmly propounded! Jesus adds a question that puts Martha to the necessity of immediate reply: "Believest thou this?" If she hesitates, though but an instant, she will already have replied, and her reply will be, No. She says, "Yea, Lord; I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God." This ended the exchanges between Jesus and Martha.

Martha, sent by the Master, summoned Mary to him. Mary's friends followed Mary, supposing that she was going to her brother's grave, there to weep. Mary reaching Jesus fell down at his feet, with Martha's own first words, repeated, on her lips. Her weeping, and the weeping of her companions, shook the calm of Jesus' spirit; he was troubled. "Where have ye laid him?" he asked. "Lord, come and see," they said. Jesus felt himself overpowered. He wept. "Behold, how he loved him!" said the Jews. Some of them even said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have kept Lazarus from dying?" That Jerusalem miracle of restoring sight to one blind from his birth, had made a profound and lasting impression. Jesus, inwardly wrought upon with a feeling of resentment that such things, the result of sin,

should be in the world, came to the tomb. This was an excavation, probably in rock, and with a rock it was covered. "Take ye away the stone," said Jesus. Martha's sentiment of reverence for the dead prevailed for a moment over her faith. She would not have the corruption of her beloved exposed to the senses of observers. She expostulated. "Consider," she in effect said; "he has been four days buried. Corruption has already begun its work." Jesus rallied her faith with, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" There were willing hands to take the covering of stone away. Then "Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me." Does this import that Jesus had prayed already on this behalf, and had received assurance of answer? What he adds favors the idea: "And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the multitude standing around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me." What confident communion of Son and Father, held consciously in the hearing of the multitude for their sake! Will God sanction this appeal? If he do, what can prevent everyone's believing? But will everyone believe?

Having so prayed, or, as John expresses it, "spoken," Jesus cried, "with a loud voice," as if in token of the resurrection energy exerted: "Lazarus, come forth!" Nobody could describe, nobody can conceive, the impression upon bystanders, when they saw issue from the tomb the living figure of the buried man, the grave-bands still on him making fast both hands and feet, and his face bound about with its napkin of ghastly white. "Loose him," said Jesus, "and let him go." Jesus had loosed the mighty bonds of death; and others might now undo for the man, dead no more, the fastenings with which those mighty bonds had been unconsciously symbolized.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ANOTHER POSTPONEMENT.

NOT everyone did believe. Some out of the number of those who witnessed this stupendous miracle went away from the scene of it, and, either in an idly tattling, or else in a maliciously meddling, spirit, told the Pharisees what Jesus had done. The result was that the embers of Pharisaic hatred for him were blown into fresh flame. From before this threatening outburst Jesus retired once more, this time into a place called Ephraim "near to the wilderness"—a "city" which it is not possible now exactly to locate. Here he stayed

with his disciples, no one can say exactly how long.

Perhaps, when at length the last Passover drew nigh, Jesus may have set out from Ephraim and accomplished one more general circuit of the regions previously traversed by him. If that expression in Luke previously spoken of, "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee," is rightly to be rendered as thus given, and not, as would be equally true to the Greek, "on the border line between Samaria and Galilee," then it becomes entirely admis-

sible to suppose that it relates to such a last general tour as the one here suggested. The question involved is one much debated by scholars. Unanimous agreement is not to be hoped for. To us who here study the earthly life of the Lord, it is sufficient to rest reasonably certain, as we are warranted in doing, that what follows in this chapter occurred, at any rate, during some stage of the last progress of the Lord toward Jerusalem. The incident of the healing of the ten lepers we know thus occurred; for Luke expressly says so. In the same connection, he also says that it was while "he was passing through the midst of [or else, between] Samaria and Galilee." Those wretched victims of the most desperate of slow, malignant diseases "stood afar off," as required by law or custom; but they lifted up their voices in suit of mercy from Jesus. He bade them go and show themselves to the priests, as was required in case of a supposed cure of leprosy. They had the faith to go, and they were cleansed as they went. One of them when cleansed turned back, and shouted aloud his gladness, glorifying God. He fell forward on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Jesus exclaimed, "Were not the ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this alien?" For the one thanksgiver was a Samaritan.

The Pharisees asked when the kingdom of God was coming. We are at hopeless loss to know exactly the whole meaning of what the Lord replied; for a certain important word that he used bears equally well either one of two meanings. "The kingdom of God is *among* you;" or, "the kingdom of God is *within* you." When we consider to whom Jesus was speaking, it seems more likely that he meant "*among* you," that is, already present—had they but eyes to discern it! To the disciples then Jesus gave solemn instructions applicable to the time approaching when he should no longer be personally present with them, and while yet the crisis of his doom should be overhanging Jerusalem. They were necessarily somewhat veiled words that he spoke. The suddenness, the inevitableness, the completeness, of the national ruin that would descend, are impressively described. It would be as in the days of Noah, when the flood came; it would be as in the days of Lot, when fire and brimstone rained down from heaven. "In the day when the Son of Man is revealed," "he which is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away." "There shall be two women grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other left." "Where, Lord?" asked the bewildered disciples. That they would learn soon enough

themselves from the events forerunning the predestined fulfillment. It was sufficient for the present, if he excited their vigilant fears. He answered them somewhat mysteriously, perhaps in terms of a proverb. "Where the body is, thither will also the eagles be gathered together." Some have imagined that here was a designed allusion to the Roman army of destruction—the Roman military standard having an "eagle" as its device. A brief and telling parable was dropped by the way, addressed to certain persons complacently self-righteous and disdainful toward their fellows. Everybody knows it by heart; it is the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican.

Those untiring Pharisees! They tempt Jesus again. This time it is a question about divorce. Jesus' reply has been of the highest historic importance. It has perhaps had more influence in purifying domestic life, in cementing human society, in promoting civilization, than all the ethical precepts of all the human philosophers that have taught since the world began. It declares the sacredness and the inviolability of the marriage bond. It has upon the whole had universal and uninterrupted sway in the custom and the legislation of Christendom. The sanction of it is expressed in that solemn sentence, "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

A significant conjunction of teachings. In immediate sequel to the teaching on the subject of marriage, little children were brought to Jesus for the holy touch of his hands upon them. The Lord had just sanctified marriage; it was fit that he should next put the seal of his touch on the fruit of marriage. The "little children" were babes, as we know from Luke. What he was asked to do for these little ones, and what he did, was to "touch" them and to "pray." These two things and no more. He used no oil to anoint them; he used no water to baptize them. What he then did for those particular babes, we feel sure he did in symbol and in effect for all, not less than for them. The disciples had been too self-important in the matter of this fond application to Jesus. They were for sending the bringers of the babes, parents no doubt, away. But Jesus was displeased. He uttered those immortal words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God"¹—words which have blessed the lot of children in all Christian generations since, and words, for sweet and potent benediction, not paralleled by utterance from any other in all the world that ever spoke with human lips since time began. "These two things

¹ Mark x, 14.

and no more," we said. But those two only things Jesus did with a certain fullness that overflowed and seemed to make them more. He took the babes in his arms to lay his hands upon them; and as he "prayed," he "blessed" them. Beautiful act benign! It has been a prolonged benediction ever since. The fragrance of it is not less—more, rather—that it has been so widely diffused.

There is no end to the variety of lovely pictures that compose the more tranquil side of this idyllic earthly life of Jesus. What has just been related seems to have taken place indoor, or at any rate at some little remove from the highway. Mark says, "As he was going forth into the way," that is, from the scene of the blessing pronounced on little children, there came to him, not walking, even with quickened gait, but actually running, a young man—he was a man of condition, a "ruler"—who kneeled in the dust at Jesus' feet and asked an eager question. "Good Master," said he, "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Noble inquiry! It was most reverently made. Did the young man know how reverently? He had said, "Good Master." Was he aware what that adjective implied? Jesus will sound him and see. He asked, "How callest thou me good?" how? that is, why? on what ground? in what sense? "None is good," the Lord went on to say, "save one, that is, God." It was as if Jesus would ask, "Dost thou, indeed, perceive the God in me? Is that why thou callest me good?" Without waiting for any reply from the young ruler, Jesus said, "If thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments." He at the same time recalled a number of these. "Master, all these things have I observed from my youth," the young man, no doubt with all modesty, with self-knowledge however defective, said in reply, adding, "What lack I yet?" Jesus looked upon this youthful seeker after truth with a peculiar regard and instinctively loved him. "One thing thou lackest," he tenderly said, "go sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." At this, alas, the young man's countenance fell, and he went sadly away. It was his misfortune to be very rich. Jesus perhaps followed the young man with his eyes as he went away; but if he did, he soon withdrew his look, and turned it round about himself, at the same time sighing aloud: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" To the disciples expressing their amazement at this utterance,

Jesus would abate nothing from what he had said. Indeed, he said it again and still more strongly, but added, "Things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Peter spoke up and said, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee." Jesus made his reply to Peter general in form, so as to include all places and all ages, promising to such as answered Peter's description, a hundredfold at present, with "persecutions," and "eternal life" at last. Then came the parable of the Vineyard, with its lesson at once for the Jews as a nation, jealous of the Gentiles who were soon to be equaled with themselves in blessing; and for all the individuals of the human race, summoned, whether early or late, to share the salvation and the responsibilities of the Gospel. Like a solemn refrain comes in once more at the end that notice to all, "The last shall be first, and the first last."

Jesus was burdened with his prophetic sense of things to be. He yearned to impart his secret to his disciples. So he now takes his twelve apostles away from the general throng, and walking forward still, tells them yet again of his own impending doom. He particularizes more than ever before. He is soon to be mocked, to be scourged, to be spit upon, to be crucified. But, as ever, so now, he is after that to be raised from the dead the third day. There was something at this time unusually impressive—impressive to the point of awfulness—in the mien and manner of Jesus. Mark notes it strikingly. The Lord seems to have quickened his pace. He went *before* his apostles, and no longer with them. They were "amazed"; they were even "afraid," following him. It was the Spirit in him that urged him on like a motive power stronger than he. He was under the mighty hand of God. But to that hand he responded with the impulse of a solemnly joyful obedience. He saluted his future and hastened to its dreadful embrace. But there was the irrepressible buoyancy of hope and of joy in his feeling. We know it was with support of the "joy set before him," that he endured the cross when it came; we need not doubt that he also anticipated the cross with something of the same victorious exultation. Luke tells us that of all that Jesus had thus foretold, the apostles had understood—nothing. This statement he twice repeats strongly. It was reserved for two of the most favored of the twelve, to furnish prompt melancholy proof that this indeed was so. That proof may be reserved for the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE APPROACH TO THE CITY.

ALAS, for human frailty! And alas for human ambition, which the accompanying frailty is not often sufficiently conscious of itself to abash! Just as these themes of thought and prophecy, destruction for Jerusalem, obedience even to death for himself, were usurping the heart and employing the tongue of the Savior, who should come to him but a woman in suit of worldly advantage at his hands? It was a mother, and she brought a petition for preferment on behalf of her sons. Those sons were the brothers James and John. Salome, their mother, begged that the two chief places in the Lord's kingdom might be given to them. Jesus seems to have seen plainly enough that the sons had prompted the mother. His answer was to them, and not to her: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" "We are able," they fatuously replied. There was no hope yet of making them understand. Jesus, with a gentleness that was severe, repelled them. And now the ten fellow-apostles promptly avail themselves of their chance to show that they also are as selfish as James and John. For they are moved with indignation against the two applicants; an indignation natural, indeed, on their part, but fatally self-revealing. Jesus in effect rebukes the twelve apostles all alike; the two had only been a little more forward with the same spirit that really animated equally the ten. "Who-soever would be first among you," said the Lord, "shall be bond-servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." In those words, "his life a ransom," is inextricably contained a statement, sufficient for practical use, of that great teaching of Christ and of his apostles, which theologians call the doctrine of vicarious atonement.

Multitudes, multitudes! The impression of them will not forsake the memory and the imagination of the historians of Jesus. The Lord had reached Jericho on his way to Jerusalem. The tumult of such a following—a following multiplied now by the concourse of Galilean pilgrims thronging to the feast—excited first the curiosity, and then the hope, of two blind men sitting by the wayside. When these unfortunates learned that this was no other than the far-famed Jesus of Nazareth, they set up a loud importunate cry for mercy from him. The multitude said, "Hush!" but they only shouted the louder. Jesus stayed his steps. "Call

them," said he. The multitude changed their style. "Be encouraged," they said; "he is calling you." The usual event—they were healed. Perhaps the same thing was repeated on the same occasion. Matthew says "two blind men," not described as "beggars"; Mark and Luke agree in mentioning only one case, and that, with each evangelist, was the case of a "beggar." But it may not have been for both evangelists the same beggar. For Mark names his man, it was Bartimæus; and he gives the healing as performed on the Lord's way out from Jericho; while Luke gives his as performed on the way in. Matthew's story of the two men healed belongs to the occasion of the Lord's leaving Jericho. Nothing would be more natural than that there should be blind men sitting by the way on both sides of the city; and nothing more natural than that the second man should repeat, in the same terms, the same application that, as he probably would have heard, had so wonderfully succeeded with the first. Of Matthew's two cases Mark mentions only one, the one which he could identify by name. As for the behavior of the multitude, that, too, would quite naturally reproduce itself on successive occasions. What would be instinctive with a crowd once, would be equally instinctive with a crowd a second time; and it is not at all necessary to conceive—indeed, it would be highly improbable—that the whole mass of the people knew exactly everything said at a given particular point among them; one group "rebuked" the clamoring beggar of to-day, a different group, the clamoring beggar of the morrow, neither group having the least knowledge of the other. This explanation is suggested only; it is not insisted upon. In any case, there is substantial agreement among historians, and this is quite sufficient to engage the candid reader's confidence.

A novel and picturesque incident, one full of the ever incalculable, yet always sublimely self-consistent character of the Lord. A certain rich man in Jericho whose business was that of chief collector of revenue, was exceedingly anxious to get sight of Jesus. He being short in stature, his chance was small in the crowd unless he could command some overlooking position. For this purpose he was willing to sacrifice his dignity, and, running on before, he clambered into a sycamore tree on the way by which Jesus would pass. A great surprise awaited this man. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up into the tree, and called the occupant by his name. "Zaccheus," said he, "make haste and come

down, for to-day I must abide at thy house." Jesus had not mistaken his man. Zaccheus hastened down and with great joy welcomed the Lord to his house. There was a general murmur of disapprobation at this. "He is gone in to lodge with a sinner," they said. But Zaccheus was a repentant sinner. Before that divine Guest went away, he stood up in the presence of Jesus and declared his purpose to devote half his wealth to the poor and to restore fourfold what he might have wrongfully exacted of any man. Jesus said, "To-day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." The Lord, then, seemed satisfied with the half from Zaccheus; though he had required the whole from that amiable young ruler. This may show that the latter demand was suited to the perceived character and need of the particular person, constituting rather a test for him than a thing to be carried out in actual practice by all.

These words to Zaccheus were perhaps spoken by Jesus as a kind of farewell before he started away. He added a parable, suggested by the vicinity of Jerusalem and by the current general expectation that the kingdom of God, of course misconceived of, was on the immediate verge

of openly appearing. The parable was that of the Ten Pounds. The underlying thought of it was that haunting one, of the growingly imminent end of the Lord's earthly life and of the narrowing margin of probation left for the Jewish people. Jesus was about to withdraw from the earthly province of the universal dominion of God and go to the capital seat and court of the King in heaven, there to receive from his Father a rulership, and then to return. The figure was to Christ's hearers familiar and striking. It was drawn from what again and again happened under the observation of men of that time, in the administration of the Roman empire. The lesson was that the result would be fatal to the obstinately rebellious. This teaching was doubly significant; having its application first to the judged and endangered Jewish nation, and then to every individual soul, of whatever time, in that soul's relation, either obedient or disobedient, to Christ the Vicegerent of God.

This parable spoken, the solemn progress was resumed in the direction of Jerusalem—the Lord himself going on in advance of all; as if, in his own prescient mind, the separation and consecration of himself to his approaching sacrificial death, unaccompanied and lonely, were already begun.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

FROM Jericho to Bethany in the suburbs of Jerusalem was a distance of some nineteen miles; a difficult and dreary day's walk, the road rough, the country desolate. At Bethany Jesus arrived, as seems most probable, on the evening of a Friday. It was the Friday immediately preceding the Friday of his passion. Only a week, therefore, now intervenes before the tragic end of this heavenly earthly life. "End," do we say? Should we not say rather interruption only, for was not the life soon resumed for a little while at least on earth, before it was finally taken up out of human sight into the heaven of heavens?

There was much inquiry for Jesus, with much rumor and speculation about him, rife in the capital city, while he yet tarried for a day or two in the neighboring village of Bethany. He was guest doubtless at the home of the sisters Martha and Mary. "They"—but this word does not necessarily, does not probably, mean the sisters—"they," perhaps the Bethany community in partnership, make him a supper. It is in the house of one Simon; "the leper," he is called, as being well known in that character; become well known, we may

presume, from having been healed by the Lord. Lazarus was present as guest. Martha was among those that served. As for Mary, she performed a part not required which has had the effect of making that occasion more famous perhaps than any other social occasion in the world. She brought with her to the supper, in an alabaster cruse, a very costly ointment of nard; a pound's weight, John says. This she poured, in lavish effusion, over the Lord's head, as he sat at meat. She also anointed his feet, wiping them with her hair. The house was filled with the odor of the ointment. It was a beautiful act of love and devotion. But there were some, and, alas, among these were the disciples—of the disciples, especially Judas—that murmured at such a waste of that unguent. They thought, and Judas at last outright said, that it might have been sold for the benefit of the poor; it would have brought 300 pence! (This sum represents perhaps \$100, present value.) Mary was disconcerted. Had she made a mistake? But Jesus came to her relief. "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me." He put a pathetic interpretation upon her act:

"She hath anointed my body aforehand for the burying." How full that prophetic human heart divine was of the coming end! Then he added a prediction which is every day yet, as it has been every day since it was uttered, and this over ever-increasing areas of the great globe, receiving its never-completed fulfillment: "Whosoever the Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." When ever was other loving woman's simple act so profusely rewarded with inexhaustible revenues of affectionate fame?

The common people got word of Jesus' being at Bethany, and they began to resort thither. They were eager to see Jesus; but Lazarus, too—they wanted to see him. This involved Lazarus also in danger from the envy and hatred of the Jews. They coupled him with Jesus in their plots of murder.

On the Sunday following, that is, the next day probably after the supper at Simon's, Jesus enters Jerusalem. But the entry is not made by him on foot, as the preceding journeys thither had all of them been made. The Messiah will enter his capital city as King. He provides himself an ass, a young one which man never before bestrode, and takes his seat upon it. The moment was one of the wildest popular excitement. The people thought they saw the commencement in triumph of the Messianic kingdom. The multitudes of pilgrims to the city from all quarters of the land swelled the following of Jesus to uncounted numbers, and the contagion of excitement was like a spreading conflagration. Nothing that could be thought of was left undone by the throngs to testify their delirious joy. They stripped off their outer garments and strewed them in the way before Jesus. They flew to the wayside trees, and to trees in the fields adjoining, and cutting off branches flung these down upon the road for their King to pass over. The earth was not fit for even the young ass that bore him to plant its feet upon. Meantime, shoutings before him, shoutings

behind him, shoutings around him, with waving of palm branches in innumerable hands. "Hosanna!" they multitudinously cried, "Hosanna in the highest!" "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" "Blessed the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David!"

But there were some spectators that kept themselves perfectly collected and cool amid the general ecstasy. Those omnipresent Pharisees were there, by deputation perhaps; and they gave Jesus a chance to clear himself, if he would, from any complicity in these reprehensible extravagances of the people. "Master," they thoughtfully said, "rebuke thy disciples." But Jesus sternly and eloquently replied, "I tell you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." A crisis like that which was passing demanded a voice. The insensate stones should provide it, if there were no human beings to speak.

The sight of Jerusalem, beheld from Olivet, affected her King to tears. Then again was uttered by him, though not yet for the last time, a lamentation of his, with prophecy, over the doomed city; lamentation laden with a weight of pathos such as certainly never was charged upon human speech before. The commentary of subsequent history was soon fearfully to emphasize—if possible augment—the somber solemnity of the Savior's boding words.

When he finally entered the city, his entrance sent an agitation to the very heart of Jerusalem. "Who is this?" was the question asked by the multitudes already there. "This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee," the multitudes accompanying replied. The day was far spent. Jesus proceeded to the Temple, went in, and took a survey of the things that were there. His action in doing this must have been peculiarly impressive to have invited the record that was made of it by the historian. He then, it being now eventide, returned for the night to Bethany with the twelve.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LAST MONDAY.

THE hastening days of the last week (often called "Holy Week") of the Savior's earthly life were very unequally marked with incident recorded. Two incidents only are given for Monday. Monday morning, as afterward daily (unless Wednesday was an exception) till the end, he went from Bethany, where he spent his nights, to Jerusa-

lem. His resort was always to the Temple. On his way thither Monday morning, he hungered. He may have spent his night in watching and prayer, and so have left Bethany fasting. Or he may have breakfasted early without appetite, and then delayed his start so long as naturally to feel hungry with exercise and the lapse of time. He saw at a distance a wayside

fig tree, that seemed, from its appearance, to promise him some refreshment of food; but coming to it he found thereon nothing but leaves. It was, to be sure, not yet the season of figs; but this particular tree, for some reason of situation perhaps, was precociously forward, and there should have been young fruit, advanced enough to be edible, hidden in the foliage; the law of fruit-bearing for the fig tree being fruit before leaves. Or there might be fruit of last year's crop still hanging on the boughs. But fruit there was none. The tree was barren. It never should be other than so. Its chance of reformation was gone. For the Lord would make it an impressive object-lesson to all generations. It should stand forever in a kind of acted parable of the Jewish nation's character and destiny. "No man eat fruit from thee henceforth for ever," Jesus judicially said. The disciples heard these remarkable words, and they had speedy occasion to note the result. "How did the fig tree immediately wither away?" they asked their Master. He replied by again emphasizing to them the omnipotence of faith, bidding them but believe that they have received the things they asked for in prayer, with his assurance annexed, "Ye shall have them." As if to guard against an uplifting of spiritual pride inspired by the idea of omnipotence in prayer through faith, the Lord immediately adjoins this: "And whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against anyone; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." But, in thus joining here the sequel of result befalling the fig tree with the instruction called out from Christ by the wondering question of the disciples, we have been anticipating a little. This partly belongs to the story of Tuesday.

Before returning to the story of Monday, shall we entertain two questions that inevitably suggest themselves? First, Was the cursing of the fig tree a yielding, on the Lord's part, to the petulance of personal disappointment? Second, Was it an infringement of property

rights? One and the same answer disposes of both questions. The Lord *could* wither that tree with a word. Whoever could, thereby proved that, if he would, he properly might. Besides, it was a wayside tree; probably, therefore, not individual property. Moreover, being barren, it was worthless, except for shade. It was in fact by being cursed converted to a public use far more beneficent and diffusive, than it could possibly have served, had it continued for its time to thrive—even in fruit-bearing; much more, in sterility.

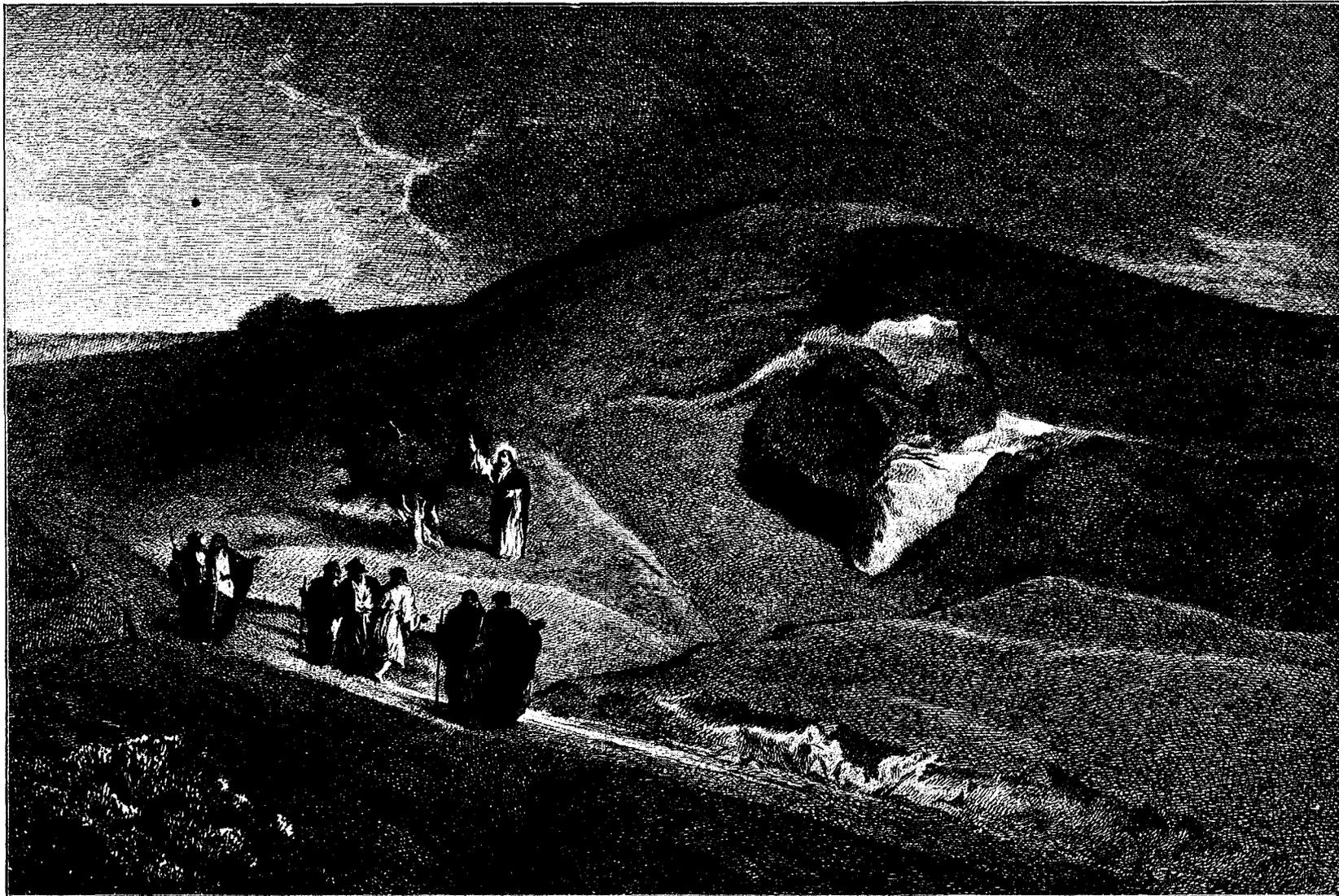
From the cursing of the fig tree, Jesus seems to have gone on directly to the Temple, where the Jewish nation, the antitype of that showy and worthless tree, maintained its imposing make-believe of flourishing in luxuriant leafy, but fruitless, pride. He here repeated his symbolic act, that act first performed by him near the beginning of his public career, of purging out from the purlieu of the sanctuary of God the profane abominations of worldly barter and exchange that had been suffered again to gather there. The blind and the lame flocked in thither to him, and he healed them. It was a novel scene. The children meanwhile were crying aloud in the Temple their infant hosannas to this Savior's name. Again the sense of propriety in those chief priests and scribes was rudely disturbed. They appealed to Jesus with the question, at the same time an intended reproach to him, and an unintended recognition of his power, "Hearest thou what these are saying?" "Yea," Jesus replied; adding, with a touch of lofty and indignant sarcasm: "Did ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" He was far from abdicating his own just claim to that ascription of praise to himself with which those half-unconscious children were rending the air. But he left those opposers, in their fenced and impregnable blindness and pride; he left those choiring children; and passing out of the Temple, he went forth from the city for a night of comparative quiet and rest in Bethany.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LAST TUESDAY.

THIS is a crowded day—none more so in the whole history of the teaching activity of Jesus. What is recorded of the incidents by the way between Bethany and Jerusalem, has already, by anticipation, been given. Arrived in the Temple, Jesus found a ferment of hostile welcome awaiting him. This had been prepared by the occurrences of the day preceding. The Jews came to him—it

seems like a set and formal proceeding on their part, an action of the whole Sanhedrim perhaps—and demanded to know by what authority he was acting as he was, and who gave him his authority. Jesus replied with one of his own unanswerable questions. "First answer me and then I will answer you," was his proposal. "The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or from men?" It was a dilemma



BIDA.

JESUS CURSETH THE FIG TREE.

with two fatal horns, the one of which these Jews could not escape without getting themselves securely impaled on the other. If they said, "From heaven," then it followed inevitably that they should have believed John's testimony concerning him, Jesus. This testimony they had themselves formally sent to procure; and it had been rendered in terms express and unmistakable. It had affirmed the divine mission of Jesus. If, on the contrary, they said, "From men," they would affront the people, and forfeit popular support; nay, even invoke the people's anger, to the point of being themselves stoned by them. For John was universally regarded as a prophet. "We do not know," they were forced ignominiously to say. "Neither tell I you," said Jesus, "by what authority I do these things."

Then in his turn Jesus, having his enemies at tremendous disadvantage, pressed them with parable upon parable intended to show how they, as representing the Jewish nation, had proved themselves, and were even now proving themselves, unworthy depositaries of the sacred trust reposed with them by God. Nothing could exceed the terrible strength of language with which he upbraided and denounced them to their face and in the hearing of the people. His parable of the two sons, the one of whom said, "I will not," but afterward went, and the other of whom said, "I go, sir," and went not, he followed with this sentence upon his perverse and wicked hearers: "Verily, I say unto you, the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." His parable of the Wicked Husbandman, he followed with this: "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Those enraged but helpless hearers of these things were, of course, well aware that they were themselves the aim of the Lord's discourse. They were exasperated to the point of wishing to lay immediate violent hands upon him; but, "The people!" they firmly believed on Jesus as a prophet, and the people had a formidable way of taking sudden vengeance, when the whim seized them; they were so dangerously ready and reckless with their stones.

Another one of those deadly parables — this, after an interval during which apparently the enemies of the Lord had withdrawn in discomfiture to return again, after mutual counsel, for renewal of their attack. The parable now uttered of the Marriage of the King's Son, resembles the parable of the Great Supper uttered on a previous occasion. It needed no application to be well enough understood. It pointed clearly to the exclusion and rejection by God of the unbelieving Jews. "Bind him

hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness," the sentence pronounced by the king in the parable upon his offending invited guest, was a transparently veiled warning to every unbelieving and disobedient Jew. If now this master in entrapping dialogue could be himself entrapped! "Discredit him, as once fairly vanquished, in the presence of the people, and the popular favor would be transferred to our side." So thought the enemies of the Lord. First, the Pharisees with the Herodians tried their hand. Exactly who the "Herodians" were, is not agreed. Perhaps members of a political party supporting the pretensions of Herod as legitimate Jewish ruler. The important thing is, that they were united now with the Pharisees against Jesus. Through a plausible spokesman of their number, they propounded a question to Jesus. It is cast in somewhat the same form of dilemma as was that which had a little while before from Jesus so disastrously confounded them. The approach is made with much simulated respect for Jesus' wisdom and authority. At the same time, the question is introduced with a preface intended to incite him to imprudent self-compromising plainness of speech. "Master," they say, "we know that thou art true, and carest not for anyone: for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?"

The question was subtly contrived, and on the whole adroitly presented; although the simplicity and the docility professed in the preamble were perhaps a trifle overdone. Jesus discerned the hypocrisy underlying and, while a hush of attention and expectancy suspended the bystanders, he uncovered it with a word. "Why tempt ye me?" he said. After that, what hope was there of entrapping him unawares? "Bring me a denary," he said. "Whose is this image and superscription?" It was Cæsar's; that was too palpable for dispute, and it constituted a sign, not to be gainsaid, of a political condition. That political condition had its unavoidable obligations. To deny these would be folly — it would be worse than folly, it would be treason. For Jesus to commit this treason would be for him to bring himself under the hostile hand and power of Rome. The hated Nazarene would thus be disposed of once and for all. On the other hand, should Jesus say, "Pay tribute," he would affront the patriot pride of the irresponsible crowd, and lose their support. They, the Jewish rulers, could then proceed against him without fear of exciting popular violence in his favor to their own undoing. The dilemma was apparently insoluble. But Jesus solved it instantaneously without effort. "Render unto

Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," he said. "Your obligation to Cæsar is outward, discharge it; your obligation to God is inward, discharge that. Do not imagine that, in withholding tribute in coin having his image from Cæsar, you act meritoriously, while you are at the same time withholding from God his due, your own selves, created as you are with the ineffaceable mark of his image upon you." The Pharisees, with their Herodian helpers, were confounded and dumb.

The Sadducees took their turn. Their question to Jesus was one with which they no doubt had often perplexed the Pharisees. The Sadducees were the skeptics of their race and their time. They did not believe in such a thing as resurrection after death. So they supposed for Jesus the case of a woman married in succession to seven brothers, who die one after another, leaving her widowed. (The custom of the Jews in the matter of matrimony made such a supposition quite reasonable, leaving it remarkable only in the number of the successive marriage supposed.) The woman herself at last dies. "In the resurrection, whose shall she be?" they triumphantly asked. "Ye do err," said Jesus, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." There is an unmistakable, and a most overawing, majesty, beyond anything human, in the tone with which this is said. There exists, Jesus teaches those Sadducees, no such difficulty as they have imagined, to embarrass the doctrine of a future state. In the resurrection there is no marriage. The inhabitants are as angels. As to the fact of resurrection, that, Jesus teaches, is inextricably involved in the Scripture in which God, announcing himself to Moses, says, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," said Jesus; "for all live unto him." God, that is to say, would not style himself the God of persons who had been, but were not; of mere nonentities with names. "Ye do greatly err," said Jesus, in conclusion. The Sadducees were silenced.

A scribe present was drawn to ask Jesus a question in a spirit different from that of his baffled predecessors; and this questioner got a correspondingly different answer. "What is the first commandment of all?" was the question. And the answer was, in brief, "Supreme love to God"; with this added, beyond the strict answer, "The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The scribe assented so heartily, that Jesus was moved to say, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Christ's trial by questions was at an end. No man's courage was equal to entering those lists again. But Jesus had still his questions to pro-

pound. The following was one: "David in the Holy Spirit calls the Christ, Lord. How is he David's son?" Nobody could answer. We now easily know that the Christ was David's son according to the flesh, while according to the Spirit, he was David's Lord. The common people were delighted with these discomfitures of the Pharisees and the doctors. Jesus turned now to them, together with his own personal disciples, and entered upon a strain of the heaviest reprobation directed against the Pharisees and scribes. This ends in a sevenfold woe denounced upon them. The thunders, however, of righteous indignation and wrath die away in a tone of relenting sorrow over Jerusalem; the third, and not even yet the last, recurrence of that pathetic refrain. There was leisure to Jesus amid such occupations of his mind and his heart, to sit and watch what went on at the treasury of the Temple. Here he pronounced that memorable commendation of his upon the widow's mite.

An incident not seeming to be in itself very noteworthy appears in the Evangelist John's account of this day invested with a peculiar interest not only significant and solemn, but withal somewhat mysterious. Certain Greeks, from the Decapolis probably, and probably "proselytes of the gate" so-called (that is, uncircumcised Gentile proselytes to Judaism), expressed to Philip—whom perhaps they knew, he being of Bethsaida, in the same region with themselves—a desire to see Jesus. Philip tells his fellow-townsmen Andrew; and they two together, Andrew apparently taking the lead, tell Jesus. The answer of Jesus is remarkable. It does not appear whether or not the desire of the Greeks to see him was gratified. But Jesus, in answer to his two disciples, breaks out into a strain of expression not to have been at all forecast for such an occasion. He would almost appear to have recognized in this application from Gentiles to see him a sign from his Father that the end for himself was now indeed nigh at hand. He had an immediate, face-to-face vision of his "hour." He exclaimed, "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified." The being glorified was a sequel to suffering, and a result of that. This is implied in the figure in which the Savior goes on to express himself. What a depth of self-devotion and self-sacrifice is to be discerned in his words! "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." The Lord's prevision of his future did not stop short in his tomb. It took in his own resurrection and the boundless fruit of salvation to others which that event would bear. The Lord remembered, for application to himself, his own instruction to his

disciples, and said: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." He would have others do as he was himself doing: "If any man serve me, let him follow me." There should be no separation in place or in lot between the servant and his Master: "Where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will the father honor." But the solemn joy does not triumph so as not to feel a sinking, a shudder, in prospect of what lay between this and that: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" The question was like the momentary loss of foothold experienced by a man in fording a stream too deep for his height. The foothold of this Divine-Human struggler was immediately regained: "But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." The bitterness of death was past, when those words could be said. There came a voice out of heaven saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The voice was not so much for Jesus, as for those with him who heard it—in vain! Against what light they sinned, those unbelieving Jews! Yet some, nay, many, even of the rulers did believe, but they concealed their belief. "For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God."

Those simple, dull-witted, slow-hearted disciples! After all that they had heard, this day and before from Christ, of the doom of Jerusalem, they could not repress their rustic wonder and delight at the magnificence of the Temple built as if to last forever, like the hill itself on which it stood. They called the Lord's attention to the immense size of its stones and the splendor of the votive gifts that adorned its façades. This was probably while the Lord, with his disciples, was on his way from Jerusalem to Bethany. The admiring remarks of the disciples became to Jesus the occasion of the longest and the most detailed and specific of all his predictions. "Seest thou these great buildings," said he; "there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." The walk then was perhaps continued, until, on the slope of Olivet over against the Temple in full view across the vale of Kedron, the Lord sat down and, on the application of his disciples, resumed his prophetic discourse.

Interpretation of this discourse has always been a matter of much debate with expositors. Some think that, with the destruction of Jerusalem here foretold, was blended, in a manner to leave the two things difficult of separation, the "end of the world" understood in a much larger sense of the expression than that in which this idea is involved in the passing away

of the Jewish State. Expositors who hold the view thus described look for a second coming of the Lord yet future. Another interpretation, which has the merit of much simplicity, maintains that the whole prophecy relates exclusively to the Lord's coming for the destruction of Jerusalem and for the various fulfillments associated by him with that great historic event. The sorrow of the Lord's heart, in sympathy for the city so much beloved and so unworthy, breaks out afresh, in tragic hyperbole, the chief tragedy of which is that it is not hyperbole at all, but literal statement of fact: "For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be." The parable of the Ten Virgins and the parable of the Talents are incorporated in this amazing discourse. An august and awful panorama of the judgment of the great day is made in conclusion to pass before the imagination of hearer or reader, whose ears are left tingling at last with the sound, heard or imagined, of that final, fatal, irreversible sentence, "These shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life."

It was a contrast amounting almost to a paradox, when, immediately upon the conclusion of a discourse in which he had presented himself in a character of such sublimity as Judge of the world, Jesus proceeded to tell his disciples that after two days the Son of Man was to be delivered up for crucifixion. What absolute self-command and sanity, what undisturbable equipoise of spirit, the conjunction of two things concerning himself so contrasted presupposes in the Speaker! At perhaps the very same moment, the chief priests and the scribes were plotting his death. But they resolved that this should not be until after the feast. "The people" might raise a tumult. Man proposes and God disposes. It was to be *during* the feast, and that by the choice and act of him who was himself the true passover! While Jesus was saying, "The Son of Man is delivered up," Judas, it may be, was darkly meditating his own purpose to deliver him. At any rate, he soon "went away" to the chief priests, and agreed with them to betray his Master for a price.

The last Wednesday was a day to the Lord of which there remains no record on earth. Perhaps he spent it recovering strength, through pure rest, for the dreadful things that were before him. Perhaps he spent it in communion with his Father better to him, and more strengthening, than rest. Perhaps he spent it in the sweet domesticities of the home that welcomed him in Bethany, there partaking and dispensing the comfort of love. Perhaps



DAVID ROBERTS.

NAZARETH.

he spent it in giving intimate instructions to his apostles. Perhaps he spent it in some way that mingled and harmonized all these different ends. We can only conjecture, where the silence of history is absolutely unbroken. One feels it almost as a relief to the tense tragedy of the Lord's prophetic mood, when the disciples intervene, as they do from time to time, with their unconscious interpositions of commonplace suggestion. A certain reassuring touch, as of everyday reality, is thus communicated to the overwrought mind. On Thursday morning the disciples came to Jesus with the practical question: "Where wilt thou that we make ready for thee to eat the passover?" Now, Jesus with his disciples would constitute what, for the purposes of the feast, would be regarded as a family. And it was in "families," of not less than ten and not more than twenty persons each, that the Jews celebrated their passover. The Lord answered the question asked him, in a manner that seems to imply desire on his part to keep his purposed movements from the immediate knowledge even of his disciples. Perhaps he sought to provide that no premature invasion proceeding from the treachery of Judas should violate his sacred last hours of privacy with his apostles. Peter and John were sent out to make the necessary preparations. They went, not themselves knowing exactly whither they went. They should learn, as they were going, by certain specified signs which they would meet on the way.

"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," the Lord said, as, with the coming on of evening, he sat down at the table prepared, with his disciples—that is, the twelve apostles—about him. Judas was also there. It seems incredible, but at that supreme moment for their Lord, those apostles strove with one another for the best places at table with him! They probably thought that the precedent then established might have an important influence on their subsequent relative positions in the "kingdom," when that was full come! We wonder; but we do not wonder wisely, if we only condemn, and do not consider that we ourselves, in those disciples' places, would probably have been not less inclined than they were to do as they did. We might have acted with much discreet disguise of our real motive and spirit; but no disguise would have availed with him.

Jesus taught his poor, foolish, contentious disciples, with an eloquent acted parable of humility and love. Fully knowing at the moment his own divine mission and majesty, his present investiture with universal authority, his late coming hither from God, his speedy going hence to God—with the clear consciousness of

these things in his mind, and doubtless with an effect from the consciousness illuminating his person and mien, that earthly-departing Jehovah rose from supper, and, amid the awe-struck silent amazement of all, laid off his outer garments and took a towel and girded himself. Their Lord was now indeed among those disciples "as he that serveth!" He poured water into the basin—the imagination hears the gentle splash of the water poured out, breaking a stillness like the stillness of a sepulcher! He began to wash the disciples' feet. Such service was one that belonged to the meanest menial of a house. When Peter's turn, which may indeed have come first, was reached, that impulsive and impressionable spirit could not brook to keep silence. "Thou shalt never wash my feet," he exclaimed. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," the Lord replied. And so the round was completed, no omission of any, not even of Judas, from the lowly ministrations. "Know ye what I have done to you?" the Lord inquired, when, with his garments resumed, he sat down again; "Ye call me, Master, and, Lord; and ye say well, for so I am. . . . I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you." He continued this strain of affectionate inculcation, intermingling admonition apparently intended for the special heed of Judas. There was no sign of relenting or repenting in that obdurate breast. But the tender heart of the Lord still beat itself against it in resisted appeal. The appeal resisted bruised the heart that made it, though on the heart that resisted, it wrought no impression. We are expressly told that Jesus "was troubled in spirit and testified." This language imports a peculiarly wounded and suffering mind. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me," were the words he spoke. The disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spoke. There was then still a chance for Judas. He was not yet exposed as a traitor. As far as the company there present were concerned, the secret remained between himself and his Lord. If only he had felt the appeal thus made and recoiled from his crime! Even then, even then! But no. No wavering appears of that foul and fell resolve. Jesus adds one further word of warning. Will Judas, *can* Judas, still resist? Woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had not been born." It was a boding knell sounded as if from the undisclosed recesses of the world to come. It must make the traitor blench. He did not so much as hear it! He had deafened his soul! While he had ears to hear, he did not hear; and his power of hearing was now gone. Judas had the horrible coolness to ask, "Is it I, Rabbi?"

There was no further hope. And Jesus answered, "Thou hast said." This was perhaps in a low tone, and not heard by the rest of the company. But to them, too, Jesus gave a sign by which they also understood who the traitor was.

Up to this moment, it was probably still in Judas' mind not to betray his Master until after the feast. But the Lord was to suffer as the Passover, and it should be at the time of the Passover. He said in an undertone to Judas: "That thou doest, do quickly." This was after Satan had entered into Judas, not by force, but as Judas' own invited guest. The Lord's words were an urgency, not to do, but not to delay. Judas' crime was already irreversibly committed in Judas' soul. It remained only to reveal his crime in act. And that revelation must be immediate. So the Lord willed it, and so it was. Judas went out straightway; and it was night. A symbolic night!

There is hopeless disagreement among Biblical students as to whether or not Judas was present when our Lord, on the night on which he was betrayed, instituted the observance of the Supper in memorial of himself. This, on the occasion of its institution, was in a manner grafted upon the Passover meal. "This is my body which is given for you," the Lord said, when he broke the loaf. "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many," the Lord said, when he gave the cup containing "fruit of the vine" to his disciples. The memorial of himself was to be forever a memorial of a suffering Savior, a Savior suffering vicariously. When they had sung a hymn—the one hundred eighteenth psalm was the customary closing hymn for Passover occasions—they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Either while on his way to this retreat of his, or else while lingering still, seated perhaps at first, and afterward standing, together with his disciples, in that chosen upper room, Jesus uttered discourse, reported only by John, which, from its peculiarly intimate quality, has been not inaptly called the "holy of holies" of Scripture. This discourse is found in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of John's Gospel. At the end of the fourteenth chapter, occur the words, "Arise, let us go hence," which may mark a point at which the position of all was changed from sitting to standing. The thought, it may be, was to go out then at once; his last words welled up so in the overflowing fountain of that unfathomable affectionate heart, that he delayed starting, in order to utter them more at leisure, in the quiet and seclusion where he was. This discourse, with the prayer forming as it were a part of it, cannot be here reproduced. It has an ineffable quality of purity and depth in which the intellectual and spiritual elements so blend that they seem to be the same, the one interchangeably becoming the other. There is nothing else like it in literature. The utterances of Socrates about to die, as reported by Plato, come nearest resembling it. But they approach resemblance only as the highest merely human can approach the incarnate divine.

When the farewell discourse of the Lord died away in the cadences of that heavenly prayer, the hour could not have been far from midnight. According to our manner of dividing time, it was already perhaps Friday when the little band reached the place called Gethsemane, on the western slope of Olivet. The story of that Friday belongs in a chapter by itself.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GETHSEMANE.

FRIDAY began to the Lord with an hour of darkness and agony. "Sit ye here," he said to his disciples, on entering the wooded seclusion ("garden," so-called) of Gethsemane, "while I go yonder and pray." He retired a little way, taking with him Peter, James, and John. The human heart in him desired the conscious touch and support of human sympathy. He told the chosen three, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." This is a very different tone from the serene courage of Socrates' cheerful welcome to death. There is but one explanation of the difference that can save the credit of Jesus as a man to be compared with Socrates for fortitude of spirit. That explanation, however, is simple,

and it is sufficient. Socrates had only the burden of his own personal fate to bear, Jesus bore the weight of the sins of the world. Jesus must have sustaining help that no human sympathy could give him. From even those three preferred of his disciples, he withdrew while he should pray alone. He fell on his face—no posture other than that would suit the utter prostration of his spirit. We know the prayer that he prayed. It was prayer for deliverance from what was before him to bear: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was an unspeakable agony of recoil. It almost equaled—it did not quite equal—the counter agony of submission. The

throe and wrestle of that agony would have drained his strength; it *did* drain his strength; but his strength was replenished by an angel from heaven. And now the pressure of his agony forced from him a sweat that became as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Thrice he interrupted his prayer by return to his disciples, where he had asked them to stay and watch with him. Each time he found them sleeping — witness less of their unfaithfulness to their Master than of the strain to which they had themselves been subjected through that week of trial and this night of vigil. With gentle rally to their spirits, the Lord hid, without wholly hiding, his own disappointment in missing the human sympathy he longed for; and at length he said, "Arise, let us be going: behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

At the head of a band of men with lanterns and torches and weapons, Judas was coming to find his Master. He well knew the Lord's habit of resorting to this place. The time was that of full moon, but the night may have been clouded and dark. Or there may have been, with the Lord's enemies, a suspicion that, to escape apprehension, he would secrete himself in some one of the caves with which the region abounded. Hence the lanterns and torches. The preconcerted sign was a kiss from Judas to Jesus, to indicate which one of all to arrest. The traitor had exhorted his employers to make sure of their prisoner. Jesus went forth calmly to meet his captors. "Whom seek ye?" said he. "Jesus of Nazareth," they said. "I am he," the Lord replied. Whether they did not quite trust Judas' kiss, or whether, in the uncertain light, they had not seen it, or whether there was something in the demeanor of Jesus that dazed them and bewildered their wits, those soldiers and officers were apparently not yet assured of their man. But on the Lord's announcement of himself, they, instead of advancing at once to seize him, went backward and fell on the ground. Judas seems to have been among those that fell. Again Jesus asked them, "Whom seek ye?" They had doubtless recovered themselves. They said again, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said, "I told you that I am he." The loyal disciples were at first minded to resist. One of them in fact — from John we know that it was Peter — drew his sword, and, making a thrust with it, severed the right ear from a servant of the high priest. Malchus, John

tells us, the name of this servant was. Peter's demonstration apparently was made at the moment of the first actual laying of hostile hands on the Lord. Jesus gently reproved the act, saying to Peter, "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Then, in the words, "Suffer ye thus far," meekly asking or majestically claiming leave from his captors to perform this healing service before submitting to be bound, he touched the severed ear and made it whole. "Thinkest thou," the Lord added, to his wrongly zealous disciple, "that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" The Lord's reverence, so absolute, for the Scriptures — does it not sometimes seem almost less that of one who merely believed them as the word of another, than that of one who acknowledged them as his own word? His behavior here is as if he felt not only his filial obedience but also his personal veracity to be pledged to their fulfillment. At the supreme moment, the crisis, of his agony in obedience as Son, he remembered what was foretold and promised concerning him in Scripture. That to him was the end of all human doubt, of all human hesitation. The "hour" was come, and Jesus would no longer postpone the inevitable end.

Their Lord, then, was going to submit to this arrest! The disciples conceived a sudden panic. They all forsook him and fled. All! Not even that valiant drawer of the sword remained. They had, indeed, received a kind of dismissal from the Lord himself; for he said to his captors, "Let these go their way." We cannot wonder at the disciples' behavior.

To the chief priests and elders in that midnight crowd, Jesus said: "Are ye come out, as against a robber, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the Temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me." This reminded his enemies how helpless they found themselves against him as long as it was the Father's will that he should go in and out before them unharmed. "But this is your hour," the Lord said to them, "and the power of darkness." The kingdom of Satan was permitted now to do its worst against him who had come to destroy it. It failed in nothing that in these last hours it attempted against Christ, *except* to shake the steadfastness of his filial obedience to his Father.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"MORE MARRED THAN ANY MAN."

THE band seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest; and then from Annas to the high priest Caiaphas himself—this, however, not apparently until after an informal preliminary examination of the prisoner. ("Apparently," we feel obliged to say; for comparison of the four Gospel accounts brings it into some doubt whether what John relates as if it occurred before Annas, was really meant by him to be so understood. Some students hold that it occurred before Caiaphas; and that we have no report of what passed before Annas.) Peter had rallied sufficiently to follow his Master at a distance; and with him came also another disciple, presumably John, to the high priest's house to see the end. The high priest—whether Annas or Caiaphas uncertain, both of the two men seeming to have borne that title—asked Jesus of his disciples and of his teaching. Jesus answered in effect: "Thou needst not ask *me*. I never taught secretly. Ask those who have heard me teach." This reply was construed as disrespectful. One of the officers commended his own zeal on behalf of authority by striking Jesus, at the same time saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" Jesus remonstrates: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"

Peter, by coming to the high priest's house, had prepared for himself a dreadful temptation. He sat among the officers warming himself, as they were warming themselves, by a charcoal fire which they had lighted in the court; for the weather was cold. There he was three times charged with being a disciple of Jesus; and there three times did Peter, though hero enough to take the risk of thus exposing himself, prove also coward and liar enough to say and swear that he was not Jesus' disciple, that he did not even know the man! While he was uttering the last dreadful imprecation and perjury, a shrill clear sound smote inward from without upon the fallen apostle's ear. It was the crowing of a cock that marked the coming on of dawn. Peter was cut to the heart with that sound. He remembered how, when, but a few hours before, he was confidently vaunting his own eternal fidelity to his Master, that Master had told him, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Besides, the Lord had now turned and looked on Peter. Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Meantime, the rulers had already unanimously condemned the Lord to death. With

this foregone murderous purpose in their mind, they had sought false witness against him; but they had not succeeded in finding any plausible enough to make even a specious case for justification of the capital sentence they were predetermined to pronounce upon him. The Lord himself supplied the witness that was wanting. The high priest formally asked him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus no longer avoided the direct answer. His "hour" was come, and he said: "I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." This was what they sought. The high priest, in a paroxysm of hypocritical horror, rent his clothes and said to his fellow assessors: "Ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?" They, of course, thought as he thought; and they passed their sentence. The wicked excess of their passion was then displayed. Some spat on Jesus, covered his face, and, giving him blows, said, "Prophecy; who is he that struck thee?" They treated him with every oriental device of truculence and scorn.

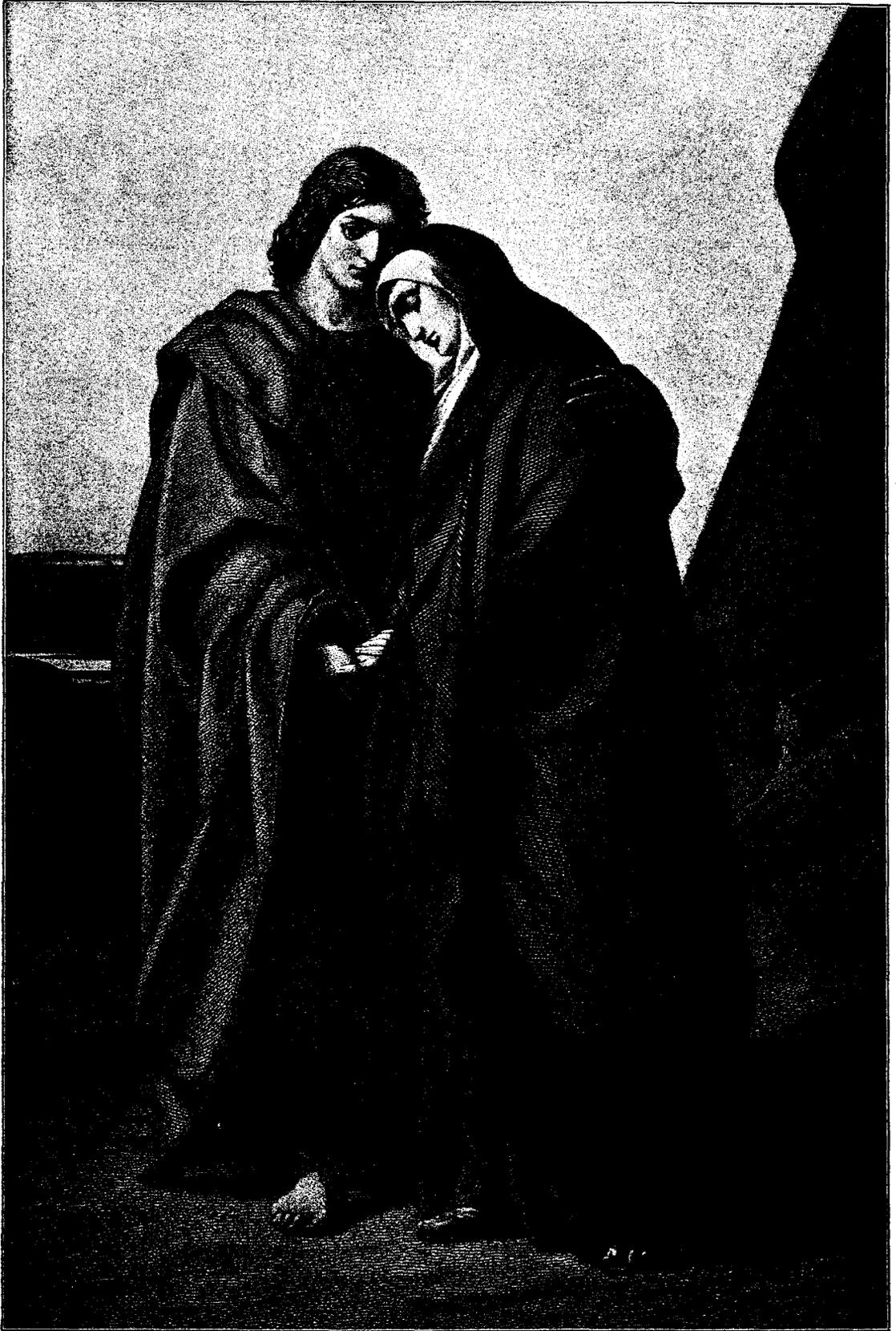
With the dawning of the day, the council (that is, the Sanhedrim) met in full frequency, and considered what to do, or rather how to do what they had already resolved upon doing. This second meeting, by daylight, was necessary in order to legalize their proceedings. The pretended trial proper now began. They had Jesus brought before them, and they gave him a second opportunity, which he embraced, "witnessing a good confession," to declare himself in express terms in his true character. An unexpected incident, with a ghastly sequel, thrust itself into the course of the proceedings. Judas came to the chief priests and elders with his thirty pieces of silver. These burned his hand now. He could not hold them. The traitor told his employers, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they freezingly replied; "see thou to it." No comfort from that quarter—if peradventure Judas had hoped that his confession might undo what his treachery had done. He flung his burning thirty pieces of silver into the sanctuary of the Temple and went away. But he carried with him a burning memory in his heart. There was no riddance possible of that. But was there none? Might he not have gone to the despised and rejected Jesus and found forgiveness? Satan in him had got his purpose served by him. That hard master would now torment his human tool

with remorse; but he would not suffer him to find healing in true repentance. The maddened man was driven to suicide. It was a hideous suicide. Judas hanged himself; but that was not all. He fell from where he hung, and, cut perhaps as he fell with a point of jagged rock, burst asunder in the midst, his bowels gushing from the gaping wound. If one could hope that Judas' punishment ended *then!*

The decision of the council was to get Pilate, the Roman governor, to do their bloody work for them. They led Jesus to him. At first they were disposed to carry matters before Pilate with a high hand. To his question, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" they answered loftily. "If this man were not a malefactor, we should not have delivered him up unto thee." Pilate was a weak man, but this style of browbeating was too open; it did not succeed. The governor told the Jews, with a sarcasm which they in their helpless national dependence must have felt keenly, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." This the Jews knew they could not do, at least not with that result to the prisoner which they desired—it being unlawful for them to inflict a capital penalty without express leave from Rome. So they condescended to frame an accusation. It was an accusation craftily enough contrived. The prisoner, they said, had set himself up for king. Pilate asked Jesus, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus confessed that he was. There was probably something in the manner of the confession, something in the manner of the man himself, that put Pilate at a loss. Jesus did not appear like a vulgar, ambitious, seditious pretender to kingly right. Indeed, he had already explained to Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world. "Thou art a king, then?" asked Pilate, sincerely mystified. Jesus assented, but said that he was come into the world to bear witness to the truth. "Truth!" "The Truth!" The Roman world was a world of doubt, of skepticism. Pilate but represented it fairly, when he asked, incredulously, "What is truth?" The Jews' case began to look doubtful. The chief priests strengthened it with added accusations, to which Jesus made no reply. Pilate was further staggered at this silence of the prisoner. He asked, "Answerest thou nothing?" Even to Pilate, asking this, Jesus made not a syllable of reply. The governor was hopelessly nonplussed. Still, the result was that he told the Jews, "I find no crime in him." But the Jews did. They insisted. In the course of their insistence, it came out that Jesus was a Galilean. They suggested an expedient. Pilate would send the prisoner away to Herod, ruler of Galilee, who, happily, was at that moment in the city. Herod was

pleased with his opportunity to see Jesus. Such an opportunity he had long wished. He was curious to witness some wonder from this wonder-worker's hand. The result was a complete disappointment to his hopes; it was more; it was a deep wound to his pride. Not even one word could the monarch, with all his questions, elicit from the prisoner. To the Jews also, they meanwhile pressing their charges against him, Jesus was equally dumb. Herod took his revenge, a revenge worthy of his royal house, by heaping ignominies on this silent prisoner. He with his soldiers arrayed him in showy apparel and sent him back to Pilate. The two rulers, before at strife, became friends that day.

Pilate had the accused man on his hands again. He summoned the Jews and told them that Herod agreed with him in finding Jesus innocent. He would therefore—"therefore"!—chastise the prisoner and release him. But the Jews were thirsty for more blood than the lash would cause to flow. The multitude, in their inconsequent way, began to clamor for a certain exercise of clemency on Pilate's part which they had come to expect as their right. It was usual, as an annual act of governmental grace, to discharge on popular demand some prisoner at the feast of the passover. Pilate bethought himself of an alternative. "Whom will ye that I release unto you," he said, "Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ?" (There is some reason for supposing that this Barabbas also bore the name of "Jesus." The question would then be, "Which Jesus?") Barabbas was one of a number of men then in prison accused of sedition and murder. Pilate hoped for relief to come from this alternative. He was becoming more and more deeply involved. His wife had contributed to the distracted governor's perplexity by sending word to her husband on the judgment-seat of an ill dream she had had. She warned him to do nothing against "that righteous man." "Which will ye have?" Pilate asked. The multitude, set on by the rulers, scandalized Pilate by crying out, "Barabbas!" "And Jesus the Christ—what shall I do with him?" asked the helpless governor. The answer was prompt, and loud, and many-voiced, "Crucify him!" *That* dreadful doom! Pilate was horrified. "Why, what evil hath he done?" But the multitude were wild. They only cried out the more, "Let him be crucified?" Pilate was horror-struck before; he was panic-struck now. The multitude cowed him and he yielded. He performed a theatric ceremony to clear himself. He took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see ye to it." Such blood clings like a mor-



SAINT JOHN AND MARY.

dant to the hand that sheds it. An ocean of water would not wash it away. The people were beside themselves. They were judicially mad. They answered: "His blood be on us, and on our children." It was a dreadful imprecation upon themselves. God the Avenger required that blood a hundred thousand fold at their hands. On the very spot where they cried those words, they and their children drenched the street to a river with their own blood.

Pilate discharged Barabbas, and Jesus he first scourged and then delivered to be crucified. An orgy now of brutal insolence and cruelty. They stripped Jesus of his raiment and put on him a robe of scarlet (or of purple). They plaited a crown of thorns and pressed it on his brow. Into his hand they thrust a reed for scepter, and mockingly knelt before him, crying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat upon him. Snatching his reed-scepter from his hand, they smote him with it on his head. This riot and revel of wanton wickedness passed within the court of the palace. Pilate now brought the Meek Sufferer out and showed him to the multitude. The purple robe was on him and the crown of thorns. The sacred violated flesh trembled and ran blood beneath the folds of that mock-imperial vestment. "Behold, the man!" the governor said. Perhaps Pilate thought that even yet the piteous sight would move the mob to compassion. And perhaps it did. But the "chief priests and officers" were implacable. They screamed now—apparently they alone—"Crucify him! Crucify him!" They were in haste to forestall any relenting on the part of the people. Pilate recoiled from the crime proposed. Again he resorted to his sarcasm, "Take him yourselves, and crucify him." The Jews' case

looked bad. In their desperation, they let slip what their real ground of offense in Jesus was. "He made himself the Son of God," they said. That escape from their lips worked against them. The governor was alarmed by it. He went into his palace, taking Jesus with him, and asked, "Whence art thou?" He perhaps had a qualm of superstitious fear. He might be dealing with a veiled divinity. But Jesus made no reply. Pilate was vexed as well as mystified. He tried browbeating his prisoner. "Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee?" he asked. "Thou wouldst have no power against me," said Jesus, "except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath greater sin." Pilate was increasingly anxious to release this mysterious prisoner. The Jews, driven to extremity, urged their last plea. "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend." It was a virtual threat to accuse Pilate before the emperor Tiberius; a dangerous man he to offend, with his morbid jealousy of prerogative. Pilate hesitated no longer, though still paltering in a few weak and peevish attempts to save his dignity in yielding. He brought Jesus out once more and said, "Behold, your King!" For answer, they yelled like one many-mouthed wild beast of prey thirsty for blood, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" "Crucify your King?" mocked Pilate. Those proud abjects, the chief priests, ate the very dust of servility in order to gratify their lust of innocent blood. "We have no king but Cæsar," they cried. It was a singular fulfillment of prophetic words: "They gape upon me with their mouth as a ravening and a roaring lion." The soldiers led Jesus away to be crucified.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CROSS.

BETWEEN sentence and execution no time intervened. It was murder rather than execution. They loaded upon Jesus the cross on which he was to suffer, and compelled him to bear it to the place chosen by them for the perpetration of their crime. This was without the city gate. The name of it was Golgotha "the Place of a Skull." On the way thither, the Savior perhaps fainted under his burden. Or, it may be that a horrible brutality of mirthful whim seized the crowd, prompting them to a wanton demonstration without cause. However it was, the cross was put upon another than Jesus to bear. A man of Cyrene coming from the country—his name is saved to perpetual memory, it was Simon—was

pressed into the service. This Simon is noted by Mark as father of Alexander and Rufus, who were no doubt in Mark's time well-known disciples. Simon was perhaps himself a disciple. He may have testified his sympathy for his suffering Lord, and thus incurred the penalty (which in that case he would welcome) of bearing for Jesus a burden too great for Jesus' overtaken strength.

It was a mixed procession that followed Jesus to Golgotha. In it were many women, who bewailed and lamented him. The Lord turned to these and said, with heart-breaking tenderness in which no self-pity mingled: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children!" The

image of that future for Jerusalem haunted his prophetic mind like a specter of blood. With Jesus were led two others, malefactors, to crucifixion. Jesus was fully human, he was exquisitely human. The shame of his death was much to him. He shrank from it with indescribable recoil. Yet his victory over it was complete. It was present as an element of bitterness in his cup; it had to be reckoned; yet he "despised" it. He did not escape it; it was there; but he despised it. The pain, too, was horrible. It was a lingering death, the death of the cross. The victim survived in unrelieved suffering sometimes for days. On either side of Jesus, fixed each to his wood, hung the two malefactors that were to die in company with him this long death of anguish. The slow process began.

It was probably as the work of fastening the Savior to his cross went on, that he uttered those words of superhuman grace, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If the prisoner had been treated, as in so-called Christian countries it is usual for condemned prisoners to be treated, with a certain measure of consideration and kindness; if the executioners had shown a compassionate reluctance to proceed with their office—the forgiving spirit exhibited by Jesus would have been less remarkable. But it was against every imaginable and unimaginable expedient of malignant exasperation already practised upon him; in prospect, too, of a prolonged continuance of such torment added to the unavoidable agonies of death by crucifixion—it was in the face of all this, that Jesus kept the unalterable sweetness of his good will toward his murderers, and prayed that prayer for them. A potion mixed of wine and gall was given the sufferer to drink, perhaps to relieve his sense of pain. Jesus tasted but would not drink it. By prescription, the garments of the crucified belonged to the four soldiers detailed to perform the executioners' task. There, then, the soldiers that crucified Jesus sat, and watching meanwhile the dreadful tragedy divided up the prize among themselves. The coat, or tunic, they cast lots for, whose it should be; it was a seamless garment, and, "Let us not rend it," they said. John notes in this a fulfillment of Scripture.

The spectacle of those three sufferers on their crosses drew curious beholders. These were mostly hard-hearted, at least as toward Jesus. They regarded the fate that had now befallen him as a sufficient refutation of the claims that he had made for himself. They railed at him accordingly. Their taunts were directed with what they felt to be deadly aim. "Ha!" they derisively cried, "Thou that destroyest the Temple and buildest it in three days,

save thyself and come down from the cross." The triumphant chief priests and elders took their fill of sweet revenge. "He saved others," they exclaimed; "himself he cannot save. . . . Let him now come down from the cross and we will believe on him." Passers-by joined in the ribald mockery. Nay, the companions of his doom, those robbers on either side of him, taunted their fellow-sufferer, saying, "Art not thou the Christ? Save thyself and us." But if both malefactors joined in this, one of them relented, and even reproached his fellow in crime and in punishment for continuing to insult the crucified Lord. More—his repentance and his faith rose to the height of a prayer to the Lord, uttered at the very moment of that Lord's nethermost humiliation and shame: "Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." Jesus' response went beyond the penitent's prayer: "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

There were faithful women standing by the cross of Jesus. Of these, one was Mary his mother. She realized now the meaning of those words of aged Simeon in the Temple: "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul." That lacerated mother-heart! But it should be comforted with a last testimony of love from her Son. A testimony that would draw healing tears in fresh flood from her eyes! Jesus saw his mother, and, standing by her, that disciple whom he loved. He spoke to her. The words were few, and they were mere words, not a sentence; but they uttered all a mighty heart. "Woman," said he, "behold, thy son!" The hand might have pointed, had it not been nailed to the wood, toward John, the beloved disciple, who was meant. To that disciple Jesus said, "Behold, thy mother!" The commendation was understood and responded to. From that time, John took Mary to his own home.

The Crucifixion began, it seems likely, at about nine o'clock in the morning. At full noon a darkness overspread the land which lasted three hours. It was as if the earth, in mourning, put on sackcloth of black; it was as if the sun in heaven refused longer to behold that wickedness of man. At about three o'clock in the afternoon, a strange cry, the most lamentable ever heard on earth, proceeded from the lips of Jesus. "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" were the words. The meaning was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The words are the words of a psalm, the twenty-second. As uttered by the Lord, they mark an experience on his part that we shall perhaps never, either here or hereafter, fully understand. That experience, it may well be supposed, was the element in the cup of the Lord's sufferings which he most of all dreaded. There

is no record of any reassuring answer descending now, as twice before such answer had descended, from heaven. That sinless soul, sin-bearing, was apparently suffered to endure this sense of being forsaken by his God, without communication from above to relieve to him the unimaginable horror of it. That cup could not pass from him except he drank it. Eternity was crowded into a moment of time. But the cup passed — when he had drunk it. "I thirst!" he cried. A sponge dipped in vinegar was raised on a reed to his lips. He did not refuse it. He cried, not feebly as if his strength were exhausted, but with a loud voice, and now a very different cry. "It is finished,"

he said; and, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." With these words, so uttered, the Lord bowed his head and gave up his spirit. No man took it from him, but he gave it up of himself.

And the veil of the Temple (a curtain which hid the holy of holies from the eyes, much more, barred it from the feet, of men) was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Access into the holiest of all was thenceforward by the blood of him forever open to every child of Adam that would come.

Jesus had now died, in manner as he often foretold that he should. Would he rise again, in manner as he often foretold?

William Cleaver Wilkinson.



CHRIST FORETELLING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

BOOK XIII.

FROM THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS TO THE ASCENT TO THE THRONE.

BY REV. PROF. SAMUEL HART, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.

THE Lord's death had taken place some little time before the hour of sunset.

It was the custom of the Romans, except in the country of the Jews, to leave those who were crucified to die of the exhaustion and agony, often greatly prolonged, of this terrible method of punishment; and then, after death had ensued, the bodies were left upon the crosses until they dropped off or were devoured by ravenous birds. But the Jewish law was explicit, that the body of no person who was "hanged on a tree" should be allowed to remain there until the setting of the sun.¹ As the phrase was originally used, it did not refer to the crucifying of a living body, for this method of execution was unknown at that time; but it had reference to the custom of exposing on a gibbet the bodies of those who had been executed in some other way. But when the Roman power made itself felt over the Jews, and crucifixion was introduced as a method of inflicting capital punishment upon slaves and others who had not the privilege of Roman citizenship, this provision of the ancient law was held to apply to the crucified. And the Romans, who had the wisdom to respect local prejudices and to allow the continuance of local customs among the nations whom they conquered, and who seem to have been particularly anxious not to offend unnecessarily the scruples of the Jews, had granted permission that in Palestine those who were crucified should be killed, and their bodies removed from the crosses, before the evening. On the day when the Lord suffered, the Jews would have felt it especially necessary that advantage should be taken of this permission to obey their law. That was the very day of the Passover; and the following day would be the sabbath, and not only that, but the sabbath in the Passover week, an especially "high day," which must on no account be profaned. In good season,

then, the Jewish officials went to the Roman governor, and asked him that the three persons crucified that day by his order might be killed and their bodies taken away before the land should be defiled by them. Pilate at once sent soldiers with instructions to hasten the death of those who were hanging upon the crosses. They found the two robbers, as they expected, alive; and with sharp blows of clubs they broke the bones of their legs. This made it impossible for them any longer to lift their bodies, to relax the tension of the muscles, or to give the blood an impulse through the heart; the impure blood could not be forced to the lungs and purified there; and death soon ensued. But when the soldiers came to Jesus, they saw that he had died after but a few hours' suffering on the cross; there was no need that the bones of that worn body, which had so soon yielded to death, should be broken. But one of the soldiers stretched out his spear, lifting it but little (for the feet of the crucified were not raised far above the ground), and pierced the Lord's side. Saint John was standing by, and he saw blood and water flowing from the wound; and when he wrote his Gospel, he declared with great earnestness the truth of the record that he made in regard to the fact.

What were the blood and the water that thus flowed from the Savior's side when it was pierced, and why the beloved disciple felt it necessary to lay such stress on the fact, we cannot say. It may well be that it was an indication that his death, though verily and indeed death and a separation of the vital union of soul and body, was yet unlike all other instances of death, in that his flesh saw no corruption. The victory was assured, when the depth of humiliation was reached by death; and, if we may so speak, the holy body was already preparing for its resurrection while the soul was in the abode of departed spirits. Already the bodies of sleeping saints, Saint Matthew tells us, had arisen, though

¹Deuteronomy xxi, 22, 23.

they might not come out of their graves till after his resurrection. The world of the living and the world of the dead had been shaken when the Savior of all bowed his head and gave up the ghost; and in some way it was a proof of the wondrousness of this death that blood and water flowed from the wounded side. And yet, and perhaps even primarily, this was a proof that death had actually taken place, that the Lord did not merely swoon from exhaustion, and that it was not because the soldiers' clubs spared his limbs that he rose from his grave and was seen of men so soon. "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews"—for so the mocking title still read, fastened above his head; a mocking title, but true in its every word—had died. Those who came to make sure that Pilate's sentence was carried out had no doubt of it; and there was not the slightest room for doubt after the soldier had made a wound in his side so large that Saint Thomas afterward spoke of putting his hand into it, as he spoke of putting his finger into the print of the nails that had fastened the hands to the cross. The report of the soldiers, as we shall see, was soon made; doubtless due record was entered, and Pontius Pilate was presently thinking of the credit that he would gain at Rome when the official dispatch, in which he was to tell how he had administered justice that day and had executed a pretended King of the Jews, should reach Tiberius.

We may assume that the bodies of the two robbers were given a hasty interment in some place for the burial of strangers, such as that which was soon afterward bought with the money paid for the innocent blood that had just been shed. But the humiliation of Christ, the Son of God, was not to last beyond his death. Already courage returned—or, perhaps, we had better say, was strengthened—in the case of some of his disciples and friends. Saint John had come back to the cross after he had led away the mother of the Lord to his own home in the city. The Lord's acquaintances had stood afar off, looking on in wonder and sorrow, chief among them three of the faithful women who had ministered to him in Galilee and come with him to Jerusalem. And, if they were not among these, word soon came to two men whose names will ever be held in honor for that which they did for Christ when they could have had no hope of reward or even of recognition from him. One of them was Joseph of the city of Arimathea, hitherto a secret disciple of the Lord's, but now (most strange and yet most natural) emboldened by his seeming defeat and his death; a good and just man, a rich and honored member of that Jewish council which had declared the Lord

Jesus worthy of death because he had asserted that he was the Son of God, but a member who had not given his consent to the action that they had taken and the decision that they had reached. He "took courage," Saint Matthew says, and went into the palace of the Roman governor, though the act defiled him for keeping further the great feast of his people, and presented a petition that the body of Jesus of Nazareth, about to be taken from a cross, might be given to him. It happened that the report of the soldiers had not yet been brought to Pilate, and he thought it hardly probable that anyone had died so soon after being led out to crucifixion. When, however, he was assured that death had taken place, he gave the body to the honorable man who had asked for it. With Joseph went also one of the Pharisees, Nicodemus, of whom we do not know that he had been even secretly a disciple in the full sense of the word, but who had come to our Lord by night on the occasion of his first visit to Jerusalem in the time of his ministry, who had professed then his belief that Christ was a teacher sent from God, and who had had with him a memorable conversation dealing with great mysteries. And now he also came as a professed disciple of him who had died a malefactor's death, uniting with the rich Arimathean in the determination that by the honor of the burial something, at least, should be taken away from the ignominy of the crucifixion. Joseph bought fine linen cloth (for the sabbath had not yet begun), and Nicodemus brought about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes. The body must be hastily prepared for burial before the fast-declining sun had set; it was wrapped in the linen with the spices, according to Jewish custom, the head being specially bound with a napkin, as in the case of Lazarus. It was not necessary to go far to find a tomb; the place of crucifixion was of necessity outside of the walls, and close by was a garden, or small park, of which Joseph owned at least a portion. There, in a natural cave, as it would seem, he had cut out a place for burial; but as yet no dead body had been laid in it. In this new tomb, therefore, "wherein never man yet had been laid," in one of the recesses cut in the walls of the inner cave, was laid the sacred Body of the Lord, tightly wrapped in the grave-clothes which held the myrrh and aloes that had been so abundantly provided. Thus giving all possible honor to the dead Christ, Joseph caused a great stone to be moved up to the door of the cave, so that no one could easily enter, and went away. Mary Magdalen and the other Mary waited till all was done; they then went to their homes, and made preparation of spices and ointment, that they might more carefully

prepare the body for its final rest in the tomb. And so the shadows fell upon the earth, and the great sabbath day began.

It is beyond the scope of this article to enter into the controversy as to the place of the burial. We know that it must have been without the city wall; but we are not absolutely certain

whether the wall, in our Lord's time, ran within or without the site now occupied by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is the opinion of the writer that the evidence available points to the acceptance of the ordinary tradition, and to the belief that this church does mark the place where the Lord's body was laid.

CHAPTER II.

THE GREAT SABBATH.

IT was truly the great sabbath, as it was in strictness of speech the last sabbath of the world's history: the Lord's day of rest, after the conflict of life and of death, after the struggle with evil and with temptation; yet even for him, as shall be presently noted, not a day of inactivity or of mere expectation. It was a strange day of rest to the disciples, all more or less dazed at that which they had witnessed during the past few hours; and if faith remained in but a few, sorrow, we may well believe, began to quicken love in many. We may think of how that holy day—so full of grief, and yet bringing the blessing of a restful quiet—was spent by the Blessed Mother and Saint John, by the penitent Peter, by the devoted women, by the body of the apostles who probably kept their lodging for the Passover-time in the upper room from which they had gone with the Lord to the place of his agony, and by the other disciples. Perhaps some of them united with the devout Jews who were not disciples in the sacred observances that belonged to the Passover Sabbath, partly with wonder, partly with fear or hope.

But the chief priests and the Pharisees, the bitter enemies who seemed to have gained a final victory over him who called himself the Christ and the Son of God, could not rest on that holy day. They were not able to repress the fear that all that they had succeeded in doing might yet be in vain. They had heard rumors that he whom they had crucified had declared that he should die and on the third day should rise from death; or, as what they said to Pilate seems rather to imply, they had heard some declaration of his which they thus understood. Now, we know of no words of Christ, spoken in the hearing of the rulers and Pharisees, in which he expressly said that he should rise from the dead on the third day; it is hardly possible that they came to understand the words which he spoke to them at the first passover of his ministry, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"; and Saint John is careful to assure us that they did not then understand him. But at any rate, with

that fear which belongs to all who are struggling against the truth and are determined not to be convinced, they resolved to make it impossible that any report should be spread abroad to the effect that there had been an actual resurrection. No disciple could be so fanatical as to affirm that one had been raised from the dead, so long as the body could be seen under the power of death in Joseph's sepulcher close to the city. But some of them might steal the body before the third day came, and, showing an empty tomb, might affirm that their Lord had fulfilled his word and had risen. It would be easy, could they but obtain the consent of the procurator, to guard the place of burial until the third day was past, and thus to give absolutely indisputable evidence that he who died on the cross was still dead. Accordingly they went to Pilate, and told him of their apprehensions, and hinted to him that the rumor of a resurrection might lead to claims, and to disturbance in maintaining them, which would be more serious than those on which so severe a sentence had just been decreed and executed. Pilate was in no mood to argue with them or to deny them anything that they should ask. He told them that they had a guard—evidently the detachment of Roman soldiers detailed to maintain order about the Temple—and they might use them, if they wished, to watch the sepulcher. They went accordingly, put a seal upon the stone that closed the door of the tomb, so that any disturbance of it could be known, and stationed the soldiers, accustomed to the rigorous discipline of the Roman army, to watch in turn through the day and the night. They need not be long on duty; it would prove nothing that the tomb should be found empty after the third day, if it were kept undisturbed until that day was over. Very soon he who had called himself Christ would be proved to be a deceiver, and his disciples would be shown to have followed vain hopes. An end would be put to the delusions which had had so much power and which threatened to do still more harm: Jesus of Nazareth was dead, and it would be in vain for any to assert that he was alive.

The sun went down at the end of the great sabbath, leaving the followers of Christ with little faith in him, and his enemies with increased hope that he had at last been overcome. Yet on the one hand stood in reality the great purposes of God and the prophetic word of his

Incarnate Son, while on the other hand were but the feeble efforts of man to baffle God's designs and prevent the accomplishment of his word. The crucified Lord was but waiting that he might end his brief sojourn in the world of the dead, and then triumph over death forever.

CHAPTER III.

THE LORD AMONG THE DEAD.

BUT, to bring before our minds all the events of the great sabbath, we must think not only of the new tomb in the garden near the gates of Jerusalem, where the body of the Lord lay composed to rest, but also of the world of spirits—the state of the departed, into which the soul of the Lord, separated from his body, had passed from earth. For as he really died, and passed through all the experiences that belong to the lot of mortal men, his human soul came at death into that state which, for want of a better phrase, we speak of as the place of departed spirits. Upon the cross, he promised the penitent robber that he should be with him that very day—that is, before the sun should set—in Paradise. The word had a sufficiently distinct meaning for every Jew of our Lord's time. It meant, in the Eastern sense of the word, a garden; as we use words, rather a park or large inclosed place of beauty and delight; and it recalled the garden, or paradise, of Eden, in which the first parents of mankind once dwelt; where grew all trees pleasant to the sight and good for food; where all animals roamed about finding natural enjoyment, and where man, having the gift of God's presence and God's grace, was put, to dress and to keep the place, and to find in it the opportunity of exercising and increasing all his wonderful powers. A place, or state, then, of natural happiness and of special divine favor and blessing was brought to the mind by the word paradise; such as man, after the Fall, could not expect to find on earth, but into which, by God's mercy, he might enter at death. As the Lord used the word, he testified that the Jewish idea which it represented was at least not altogether erroneous. He promised the man who, crucified with him, had asked that he might be remembered when the Lord should come into his kingdom, that he should not need to wait long; that before a few hours should pass, he would meet him in a place of blessed rest. And we may perhaps believe that the first one to die after our Savior's own death—or at least the first one to die in faith—was the penitent to whom this gracious word had been spoken, and that he

came into the world of spirits as the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

But it cannot be that the entrance into the world of spirits of him who had by death overcome death, and who was soon to proclaim his victory and to restore life to the world by rising from the dead, should fail to produce wondrous results in that world. There were multitudes there who had died in faith that he would come and would right the wrongs of mankind; some in a strong faith and mighty assurance, others with but a feeble hope; some strengthened by a repeated and ever-brightening revelation, and others only groping for the light in a darkness that seemed to be growing more and more hopeless. It cannot but be that these knew that the Redeemer had been on earth, had made atonement by death, and had come for a time into their world; it cannot but be that he made some proclamation of his victory, and, by the very fact of the assurance that he gave, made that world of waiting a brighter and happier place than it had been before.

The difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament views of the world of the dead, is not merely such as comes from different degrees of revelation of the truth; it rather bears testimony to different truths—to the fact that Christ's death and descent into "hell" (using the word in its ancient sense, as the Apostles' Creed uses it) made a real change in the condition of the souls of those had died in some faith or hope in the Redeemer. Thus much at least Saint Peter tells us,¹ even if we cannot explain the full meaning of his words, when he speaks of that which Christ did, when, being put to death in his flesh, he was quickened (or kept alive) in his spirit. In that spirit, he says—in our ordinary phraseology we should say, in his soul—"He went and preached unto the spirits in prison"; that is, he made proclamation to the souls that were in a place of custody. There is hardly room for doubt that this means that Christ declared to the souls of the dead, who were capable of receiving and welcoming so great a truth, that

¹ Peter iii, 18-20.

he had done that great work of which they had felt the need while living on earth, and to which they had not ceased to look forward after their earthly life had come to an end. There is certainly some reason why the apostle goes on to say that those of whom he specially spoke were the souls of men who had been disobedient while God's patience was waiting in the days of Noah before the flood; it may be because those to whom he was writing had little hope for these antediluvians, and that he would assure them that even in their case God's long-suffering had not waited in vain, and that not all whose earthly life was ended by the waters of the flood died impenitent and rebelling against God. But, at any rate, the words give us a glimpse of what the Lord did while he was in paradise, and help us to understand how the blessings of his redemption extended to men who had died before his coming.

Thus it comes to pass that the consideration of our Lord's sojourn in the state of the departed, his death and his being in the world of the dead, is full of instruction and of comfort. It enables us to understand somewhat of that over which there hangs so heavy a shade of ignorance and fear, and it comforts us as to the condition of those who have gone before us through that veil. It enabled men like Saint Paul to believe and to teach that to depart and to be with Christ was far better; it put upon the lips of the early Christians the acknowledgment of their belief that those of their brethren who had died in faith were "in the land of the living, whence sorrow, grief, and lamentation were driven away, and where the light of God's countenance did visit and shine perpetually"; it gave a new meaning to the words

which told of the peace and blessedness of the righteous dead; it cheers the Christian who thinks of the beloved ones that have gone before him, and who looks forward, should the Lord's return be delayed, to a rest in that holy place where once the Savior found a rest, and in the rest, it may be, an opportunity of new service to those whom he came to save.

"Oh, sweet is the slumber wherewith the King
Hath caused the weary to rest!
For, sleeping, they hear the angels sing,
They lean on the Master's breast.

"And sweet is the chamber, silent and wide,
Where lingers the holy smile
Of a wayfaring Man, who turned aside
To rest long ago, for a while:

"He had suffered a sorrow which none can tell,
He had purchased a gift unpriced;
When his work was over the moonlight fell
On the sleeping face of Christ:

"The face of a Victor, dead and crowned,
With a smile divinely fair;
The saints and martyrs sleeping around
Were stirred as he entered there:

"His very name is an ointment poured
On the moonlight pale to-night,
And the chamber is sweet to thy servants, Lord,
For the scent of thy raiment white.

"The silent chamber faceth the east,
Faceth the dawn of the day,
And the shining feet of our great High Priest
Shall break through the shadows gray.

"The golden dawn of the Day of God
Shall smite on the sealed eyes;
The trumpet's sound shall thunder around,
The dreamers shall wake and rise.

"The night is over, the sleep is slept,
They are called from the shadowy place;
The pilgrims stand in the glorious land,
And gaze on the Master's face."

CHAPTER IV.

THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION.

WHEN, following the narratives of the evangelists, we come to the record of the Resurrection and the events of the first Easter-day, we can hardly fail to notice the form in which that record is presented to us. In the first place, the story of the Resurrection, although it tells of so momentous an event—the greatest and most wonderful fact ever submitted to the evidence of men and confirmed by human testimony—is yet as simply told as is that of any fact in the Lord's life among men. From the words which tell of the death and the burial, we pass at once, and with hardly anything that tells of a transition, to those which tell of resurrection and the new life. Saint Matthew, to be sure, uses

an expression of wonder as he mentions the great earthquake; but the other evangelists make not even the least break in the narrative. It is for all of them a quiet and simple record of an event which, before they wrote, they had learned to be as necessary a part of their Master's work as were his teaching, his works of mercy, his sufferings, and his death. At the time "they knew not that he must rise again from the dead"; but they soon were taught by himself, and this lesson was confirmed by the Holy Spirit whom he sent, "that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead"; and in so wondrous an event they saw a step in the path marked out for him, an act in his great work for men. And, therefore, as

they recalled the events of the first Easter day, they wrote them without excitement, with scarce an expression of unusual emotion, save as we can see that their hearts burned within them at the thought of all that was meant by that of which they wrote. It was wonderful, indeed; but it was that which they ought to have expected, and which they soon learned to understand aright; and the simplicity and naturalness of the narratives bear witness to their truth and to the apprehension which the writers had of its great and inexhaustible meaning.

And closely connected with this is another fact, which might appear strange to one who did not look into the meaning of this part of the Gospel narrative. There is no argument to prove the truth of Christ's Resurrection; none of the sacred penmen does more than tell us of that which happened, either on the very day when Christ rose or between that and the day of the Ascension. The reason for this is doubtless that the need of such argument was, as they wrote, entirely out of their thoughts. No one needs to prove that he is alive, except by the fact that he lives; we do not require the men and women whom we meet from day to day to prove to us their existence or that they are alive in the flesh; their being, their life, is a self-evident truth, as to which we do not think of asking a question. So it was with the risen Lord. He was alive; he did the deeds and spoke the words of a living man; nay, even after he had gone from the sight of men, they knew that he still lived, because he still had and exercised the power of one who had the fullness of life; and, therefore, it was no more necessary for the evangelists to prove that Christ was living during the great forty days, than it was for them to prove that he was living when he dwelt in the quiet home at Nazareth, or when he walked up and down in Galilee and Judea. There was once need of assurance when some saw him walking on the waters; it was not, however, given by argument, but by his presence when he came near. So, too, an apostle doubted after the Resurrection, but only until he had seen the Lord; and some doubted when he came to them at the mountain in Galilee, but only until he drew near and spoke to them. The disciples knew that their Lord was living after he rose from the dead, precisely as they knew that he was living before he submitted to death.

And in this way they knew that his was a real life in all its fullness. They knew that the risen Christ had the self-same body which they had seen fastened to the cross, and which had been laid in the sepulcher. Whatever change had come over it, they could not mistake as to its identity; it was not a ghostly appearance, a

phantasm, possibly testifying to the existence of the soul, but having nothing to do with a real body. They did not think of their Lord as they thought of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, of David, and Samuel, and the prophets — dead in the flesh though living in the spirit; they were assured that he was in the full perfection of manhood, in all its parts and with all its proper powers. The penitent robber had died almost at the same time as the Lord, and he had been that very day with him in paradise; the robber was living in the disembodied state; but the Lord was living in quite another sense, even as those lived who had not yet seen death, though with a wondrous life which had gained new powers by its passage through the dark world of the dead.

It need not, therefore, excite our wonder that we have no full and elaborate account of the events of the day on which Christ rose from the dead, or that we find it difficult to arrange that which has been recorded in such a way as to form one complete narrative. None of the evangelists intended to write a full history of this kind; and here at least, however possible it may be that a later writer had before him what had been written at an earlier day, there is no appearance of any design of filling out what others had left imperfect. That which was prominent in the thoughts of each, either because it came under his own observation or was specially brought to his attention, or because it was in some particular way adapted to the purpose that guided his pen, was recorded by each: the mighty fact was stated in simple language as a great and most necessary part of the work of the Savior of the world, some at least of his manifestations of himself as the risen Lord were mentioned, and a few of the events and the sayings of the great forty days were recorded for the instruction of the ages that were to come.

And there are other reasons why the disconnected and apparently discrepant narratives of the evangelists, by the very fact that they are not methodical and complete, carry with them strong evidence of their truth far beyond any that could have come from a more formal and exhaustive history. The day of the Resurrection was to the disciples a day of anxiety and confusion. In spite of all that the Lord had said to warn them of his death and to assure them that he would rise on the third day, nearly if not quite all were utterly unprepared to enter the shadow of the cross or to look upon the glory of the opened sepulcher. Women went to the grave on the Sunday morning, but it was that they might carry spices in which to wrap more carefully the sacred body that had been hastily laid in the tomb before the sun had set on the Friday. Apostles hastened to



AXEL ENDER.

By special permission of the artist.

RESURRECTION MORNING.

the place of burial, but it was with puzzled thoughts and hearts full of anxiety. Reports were spread as to a vision of angels who had declared that the Lord was alive; then one or two could tell others that they had certainly seen him who had been crucified; some were ready before nightfall to affirm, "The Lord is risen indeed," while they refused to accept the testimony of others to the self-same fact. While some were hastening out of the city by the gate that was nearest to their home or their lodgings, others who had been to the tomb and found it empty were hastening back to enter by another gate. At times there seemed strong reason for believing, at times there appeared to be grounds for hope, and at times both faith and hope were dashed to the ground. It was, indeed, a day of strange excitement and confusion; few probably would have dared trust themselves that night to tell what they had heard and seen; it was enough that Mary of Magdala, and Saint Peter, and perhaps others could tell how they had seen and spoken with their Master, and that he had come to the place where ten of the apostles were gathered together and had given them a lofty commission.

What has been preserved for us bears the

strongest evidence that it belongs to a truthful record of that which was said and done on such a day. We catch glimpses of the hurry and the anxiety, the hope and the growing faith, that marked the day; we see some dazed, and some startled, and some encouraged, by the tidings that reached them; and, above all, we see the calm dignity, the immortal vigor, the inspiring presence of him, the Living One, who had been dead and now was alive forevermore; and we hear the first echoes of blessing and peace as spoken by the lips of the Conqueror, who had gained the victory in his great conflict with death and had shed light on life and in-corrption. Surely, when the blessed Spirit guided the minds of those who told of the Resurrection, it was that they might recall and put in writing a lifelike picture of that greatest of days—showing the reality of human souls, anxious, doubting, learning to believe, not the unreality of a fiction which can explain everything because it assumes or molds facts to suit a theory or a fancy.

Bearing these things in mind, and remembering that it is possible to ask many questions as to details which will not admit of a satisfactory answer, let us try to follow out, as best we can, the events recorded for us on the sacred page.

CHAPTER V.

THE RESURRECTION MORN.

THE sabbath had ended at sunset on the day that we call Saturday. There had been opportunity then for the faithful women to buy such spices and ointments as they thought were needed; but they must wait till dawn before they could go out of the city and visit the place of entombment. Thus the women passed an anxious night, probably not knowing that the stone that closed the entrance to the tomb had been sealed at Pilate's order and that a guard of soldier's had been stationed there, for fear, forsooth, that the body wrapped with the hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes should be stolen and secreted, and that a false story of a resurrection from the dead should be spread abroad. At the home of Saint John in the city was the Virgin Mother, whom that disciple, taking her Son's place, had led away from the cross; and one is more than half disposed to believe that in that house, as the mother and the beloved disciple talked together, there was a recalling of the Lord's promise and a faith that he, the true and faithful, would perform his word and rise from the dead. And from the fact that Saint Peter was found the next morning with

Saint John, it seems almost certain that the apostle who had denied the Lord and had been recalled by the Lord's loving look had gone to the other apostle whose faithfulness had not failed, or perhaps had been sought by him, and that in that home and from those lips he had found comfort and the inspiration of hope. And if we may trust a tradition, which tells us that James, the brother of the Lord, sometimes called the bishop of Jerusalem, who probably was not of the number of the twelve, had declared that he would neither eat nor drink until he had seen his brother risen from the dead, there was in at least one other place, and that possibly within the Temple precincts—for there Saint James was wont to resort—some remembrance of the Lord's promise and faith in him.

Meanwhile those who had charge of this part of the ritual of the Passover-tide had gone out into the fields—and this they were allowed to do even on the sabbath—that they might reap the first sheaf of the barley harvest of the year, in order that on the morrow after the sabbath it might be waved, as the first fruits, in the Temple. And very early in the morning, be-

fore the sacred services could begin, and before the women could reach the tomb, Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.

It seems to have been the opinion of the early Christian writers that, as the human soul of Christ returned to his human body and the vital union was restored in a wholly miraculous manner, so, also, he came forth from the grave in the perfection of his manhood after a manner as miraculous, and that the angel who rolled away the great stone showed but an empty tomb. It matters but little whether we accept this opinion, or believe that the angel was sent to roll away the stone in order that the Lord might come forth in the glory and vigor of his new life. Saint Matthew tells us that at the angel's coming there was a great earthquake, and that his presence and his act struck fear into the minds of the guards so that they became as dead men. At once they fled from their posts, and their place was taken by the angel, who sat in triumph on the stone which he had removed and had placed, as it would seem, within the opening of the outer cave. There was still the dimness of twilight when Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, with one or more other women, came, bearing in their hands the spices which they intended to use in finally preparing the Lord's body for its rest in the tomb. Perhaps, as has been suggested, they had not known that the guard had been set at the grave; perhaps, in their sorrow and their devotion, they had not thought of the difficulty of entering the tomb; but as they hurried along, they began to ask one another how, with their feeble strength, they could remove the stone; and then, as they lifted their eyes, they saw that it was no longer in its place. Still they pressed on, and ventured to look into the tomb; and lo, there were angels there; he of whom we have read before was accompanied by another; and in the appearance of men in shining garments they spoke to the frightened women. They told them that the crucified Lord was risen, reminding them of his prophetic words of promise; they bade them hasten to tell the tidings to the disciples, and to say that the Lord would meet them in Galilee. What wonder that, at the strange sight and the sound of such strange words, the women trembled and were amazed? What wonder that, as they ran back to the city, they did not dare to speak to anyone? What wonder if, as they tried, either on that day or afterwards, to recall what they had seen and heard, their memory was confused and they knew not exactly how to tell the marvelous story? Apparently, the women had started from different parts of the city, and had met by appointment that they might come out together in the early light; but now, as

they hastened back, they went by different ways, some to nearer and some to more remote parts, each to her own home or to a place in the neighborhood where she knew that one or more of the disciples were.

Mary Magdalen hastened to the house of Saint John, which cannot have been far away, perhaps just within the nearest gate of the city; and to him and to Saint Peter, then (as has been suggested) sojourning with him, she dared tell no more than that the sepulcher was empty; she could not believe the angelic word; her message was but of an empty tomb. The two apostles, excited by her words, started at once to run to the place of the burial; and Mary followed them as best she could. Saint John, as the younger of the two apostles, and perhaps as animated by the faithful love which had never left him, ran more quickly than Saint Peter, and came first to the tomb. He stooped down to look into the inner chamber where the body had been laid, and saw that the grave-clothes were there. Detained, we may think, partly by a sense of reverence and partly by the growing conviction that the Lord had indeed fulfilled his word, he went no farther. But Saint Peter soon followed, and, hastening past him, as one might expect of a man so impetuous and so earnest, he went into the sepulcher. He saw at a glance that there had been no violent disturbance of the body which had been wrapped in the spices and laid there so short a time before; the grave-clothes were lying there in order, and the napkin which had been put around the head was wrapped together and laid by itself. Some exclamation from him may have led Saint John to follow; he also went in, and as he tells us, "he saw and believed." This cannot mean merely that he was satisfied that the body was no longer there, and that Mary had brought a true report; it must be that the evangelist means to tell us that, as he stood there, he was convinced that all had been done as had been promised by him who had foretold his death and his resurrection, his humiliation and his victory; for himself he needed no further proof: "He saw and believed." The two then hastened back to the city. And if they spoke on the way, how wonderful must have been the conversation! When they arrived at the home where they had left the Virgin Mother, how wonderful the words in which they told her of that which they had seen! and how wonderful must have been the faith, the joy, with which she welcomed the tidings that they brought!

Meanwhile, Mary Magdalen had come back to the tomb; and it may readily be believed that she had not seen the two apostles as they started to return, and, that they failed to notice her. In loving sorrow and anxious despair

she stood outside of the sepulcher, weeping and with bowed head looking in, as if in the hope that what she feared might prove to be untrue, and that the Lord's body might be still resting where it had been laid. As she looked, she saw two angels sitting as if to guard so sacred a place. They asked her why she was weeping; and she answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." She knew it not, but the Lord himself was there standing at the entrance of the tomb. Some act or gesture of reverence on the part of the angels, who saw him as he stood there, caused her to turn about; she also saw him, but she failed to recognize him, and thought that he was the keeper of the garden in which was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. And when he asked the cause of her grief, she begged him, if it were he who had removed the body that had been laid there, to tell her where it was, that she might give it due honor of sepulture. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni!" It needed but the accent of the familiar voice of him who "callesh his own sheep by name" to assure her that it was indeed the living Master who stood there; and as he spoke her name in the familiar language, so in the same tongue she saluted him "My Master." There was no need of argument or of further words. Though she could not understand how he who had but lately died a death of utter exhaustion and had been wrapped in grave-clothes could be standing there in the

full might of life and in the ordinary dress of men, she knew that it was he; and she welcomed him with the word of affectionate reverence which doubtless she had used often before. And then, when she would have shown her affection and her joy by some outward gesture, he bade her not to touch him, giving as a reason that he had not yet ascended to the Father, but to carry word to his disciples—whom he called his brethren—that he was about to ascend. Whatever else the words meant, they must have been intended to direct the minds of the disciples to the consideration of the truth of the Lord's redemptive work, to the fact that he must return to the Father before that work could be accomplished, and that when he had ascended he would be really nearer to them than when they could touch him here on earth. It was the assurance, coming from his lips when he was but just risen, that he had risen for their sakes, that in his resurrection life they would be united with him, that his Father was also their Father, and his God also their God. The message was to teach them not to expect that his new life would be lived among men like that which had preceded his sufferings and death, that even those nearest to him were not to be with him as they had been during the three years of his ministry, that the new life was to be shown in a new way. Mary Magdalen went back to the city, and told some of the mourning disciples that the Lord was alive and that she had seen him; but the story was too wonderful for them, and they did not believe it.

CHAPTER VI.

OTHER MANIFESTATIONS ON EASTER DAY.

AS we go through the fourfold record of events that happened on this day, we must constantly remind ourselves, as has been said already, that from the nature of the case we cannot expect to frame a strictly continuous narrative of that which was said and done; and it may be that our attempts at what is called "harmonizing" will but lead to confusion. Still we cannot doubt the accuracy of the records; and no violent suppositions are needed to enable us to read them together.¹ We are plainly told that Christ's first appearance was to Mary of Magdala, and also that he met the women who were returning from the sepulcher. This may readily have been done if Mary had but a short way to run to Saint John's house, and if the others started by longer roads to more remote parts of the city.

¹This writer does not hesitate to accept the latter part of the last chapter of Saint Mark as a portion of the Gospel narrative.

All that we have thus far mentioned might have taken place in a short time, perhaps in a quarter of an hour; and some of the women, going along in fright and sorrow, with but little hope, would have been still on the way. Thus it was that the Lord met them, and saluted them. They recognized him and prostrated themselves before him, touching his feet in the attitude of adoration. He must have appeared to them in more awe-inspiring guise than to Mary, for he bade them not be afraid, but he sent by them a more simple message than he had given her to carry, charging them to tell his brethren not to look for him in Jerusalem, but to go to Galilee that they might see him there.

Before any of the women had come to the tomb, yet in all probability but a short time before, the guard of Roman soldiers had been frightened away by the earthquake and the sight of the angel who came to roll back the

stone. They also hastened to the city, and knowing at whose instigation they had been assigned to their duty, they went to the chief priests to tell what had happened. Uneasy in their minds, partly fearing that the Lord's words—or the gloss which they had put upon them—might prove true, and partly thinking that some of his adherents might attempt an act of violence, they were ready to act at that early hour. They called the elders and held a consultation. It was hard for them to know exactly what to believe; probably they thought that it was safest for them to ask very few questions. It might be that the Prophet of Nazareth had indeed risen, as he had said; it might be that a false report to that effect would be spread abroad. They thought it would be better to keep very quiet. So they called the soldiers, gave them a considerable bribe, made them promise, if they were questioned, to confess to the shame of sleeping on duty and neglecting their guard, and agreed to arrange matters with Pilate if he should happen to hear of what was said. The whole thing was far from creditable to Roman governor, or Roman soldiers, or Jewish priests and elders, and they knew it; but they determined to adopt a policy of silence and of falsehood and to face it out. When Saint Matthew wrote, this saying was commonly reported among the Jews. But the fact that they made no investigation, and that those of the Jews who afterward denied the Resurrection were Sadducees, indicates the state of mind in which the responsible leaders of the Jews found themselves in this matter from the very first.

When Saint Paul, writing to the Corinthians at a time before the greater part of those who had seen the risen Lord had fallen asleep in death, was enumerating some of his manifesta-

tions, he mentioned "that he was seen of Cephas," before his appearance to the whole body of the apostles. We can hardly err if we place this also early on the morning of Easter-day. Saint Mark, who wrote, as we have strong reason to believe, at the suggestion, if not under the eye, of Saint Peter, mentions that in the words of the angels to the women who came first to the sepulcher there was a message for the apostle who had denied his Lord: "Go quickly, tell his disciples and Peter." Saint Peter—Cephas is but the common Aramaic equivalent for the Greek form of his name—had last seen the Lord when, after the third and most shameful denial, he had turned and looked upon him. That look had brought the apostle back to himself; he had gone out into the darkness of the night, and had wept bitterly. We have no record that he had ventured to go to the cross; we only know that on the Resurrection morning he was with Saint John, and ran with him to find the tomb empty. How deep, how nearly despondent, was his repentance, we may not know; how Saint John and the mother of Jesus had talked to him of forgiving love we can but imagine; but whose heart is not moved with a sense of the reality of the apostle's repentance and the fullness of the Lord's forgiving grace when he reads of the special message and the special manifestation? We hardly dare imagine what was done and said when the risen Christ was seen of Cephas. At least we know that he was assured of forgiveness and restored to his discipleship, as after a few days, by the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he was formally reinstated in his place as an apostle. The comfort and encouragement that come to us all from the words, "He was seen of Cephas," can be felt, indeed, but we may not undertake to tell all that they mean.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EVENING OF EASTER DAY.

WE are told no more of what happened on that Easter day until it began to draw toward evening. Jerusalem and all its suburbs were still filled with throngs who were keeping the Passover week; the Temple courts were crowded with those who were engaged in acts of worship; the pious Jew was rejoicing before Jehovah with the joy that came from memory of the deliverance in days of old, from the hopes that the promises would be fulfilled, from the blessing of the harvest which was thus early begun. The rulers of the people were in consternation at the news which had reached them; the rabble probably had but little thought for that which

had occurred two days ago, and had not heard any rumors as to a great event which had taken place on this third day. A few faithful ones had seen the risen Christ; a few others, because of their word, had come to believe that he was risen; most of the professed disciples who were in or near Jerusalem had heard their testimony and were astonished at it, but they could not bring themselves to believe it. It was the first Christian Sunday, but to most of Christ's disciples it was not a day of peace or of rest; rather was it a day of anxiety and trouble, of sad questionings of heart, and of doubts that would not be dispelled.

This we might have inferred, indeed, from

the silence of the evangelists. But it is made plainer to us from the record of the appearance of our Lord to two disciples on their way to the village of Emmaus. The name of one, we are told, was Cleopas; the other may have been Saint Luke himself, who records the circumstances with much detail. They had started for a long walk of some seven or eight miles, very likely that they might think and talk in quiet of what they knew had happened and what had been reported to them. They had known Christ, and had trusted that he was to be the Redeemer of Israel; they had at least learned of his death; they had heard some of the women telling how, when they went early to the sepulcher, they had seen, or had thought they saw, angels who told them that he was alive. As they walked along, their conversation become earnest argument; they could not understand, they did not agree. A stranger—for such they thought him—came near and began to walk with them. He asked them what it was as to which they were arguing, their faces showing much gloom. They told him what they knew and had heard, and disclosed to him somewhat of the perplexity that was in their minds, and then he began to speak. He told them that, if they had but understood the Scriptures aright, they would see that all that had happened—the suffering and the consequent glory—had been foretold of the coming Redeemer; and explained to them in orderly manner the teaching of all the sacred writings in regard to the Christ. When they came to their resting place at Emmaus, at their request he entered and reclined with them for the evening meal. Then, acting as the host and the head of the family, he took into his hands the bread that had been provided, blessed it and brake it, and gave it to them. They recognized him then; they knew why it was that their hearts had burned within them while he expounded the Scriptures; their Lord was indeed alive, and had been teaching them out of the Scriptures about himself. Then he disappeared; but they had no doubt as to his identity and the reality of his bodily appearance.

At once they started back for Jerusalem; they went to the place of meeting, unknown to their enemies among the Jews, where they expected to find the apostles with others—very probably the upper room from which three nights before, after the breaking of bread, the Lord had gone forth to his agony; “they told

what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.” Saint Luke tells us that, when they came in, they were welcomed with the words, “The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon”; Saint Mark, that when they told of their own experience, they were not believed; nor is this strange; for men are apt to speak positively of that which they themselves can tell, and to doubt the self-same thing when it is told by another. Their minds were in the balance between belief and doubt, between hope and fear; the new report but puzzled them the more. And lo, at that moment the Lord stood among them, and gave them the wonted salutation of peace. For one moment they were in terror, thinking that some ghostly visitor had come to alarm them; but the Lord spoke words of comfort, showed them his pierced hands and feet, and ate of the food which they gave him at his request. And—it is a touch of nature and a touch of grace as well, which we owe to Saint John's pen—“then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.”

The Lord repeated his salutation of peace; and he then gave to his disciples the apostolic commission, sending them forth, even as the Father had sent him. And then, breathing on them, as a symbol of the Divine Spirit of whom he spoke, he bade them receive the Holy Spirit, and gave them authority which, whatever else is implied, meant at least that the welfare of human souls would be dependent upon that which they should do in his name. Though Saint Luke tells us that others were present, there seems little doubt that these words were spoken especially to the apostles, and yet to the apostles as the representatives of the Church, to whom were given powers for the benefit of the Church. And the terms used are such as apply to an official college of men, and not to individuals. The traitor had gone “to his own place”; Saint Thomas was not with the others when at this time the Lord came; yet Saint Paul, apparently referring to this occasion, says that “He was seen of the twelve,” and Saint Luke says that “the eleven” were gathered together. The Lord was breathing the breath of life into his Church, the “company of faithful people,” made up at the first of those whom his words and his works had gathered about him, to be fully vivified at the day of Pentecost, and to be his witness until he should return.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GREAT FORTY DAYS.

IT must be left to imagination — or, it were better said, to devout meditation — to form some idea of the week that followed, and, indeed, of nearly the whole of the time that intervened before the Ascension. For though Saint Luke, at the opening of the Acts of the Apostles, tells us that Christ “was seen” by the disciples “forty days,” yet the form of the expression implies no more than that he appeared to them at intervals during that time; and the number of his recorded appearances or manifestations is small. We know of none after the day of the Resurrection until the following Sunday. Saint Thomas had not seen the Lord when he showed himself to the others and gave the apostolic college its commission. And he had gone so far as to say that only the most positive evidence of touch would convince him that the body that had hung on the cross had been made alive, and that Christ was truly raised from death. He was with the others on the second Sunday, and the doors were shut as they had been before. Again the Lord stood among his disciples, and gave them the salutation of peace. And then he offered to the doubting apostle the evidence which he had declared that he would require. But Saint Thomas did not need it; the sight of his Master and the sound of his voice convinced him; and he addressed him in words of a higher faith than any other, so far as know, had as yet used: “My Lord and my God!” But Christ, in accepting the profession of his belief, declared that a special blessing was theirs who believed though they had not seen.

It would seem that it must have been after this, though how much later we cannot tell, that the risen Lord met his disciples in Galilee. The message sent by him from the open tomb had not been such as to lead them to expect that many would see him in or near Jerusalem. The angels bade the women tell the disciples that he was going to Galilee, and that they should see him there, and his own lips soon repeated the command and the promise. We can see that this was, in a way, necessary. No large body of the followers of Christ could have assembled under the eyes of the rulers of the Jewish people, without rousing a tumult and creating a scene of confusion quite unsuited to the manifestation of Christ who was now about to take to himself his spiritual kingdom, and quite subversive of any evidential value that might attach to such a manifestation. And we can see, besides, that the meeting in Galilee was in accordance with the

Lord’s plan and progress in the work of his ministry. Jerusalem, though it was the Holy City and ought to have been the seat of his kingdom, was for the most part but a place where he met persistent enmity and determined opposition. He visited the city, to be sure, that he might obey the law and that he might present himself to his people; but his earthly home, “his own city,” was a despised town on the shore of the Galilean lake. And those whom he gathered about him were for the most part the simple folk of Galilee, who listened to his teachings and accepted them, who saw his marvelous works and knew their meaning, who professed themselves his disciples and held allegiance to him in spite of the derision and the persecution of the scribes and Pharisees that were of Jerusalem. In the quiet country of northern Palestine, which was his earthly home as it was that of so many of his followers, on a mountain apart which he had appointed his disciples, the Lord met them. Thither had come the eleven, there also assembled more than five hundred others; for we can hardly think that the manifestation to so large a body, of which Saint Paul speaks, could have taken place at any different place or time; and they all saw him.

Then, says Saint Matthew, “they worshiped him; but some doubted.” The simplicity and honesty of the narrative again witnesses to the truth. It could not have been otherwise. Very probably none of that large company, except the eleven, had until then seen the Lord since his resurrection; but some of them had believed on the word of the apostles, reaching them directly or indirectly; others, doubtless, were so far disposed to believe that they needed but to look upon their Master or to hear the wonted accents of his voice; while some must have needed what seemed stronger evidence, or perhaps required some little time that their minds might apprehend and accept so great a truth. If an apostle was for a time doubtful in his Lord’s resurrection, it is not at all strange that some of the humbler disciples, who may have known him but for a short time, who had not followed him as he went to and fro in the land, who had very inadequate ideas of his person, his work, and his claims, should have hesitated to believe that he who stood before them was indeed the Master of whom they had heard that he had suffered the death on the cross. But that as a consequence of this great manifestation they all did believe, there can be no doubt; though we may not know all that Christ

said and did to assure them that it was indeed himself whom they saw and heard, in what different ways he recalled and confirmed and guided their faith, or in what wondrous manner he prepared them for that which was to come.

The 500 who were gathered on the mountain in Galilee, which one would fain think was the Mount of the Beatitudes (unless, indeed, it was that on which three apostles had once seen him transfigured), must have been nearly, if not quite, the whole body of those who had really accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God. They were to form the nucleus of the Christian Church, when the spirit of life should come to breath upon them, that the face of the moral creation might be renewed; and as by divers ways they had come to accept Christ the Teacher, so by divers ways they came to accept Christ the risen Lord. But that he drew them to this faith before he assured them of his authority and based upon it his great charge to the Church we cannot doubt; nor could Saint Paul have written to the Corinthians as he did, if he had not considered all of them to be competent witnesses of the Resurrection. It was nearly twenty-five years later than this when Saint Paul wrote from Ephesus his first epistle to the Church at Corinth; and he affirmed that, though some of the more than five hundred brethren to whom the Lord appeared had fallen asleep, yet the greater part still remained in life. Very probably few of the converts at Ephesus, and fewer yet of those of Corinth, could have met with any of that favored company; but it was something for them to be assured that there were still living some three hundred persons to whom the risen Lord had manifested himself, and that they stood so very near this revelation.

This manifestation of Christ must have been most wonderful. It was no ordinary interview — that of the Lord awaiting his ascension, with his Church awaiting the gift of the Holy Ghost that was to follow upon it. He must ascend, indeed, from the Mount of Olives hard by the Holy City and the place where he had been crucified; but as Peter, and James, and John had once seen before his death a glimpse of that glory to which he was to come through death, so the 500 may have been granted before his ascension some glimpse of the glory upon which he was to enter when he should sit at the right hand of the Father. And as the former vision helped to sustain the three apostles in the days of trial through which they had to pass, so who can tell how much of the bravery, and courage, and confidence that marked the early years of the Church's history was due to the fact that there were so many disciples who had seen the risen Lord and heard his words? And what words, in fact, they were! As he spoke them,

his face must have been bright with heavenly radiance, and his person must have borne witness to their truth. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He spoke as the Son of Man, who had passed through the experiences of life and death, and as Son of Man had been made perfect by them. He spoke as he could not have spoken during the long years of quiet preparation which preceded his public ministry, nor while he was healing the sick and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, nor when he offered himself in sacrifice to the Father, nor yet when he surrendered his soul into the Father's hands. Not then had all power been given to him, not then had it been possible for him to receive all power. Though he was the Son of God, yet his humanity must be prepared for the exaltation to which it was destined; and the only path for the Son of Man, who came "in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin," to attain glory and honor was the path of a sinless life, a death of sacrifice, and a resurrection to new life. That path he had trodden in faithful humility; and through the grave and gate of death he had come to his joyful resurrection. It was not the ordinary life of earth in virtue of which he was living then; it was that new life, which has new capacities and faculties because it has passed through death. Certainly, he was marching to victory even when he was nailed to the cross, but the victory was not fully gained, the triumph was not achieved, till he had risen. And now he had risen, the Victor; and because he was Victor, he was able to receive and to exercise the fullness of authority. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." There can be no limit to the rightful authority of the perfect Man who had lived and died and was living, never again to die. Neither time nor space can set a limit to his sway; his kingdom shall have no end and no bounds. And this the Lord declared of himself, as claiming a prerogative and as assuring the faith of his disciples; now possessed of no weakness, now hedged about with no infirmity, he can claim lordship over all the creation of God, in things heavenly and things earthly.

Yet it was not solely or chiefly by way of assertion that the Lord made proclamation of the authority that had been given him when he rose and because he rose from the dead. "Go ye therefore," he continued, "and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Because of his unlimited authority, he could give to his disciples a great and practically unlimited commission. He might not himself at once exercise his authority; nay rather, because it was moral in its character and its highest exercise was over the

souls of men, a preparation must be made for it; and because it was universal, the preparation must extend beyond the limits of the holy land and the Jewish people, and must reach the ends of the earth. The believers who had seen the Lord and could witness to the Resurrection must go forth from the narrow confines of Palestine, and from the narrow restrictions of the ancient law. They must bring all the nations to discipleship, baptizing them and teaching them, admitting them to privilege and instructing them in both privilege and duty. They must use and assert their Lord's authority, and must lead all mankind to accept it and to be guided by it. They must exercise, on their Lord's behalf, a pastoral and a prophetic work, and must, in the exercising of it, carry a great responsibility.

And as Christ Jesus, the risen Savior, spoke these words, he gave utterance to a Name of God, the truth contained in which had indeed been shadowed forth before, but which had not as yet been spoken to men, the Name of God which specially marks the revelation of these Christian ages, the Name of God to which ascends the constant hymn of praise — the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He who had been known to the early patriarchs as God Almighty, he who had revealed himself to his chosen people as Jehovah, the self-existent and covenant-keeping God, now made himself known by that threefold Name which tells, indeed, of wondrous mys-

teries, but which also tells man of the possibility of close approach to God and living communion with him. And thus the Lord Jesus Christ, himself the Son of God, showed the greatness of the duty that he laid upon his Church, and also gave it the strongest possible incentive to faithfulness. He taught his disciples a truth which none before had apprehended save in enigma, and he bade them make that the center of their life and of their teaching. Nor did he stop here; he gave them the word of personal encouragement, and assured them of his continued presence. They had known that he was to ascend to the Father; they knew now what they were to do for him and for the world while he was gone; they needed to be told that they would not be left alone and that their labor would not be in vain. And the Lord assured them of all that their souls needed and more than they could have felt that they needed: "Lo, I am with you all the days, unto the completion of the age" — "the end of the world," as we translate it. They did not know, doubtless they could not be told, how long the age would last, how long it would be before their Master should return; it was enough for them to be assured that in no day of their service and their waiting could he forsake them: "Lo, I am with you all the days." With such a commission, and with such an encouragement, were these believers unto whom the Lord had manifested himself prepared for their great work.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRIST'S MANIFESTATIONS TO HIS APOSTLES.

SAIN'T PAUL tells us that, after the appearance to the 500, our Lord appeared to James and then to all the apostles. This must have been, as far as we can see, after he had returned to Jerusalem. The James mentioned by name was doubtless the Lord's brother, the author of an epistle addressed to the twelve tribes in the dispersion, and prominent in Jerusalem, whom we find even in the time of the Acts of the Apostles presiding over the "mother and mistress of all the Churches." It has been thought that he was one of the apostles, known as James the Less, or James the son of Alphaeus; but it seems to the writer that he was not of the number of the twelve. An ancient tradition has already been noted, which affirms that he had believed that the Christ, who was accounted his brother according to the flesh, would certainly rise from death. Yet it can hardly be as a special reward or confirmation of faith that the Lord at this time granted a manifestation to Saint

James alone; rather it must have been because he was to be placed in a special dignity and to have a special responsibility laid upon him. He who always, in some way or other, prepares his servants for the duties that he expects of them, did not fail to do so in this most important case. As at a later time the great Apostle to the Gentiles was sent to Arabia that he might quietly learn what he needed to know and be fitted for his great responsibility,¹ so he who was to be for a time at the head of the Church at Jerusalem was told in private of that which it specially behooved him to know. And the holiness and the wisdom of Saint James, to which witness is borne, by ancient writers, tell of the faithfulness with which he heard and obeyed.

And as this is best understood of an official manifestation (if the words may be thus employed), so we may well put a like interpretation upon the clause which follows: "Then of

¹ Galatians i, 17.

all the apostles." For, unless we are to find at this early time an extension of the apostolate beyond the number of those whom the Lord first chose, the word must mean the same persons as those whom Saint Paul had just called "the twelve." And the difference in phraseology would seem to point to a difference in the purpose for which the manifestation to them was made. It seems most natural that those on whom so great a responsibility was soon to fall, who were to be the leaders of the Church while it was completing its organization and entering upon its great work, should have some special commands from their Master, and some special evidence on which to rest their faith. To "the apostles whom he had chosen," says Saint Luke at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, Christ "showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, being seen of them forty days"—that is to say, as the original shows, at intervals during forty days—"and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." This more than suggests that there were other times when the Lord met his disciples for purposes of instruction, besides those which are mentioned in the Gospels. But in the words that follow we are told of one time in particular when he gave to the apostles a special command and opened before them a special vision of duty. He first charged them to wait in Jerusalem after he should ascend, until they should receive the promise of the Father and be baptized with the Holy Ghost. They came together, Saint Luke tells us—and apparently it was at this same time—and asked him if he

was then to restore the kingdom to Israel. He bade them not inquire concerning times and seasons, assured them that they should receive power when the Holy Ghost should come, and declared that they should be witnesses to him first in the city and the land of their own people and then to the nations beyond—"in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." If this was not the time which Saint Paul had in his mind when he wrote to the Corinthians, it was a time corresponding to it. The apostles were indeed to be taught by the Holy Spirit, who should put them in remembrance of what their Master had said unto them; but they were first to be told from the lips of the Lord himself of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Of the details of this instruction we are not told; but as we see how before the day of Pentecost they filled up the vacancy in the apostolic college, we can hardly doubt that they had been commanded so to do (Saint Peter said that "one must be ordained to be a witness with" the eleven); and in successive acts which they performed as they bore witness to Christ, first among the Jews, then to Samaritans, and soon to the Gentiles in many lands, we may be assured that we see the fulfillment of that which the risen Lord had enjoined upon them. Thus we may gain an imperfect idea of the wondrous converse which he held with his apostles while he tarried on earth before he ascended into the heavens; and thus we may see how, in every way, full preparation was made for the establishment and the propagation of his Church.

CHAPTER X.

THE RISEN LORD AT THE SEA OF GALILEE.

IT remains to notice the events which we find recorded in the last chapter of Saint John's Gospel. That chapter is of the nature of an appendix, and appears to have been added by the evangelist after he had concluded the account which he had at first intended to make. It combines simple narrative with the record of miracle and prophecy, and is full of varied instruction. We cannot tell just where it belongs in the great forty days; but we probably shall not err if we place it near the time when the Lord met the great body of his disciples on the mountain in Galilee. By the shore of the lake where he had so often walked in the days of his ministry, there were together seven of his disciples. Five, we know, were apostles: Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael, and James, and John; the names of the other two are not told. The place, the hour, the actions of the

seven remind us of the time when the Lord had bidden Simon, and Andrew, and James, and John to follow him and to be fishers of men; but the points of difference are full of significance. The Lord is not now with the disciples in the ship, but standing in the dim light of morning on the shore. He tells them on which side of the ship to cast the net; it is drawn in full of great fishes, the number of which is carefully noted; and, in marked contrast to that former time, the net is not broken, and the great Apostle Peter does not pull it into the ship, but draws it to land. If in the former miracle there was a parable of the apostolic work in the imperfection of the days of waiting for Christ to come again, there was in the latter a parable of the perfection of that work in the day of his return. There was a fire of coals on the shore, and the Lord called



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the seven to eat of bread and fish which he had himself provided against their coming to land; as before, near the same place, he had fed the multitude with bread and fish multiplied under his hand from the little store that was furnished by a lad in the company.

Then came the formal reconciliation of the apostle who had denied the Lord, and his restoration to the apostolate. By the fire of coals, which recalls the fire of coals near which Saint Peter had stood in the court of the high priest's palace, the Lord thrice questioned him as to his love for him. Twice in asking the question, he used the word that implies the love of respect and reverence; and twice the apostle in answering substituted the word that tells of affection. We may, perhaps, express the words thus: "Lovest thou me?" "Thou knowest that I love thee dearly." The third time, the Lord took up the apostle's own word, and it was this change which grieved, or we might almost say, broke down, Saint Peter: "Lovest thou me dearly?" "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee dearly." The apostle ventured to claim, the Lord vouchsafed to ask for, only the natural and simple love of affection; the deeper, more earnest, less demonstrative emotion was left to grow in the soul and show itself in the life. And, after each reply, the Lord gave to his penitent apostle an apostolic charge and commission. He was no longer to be a fisher of men, but a shepherd. "Feed my lambs"; "Tend my sheep"; "Feed my sheep." The words tell of all the parts of the work of the shepherd of souls: the provision of simple nutriment for the little ones, the watchful care of those who are more mature, and the providing for these latter the sustenance that they require; these are in the order of time, and in the order of difficulty as well, the successive steps in the work of those who care for souls. Spoken to Saint Peter, they were really

spoken to all who should have a part in that most blessed work.

Then to the apostle thus restored and commissioned the Lord showed, in words of which only the general meaning was evident at the time, the way in which he should glorify God by a martyr's death; and, as three years before he had called Simon the fisherman to follow him, the Teacher of men, in the ways of human life, so now he called Peter the apostle to follow him, the Redeemer and King of men, to death that thus he might glorify God. The sense of forgiving love, so amply shown toward one who had basely denied the Master, filled Saint Peter's heart with wonder and with gratitude. Near him stood Saint John, who, as he wrote, thought of himself but as the disciple whom Jesus condescended to love. In the high priest's palace Saint John had also stood by, and, as the narrative plainly shows, had confessed himself a disciple of the Man whom slaves were then mocking and beating in the presence of the rulers of God's people. What, thought Saint Peter, could be left for the faithful one, if such forgiveness and service and reward were given to one who had proved unfaithful in the hour of temptation? And so he ventured to ask: "Lord, how about this man?" The answer was not meant to satisfy curiosity; but it told of blessedness greater even than that of toiling and dying for the Master, while yet it laid strong emphasis on duty: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." Leaving its interpretation to be determined by the event, the beloved disciple closed his record. But in the words which the Lord spoke we may see, as one has well said, a teaching as to two kinds of work for him, each with its issue: "The one is the minister of action, whose service is consummated by the martyrdom of death; the other is the minister of thought and teaching, whose service is perfected in the martyrdom of life."

CHAPTER XI.

THE TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION; ITS EVIDENCE AND MEANING.

THUS we have gone somewhat in detail over the history of the great forty days as it has been recorded by the evangelists. In a very true sense, the story thus told and studied is its own evidence. As was noted at the beginning, the sacred penmen know that they are writing of a most momentous event, while at the same time they write with great dignity and sobriety. They have to tell of days of confusion, and doubt, and unrest; yet, while they testify to all this, it is with full assurance of faith on their own part, and with

no attempt at formal argument to induce faith on the part of others. There is all possible evidence of the truth of that which they record; nevertheless, the story is told in all simplicity and as if to remind those who already believe. The effect of the whole upon the mind is overwhelming. Assuming the fact that one who had been known to die and to be buried had actually risen from death and had been seen by his friends, could any uninspired man have written of it as the evangelists wrote, even if he had wished to do so? Would any

uninspired man have thus written of it, even if he had been able to do so? There is not the least striving for effect, hardly an attempt to give anything an evidential bearing. It was, indeed, a wonderful thing that Jesus Christ should rise again from the dead; but it was an integral part of the wonderful life of a wonderful Person. Being what he was, he could not remain under the power of death; he must have risen from the dead and lived again.

And, as has, indeed, been noted already, the resurrection-life is not merely a continued life of the soul having an accidental connection with a bodily or spectral form. That self-same body, of which the blessed hands and feet had been pierced with nails that they might be fastened to the cross, and the sacred side had been torn open by the soldier's spear; that self-same body which had been wrapped in grave-clothes and laid in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, came forth alive from the tomb on Easter morning. There was no suffering then, and no pain. The marks of the nails and the spear still remained, but there was nothing else to tell of the agony, the exhaustion, the endurance of death. In conquering death, the Lord had passed beyond the possibility of suffering and had entered upon an immortal youth. We see indications, to be sure—and of these something must be said presently—that a body raised from death into the new life has powers and faculties in some ways different from those which belong to it while it is yet subject to death; yet it was identically the same body as that which had been crucified, dead, and buried. It was no case of substitution, or even of what we know as development; the body from which the soul had departed was laid in the grave before sunset on Friday; on Sunday before the sun had arisen the soul had arisen and the body was instinct with life.

Nor was it in any sense like a recovery from sickness or infirmity or wounds. The risen Christ entered at once upon a life of perfect health and vigor; death, weakness, pain had no more dominion over him. Yet with men and women he conversed, and walked, and ate; he reasoned and expostulated; he taught, and comforted, and prophesied. It seemed in a way strange indeed; but the next notable thing that must have occurred after the death of the Son of Man was his resurrection from the dead, and next after that must have been his ascension, and that, too, with a view to his return. And thus at Jerusalem and in Galilee, with Saint Peter and Saint James alone, with the eleven apostles, with the 500 disciples, the Lord manifested himself, and by the very fact of his living made it evident that he was alive. The fact was, after all, in its statement and in its apprehension, a simple one; its meaning and

its application, as in the case of all divine facts and truths, were far-reaching and inexhaustible. But the first question is as to the fact; when this is accepted, we may inquire into its manifold meaning.

We are studying the great forty days as those who accept as true the statements preserved for us in the Gospels. We should accept them—having, as we are convinced, the strongest reasons for accepting them—even if there were serious difficulties and hindrances in the way. But the whole is so simple and yet so strong, the narrative bears such evidence of its own truthfulness, that it would argue far greater credulity to reject it than to accept it. And when we consider that the life and the work of the apostles, as they carried their Master's message and bore witness to him in all parts of the world, put their conviction to the proof, and applied every possible test to their sincerity and their truthfulness, we see that the proof of Christ's resurrection is not exhausted when we have closed the few pages in which it was recorded by the evangelists. Nor was it the apostles alone that bore witness to this great fact. There can hardly have been one of the more than five hundred who had seen the risen Lord, that was not called upon to suffer, in greater or less degree, for his testimony to that truth. The question between Christians and their opponents was for a long time a question of fact, as Festus saw when the Jews brought Saint Paul before his judgment seat: they "had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive."¹ No falsehood, no unreality, no deception, could have inspired those early Christians to do and to suffer that which they gladly did and suffered that they might testify to their knowledge of the Resurrection. Nothing but truth, and undoubting confidence in truth, could have given such courage to Peter, who but a little before had told a barefaced falsehood because he trembled at a woman's taunt or feared a soldier's jibe, when he declared to the excited populace in Solomon's Porch that God had raised from the dead the Prince of Life whom they had killed, or made the same affirmation, even more boldly, before Annas and Caiaphas themselves, with the rulers, and elders, and scribes of the Jewish people.²

And what Saint Peter did, the other believers did. The narrative of the Acts, the teaching of the epistles, the traditions in which many of the works of the apostles and early disciples were handed down to history, all point to the same conviction and the same assurance; of this we cannot doubt. How, then, can that to

¹ Acts xxv, 19.

² Acts iii, 15, iv, 10.

which they witnessed in the sight of the sword, and the cross, and the flame—nay, even unto death in its most cruel and dreadful forms—be other than true? And their own conviction they imparted to others, who were no less willing to suffer for it, knowing that they had a living Lord and Master, a Savior who had conquered death, in whose strength they might meet it, and in whose life they, too, might rise victorious. And at least in one instance, and that most remarkable, one who had resisted all external evidence, and had been unwilling to believe, was given a vision of the risen Lord in his glory, and heard him speak but a few words, when lo, the conviction that Jesus Christ was alive in a resurrection-life nerved him for acts of bravery and self-denial almost unparalleled on earth, and made the name of Saint Paul in itself almost a sufficient proof of the Resurrection. His early epistles, probably the very first part of the New Testament that was committed to writing, prove that he both believed and taught this great fact as the foundation of all Christian faith and the inspiration of all Christian life.

And in all this the testimony of evangelists, and apostles, and disciples is the more strong because it is so utterly free from any attempt to frame formal evidence or to argue as if for a disputed case. They knew the Resurrection as a fact, and they could not doubt the evidence that they had for its truth; but one can hardly imagine them devoting themselves, in the face of danger, and privation, and suffering, merely to the maintenance of the reality of an historic fact, surrendering their lives rather than fail to confess and proclaim it. It was more to them than an event in history; it had a moral and a spiritual value; it affected them and their relations to God; it had given them a new life, which came from their risen Lord, which depended upon and flowed from his life; and to that resurrection-life they traced all that in them was true, and pure, and strong in character or conduct. Had the Lord not risen, they would have had, indeed, a perfect example of holy living, setting the pattern of patience and humility; and they would have had lessons of truth, spoken as truth had never been spoken before; but both the pattern of living and the

teaching of truth would have been so far above men that they could have but looked at them in admiration, perhaps made some feeble effort to reach them, and certainly have fallen back in despair. The sealed grave of the great Example and Teacher would have been the sealed grave of the noble aspirations which he had kindled.

But the life of the risen Lord—that is, that life which had passed through death, that life which belonged to him as the victorious Son of Man—was a life which was to be communicated to all his people. As they were incorporated into him, they died to sin by partaking of his death; they were buried with him by their baptism into his death, that they might be planted together with his resurrection;¹ that is to say, that they might enter into his risen life, and so have a part in the blessed results of all that he had done when he had lived the perfect life of earth, and find his lessons of truth not above them, but written on their hearts and in their souls and inspiring their thoughts, and words, and actions. And the conviction of the truth of all this—none the less strong because it could not be put into words, none the less certain because it might not be readily transferred from one to another—was a proof that the Lord was indeed living; and men of all succeeding generations, as they have entered into the life of the risen Lord, have had a proof of that life. The strongest evidence for physical life, as has been said above, is the fact of that life; it is not the least strong evidence for the resurrection-life of Jesus Christ, in all its wondrous and varied power, that it has been experienced and known throughout the ages. This spiritual force—this mystical power, if one may use the word without being misunderstood—cannot be ignored by anyone who accepts the Scriptures of the New Testament or recognizes the action of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ. And it would be most interesting and instructive, did space permit, to look at the several manifestations of the risen Christ, as they are recorded, and see how each in its place taught this truth, or at least prepared the minds of the disciples to receive it.

¹ Romans vi, 5.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RESURRECTION AS TEACHING IMMORTALITY.

WE must not fail to note how the Resurrection of our Lord has given an answer—though certainly in a most unexpected way—to one of the great questions which has engaged the anxious thoughts of men from the beginning. Since our first parents were driven forth from Eden, the great fact of death has been ever in the thoughts and before the eyes of men, and they have asked, in anxious distress of mind and soul, whether it is indeed the end. They have been unwilling to confess this, and still more unwilling to believe it; but apart from a revelation, it has been impossible really to justify the hope that life is prolonged after death has put a close to the activities of the body. The popular idea, such as it was, was of a shadowy and unreal existence, not a continuance of the life of the man; the philosopher had a somewhat more worthy idea, but it was hardly in any way more clear or satisfactory. While Cicero was reading his Plato, he believed that the souls of men—or at any rate philosophers—were immortal; but when he closed the book and thought the matter over, he had very serious doubts. In like manner Seneca could argue for the immortality of the soul with all the skill of his well-trained intellect; but when the news was brought him of the death of a friend, the arguments went for nothing. Even the Jewish people, who had the sanction of revelation for belief in this great truth, as it was imperfectly yet really revealed, could not take hold of it as a great and certain fact. We need to stand beside the open sepulcher, and see the once crucified Lord in all the might of his new life, and hear his voice heralding his authority; we need to enter into somewhat of the meaning of that new life, before we can gain a sure answer to the great question of immortality. For, strange as it may appear, the only satisfactory proof of the immortality of the soul, is the resurrection of the body. There is little that is convincing, and very little that is satisfying, in the thought that one who has died may be in some shadowy state of existence, which is not really life in the sense in which we use the word. We feel, even if we do not confess, that a man, really to live, must have all the component parts of human nature; and that means that without the body man is imperfect. Into that state of imperfection which is brought about by the separation of soul and body, as death for the time gains the victory, the Lord entered, when upon the cross he committed his spirit into the hands of the Father; but from it he returned,

entering upon a perfect immortality, when he took again his body and truly rose from death. And from that time he has had the true immortality. His life did not remain under the power of death, but it conquered death, and therefore can never be subject to it again; and we look to the risen Lord for our proof of immortality. Or if our thoughts turn to the blessedness of the holy dead, and we know that they are yet living though we do not see their forms or hear their voices, it is because we are assured that they are asleep and resting in him who died and rose again, and that in him they shall rise when he shall return in the glory of his kingdom. Thus the world, as it has come to believe in Christ, has gained the assurance of that which it has sought in vain in the pages of philosophers or the parables of nature. Immortality is no longer an illusive dream of the student, a baseless hope of the votary of truth; it is a fact, revealed in the risen life of the Son of Man, and to be realized in the future life of those who have lived and died, and are to rise again in him.

But although the Lord rose from the dead, taking again the self-same body that had been laid in the grave, yet it was, as has indeed been intimated more than once already, unto newness of life. Even for him, whose life among men had been all-holy, there were new powers gained by the victory over death. We know this, when we see him standing on the Easter morning by the open tomb, not as one beginning to recover from the weakness to which suffering and pain have brought him, nor as one feeling his way back into a former condition, but as one who has left at once and forever all possibilities of pain and suffering, and as one who has passed beyond his former state, by a strange and a difficult path, into something new, and bright, and enduring. We see it, as we go with him that evening on the long road to Emmaus, and then learn that he has quickly returned thence to give his apostles at Jerusalem the blessing of peace. We are further assured of it, as we hear his words, which tell of his sufferings only as a necessary preliminary to his entrance into his glory and to the proclamation of his truth and his redemption to all the nations. All the events and all the teaching of the forty days look forward.

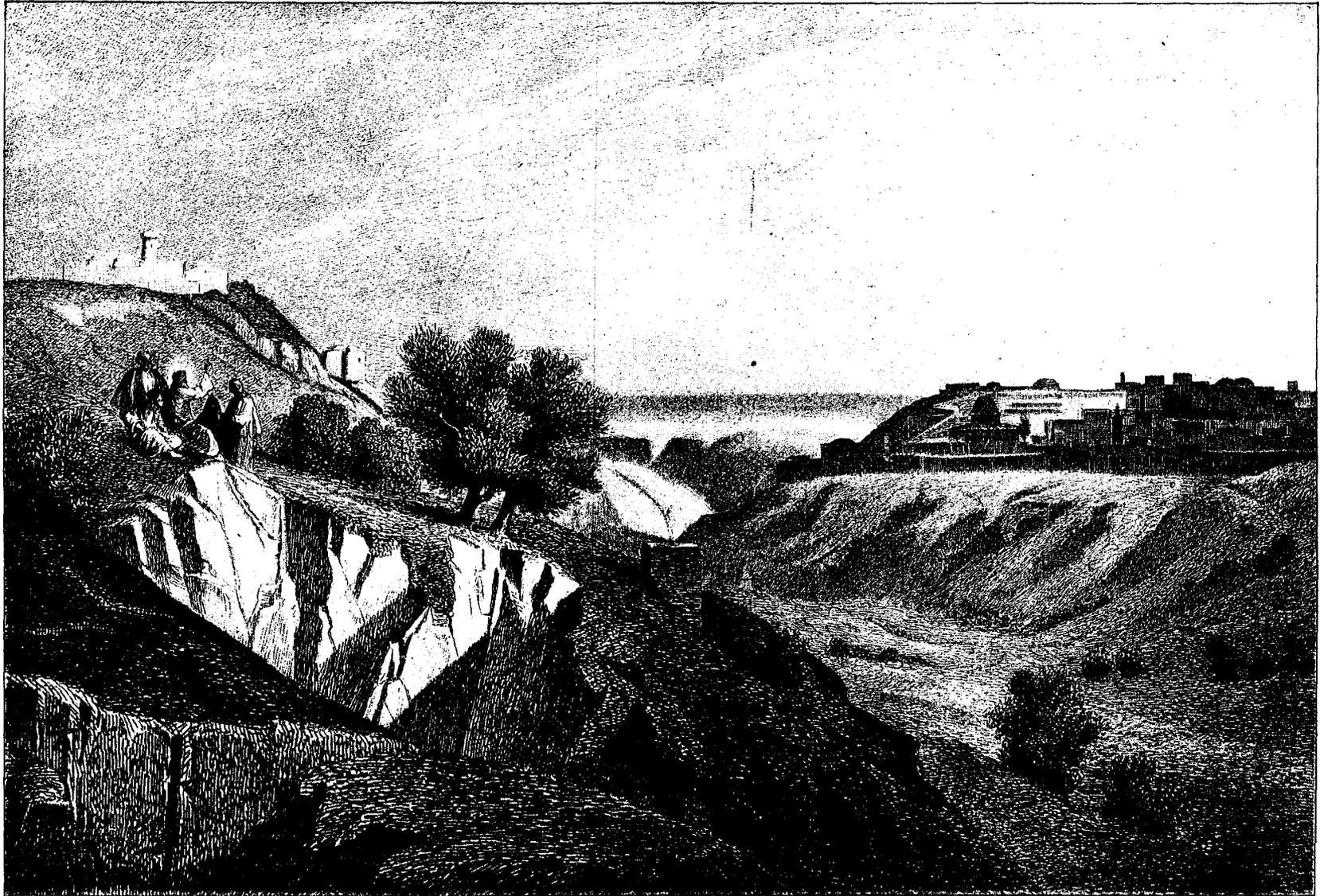
And in the change that thus came to the Lord, we get some idea of what Saint Paul means in the fifteenth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, where he speaks of

the natural body that is sown or buried and the spiritual body which the same body is when it is raised. We have no English word that rightly expresses that which the apostle here puts in contrast with "spiritual"; but as this means something in which the spirit, that noblest and highest part of man's nature, rules and holds dominion, so the other, for which we need some such word as "soul-ish," denotes that which is ruled and governed by the lower part of man's non-material nature, the animal soul. Such is the argument: "It is sown a soul-ish [or animal] body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a soul-ish body, there is also a spiritual body. And so it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a living soul'; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Such is the contrast between soul and spirit, between that which merely lives and that which gives life, and the contrast between a body in which, surrounded as it is by the things of earth, the soul must perforce rule, and a body which is fitted for the heavenly life and which, therefore, is guided and controlled by the spirit. Of what the change shall be in the risen bodies of the saints we gain some idea from that which is told us of the risen body of their Lord. His flesh, to be sure, saw no corruption, and the wondrous change exhibited when he rose must have been begun immediately upon his death, as seems to be shown by the blood and water that flowed from his pierced side. The renewed life of those who sleep in him cannot be attained in every particular as was his; but that his is the pattern for all his people—nay, that all their life is in and from him—we are expressly told.

It was in this new life that the Lord breathed on his apostles, to give them an inspiration of authority; it was in this new life that he had all power given unto him in heaven and in earth; and in this new life it was that he gave commandments to his apostles as to the way in which they should carry on his work and prepare the world for his return. How for him it differed, in its methods and its results, from that earlier life before death, we can do little but conjecture; we hardly know more than that the one was fitted for the perfect service of the Father here on earth, in the courts of the great Temple, and that the other was fitted for the perfect service of the Father in heaven, in the most holy place. The natural or "soul-ish" body that rightly does its part in the world of natural or "soul-ish" life, is preparing itself for loftier duties and greater privileges when it shall become a spiritual body and take its part in the world of spiritual life. Until he

had died and risen again, the Lord could not, although he was perfect God and perfect Man, enter upon his work of Mediator and Intercessor. The great High Priest must go within the veil with that blood which tells at once of life and death; even he was made perfect through sufferings and brought to glory by entering, in the fullness of his humanity, upon the spiritual life. So we, his people, must, in the fullness of our humanity, come to his life, most of us by death and resurrection, those of us who remain until his coming by that change that shall pass upon them that have not fallen asleep.

So it is that all the events and all the utterances of the great forty days have really a spiritual and prophetic meaning. That meaning has been suggested in part; its exposition must be left for more full commentaries and discourses. But when we remember that we trace back to these days, in large part if not altogether, our persuasion of the value of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the way in which they should be studied, that we find there the charter of the Christian Church with the outlines of its duties and responsibilities, that there we read the charge given to the apostles and the promise of a continued presence through all the days until the age should end, that we find also in these few words the proclamation of the unlimited and unfailing might of the God-Man, and how in act and word he foretold the completion of his work for his brethren and that the saved should be brought in full number to the eternal shore, we cannot fail to see how much the Christian ages have been indebted to that which the risen Lord said and did while he was awaiting the time of his ascension. Still further, when we consider that we must learn from what the apostles did and taught after the Ascension somewhat of that which the Lord spoke to them concerning the kingdom of God, we must acknowledge that much of the life of the Church and of its members draws its inspiration from this same time. They were days of God's working; God's days, as when in the physical creation he was preparing the way for the first Adam and for the natural life of man that should come from him; God's days, having in each a potency of a thousand years, in which he was making preparation for the revelation of the second Adam and of the spiritual life which he had attained and which he was to impart to his people. We shall not know all that they mean until that day when all things shall be subdued unto him, and he shall be subject to the Father, and God shall be all in all.



BIDA.

JESUS ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ASCENSION.

THE narrative of the Ascension is very brief. Saint Luke, both in his Gospel and in the Acts, seems to connect it closely with other events of which he writes. In the Gospel, however, the form of expression does not preclude the possibility of an interval of time; the words of the Acts seem to place the Ascension immediately after the command to the apostles to await in Jerusalem the coming of the Spirit and the promise that they should receive authority that they might be the Lord's witnesses unto the ends of the earth. And so great an event might well have followed upon such wondrous words. The apostles, and possibly others, had gone with Christ to the side of the Mount of Olives, over against the city of God and the site of the Temple in which his glory had dwelt. They were at or near Bethany, the quiet village where, in the time of his ministry, the Lord had found a resting place at the home of a family whom he loved. It would seem, from the fact that the Ascension must have been unobserved of the passers-by, that it was in the night-time, even as the Transfiguration, which gave a glimpse of Ascension glory, was at night; it may well be that the Ascension, like the Resurrection, was "very early in the morning," as the rays of the sun were first seen and the priests in the Temple were preparing for the first acts of worship on the new day. Standing there, with his chosen ones about him, his work on earth finished, his work in the heavens waiting for him to enter upon it, he lifted up his hands and blessed his disciples. And even as he was blessing them he was parted from them, and lifted up above them, and presently a cloud hid him from their sight.

They saw him no more; but as they were gazing upward, two angels stood by them, sent to bid them remember that their Lord was to come again in like manner as he had gone from them. That cloud, which partly manifests and partly conceals the divine glory, drew the veil between the outer parts of God's true temple, where the great sacrifice for sin had been presented and the atoning blood had been shed, and that most holy place, into which the High Priest alone could enter, that he might stand in the presence of the Father and plead the merits of the great Sacrifice. It was enough for the people of Christ to know that, to complete his work, he had gone for a time from earth; it was their sufficient lesson of duty that they should be bidden to remember that he was to return. They needed no further assurance of his life;

that he had sufficiently proved during the great forty days; they had not seen him constantly during that time, yet after he had been manifested to them they knew that he was living, and that for evermore; and so when he was taken up from them, they still knew that he was verily and indeed alive, in all the might of his manhood, and that the God-Man was now glorified with all the glory of the Godhead. They knew not how brief his absence might be; in fact they thought that he would soon return, even as the high priest in the Temple came back to his life among men at eventide of the same day on which he went into the awful presence of God. And yet they knew that he was to wait, and that they were to wait. They were to wait for the promise of the Father, and tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they should be "endued with power from on high"; they were to be his witnesses, not only in the country in which he had preached the Gospel of the kingdom, but unto the uttermost parts of the earth; and they must have understood that the words applied to him—for he himself had thus quoted them—in which David spoke of his Lord as to sit at the right hand of the King, Jehovah, until his enemies should be made his footstool. With minds filled with the thought of the glory upon which he had entered, and of the blessed work which he had left them to do, they returned to Jerusalem, we are told, with great joy. They could not mourn as those might have mourned who thought that their Master had been taken away from their head that day; he had but gone away for a time, as a King who was to receive for himself a kingdom and to return, or as a High Priest who was to complete a sacrificial act beyond the sight of the worshipers without, and then to come forth with words of blessing. They were to make ready against his coming again, and to take care that he should not find them unprepared. What wonder, then, that the feeling of joy, both for him and for themselves, was uppermost in their minds; or that they were, in the days of expectation, ever in the Temple, still to them a sacred place, praising and blessing God!

While it is to Saint Luke that we look for the only accounts that tell us at all in detail of the Ascension, it is well to remember that Saint John also mentions it as a great and momentous fact. Not to speak of the words of Christ which he records as spoken a year before the Passion, declaring that they should see the Son of Man ascending to the place whence

he had come to earth,¹ Saint John tells us how on the morning of his resurrection he sent by Mary Magdalen a message to the disciples, which should tell them that he had risen in order that he might ascend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God. So also Saint Peter preached the Ascension on the day of Pentecost, when he declared that what the people saw and heard in wonder was due to the gift of the Holy Spirit who had been sent by the risen Christ, exalted by the right hand of God;² and later, when he wrote his first epistle, the same apostle said of his Master that he was gone into heaven and was "at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him."³ And Saint Paul, writing to the Ephesians from his confinement at Rome, teaches the Ascension as one of the great facts in regard to Christ Jesus, seeing the fulfillment of the words of the psalm, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men," in that he who "descended first into the lower parts of the earth" had "ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."⁴ The argument of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews largely turns upon the Ascension, as he lays stress on the priesthood of Christ having its completion when he made his one great entrance into the most holy place.

And the visions of the Lord in glory bear witness to the same great fact, and tell us something of him as he now is and of his work for us. On the face of the first martyr, as he stood before the Sanhedrim, a youth and alone, there shone a radiance such as seemed to belong to the face of an angel in the very presence of God; and he declared that he saw heaven open, and the Son of Man, for whom he was ready to die, standing at the right hand of God. Devout writers have noted that though elsewhere we read of our Lord as sitting in heaven, to denote the majesty and dignity of his kingly power, Saint Stephen saw him in the posture of one who was ready to render assistance, the Champion defending the cause of his servant. And all who suffer for Christ's sake, all who need his help in the warfare and struggle of life, may well believe that Christ stands as their Champion, his glory brightening the faces and cheering the hearts of his people. Again, Saul the persecutor had a vision of the ascended Lord, seeing the bright light that came from his presence, hearing his words, and gaining such a conviction of the fact that it was indeed the Jesus that he was persecuting whose voice he heard and whose glory he beheld, that nothing afterward could shake his faith. "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" so he wrote

in reply to those who would deny his apostolate; he had had a revelation of truth in having a vision of Christ. And still again, Saint John, the last of the twelve to be left on earth, in the lonely isle that is called Patmos, sent there by a wicked emperor "for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," saw the Lord in all his glory, standing in the midst of the golden candlesticks that represented his Church; and he, who had leaned on the Lord's breast at the Supper and whom the Lord had loved, when he saw him "fell at his feet as dead." So from the ascended Christ there have come visions of his truth in all the ages, some to call and convince the ignorant and those that are out of the way, and some to cheer and encourage the saints; the former have learned to believe, the latter have had somewhat of the rewards of faith.

We need not ask where is that heaven, the plan of the revelation of God's glory, the mercy seat for propitiation, to which our Lord passed from earth. It is enough to know that he, the God-Man, with his glorified body—a body spiritual, but none the less real—is in the place of highest honor in the universe of God. He has carried our nature, united to his divine nature, above that of angels and of all the heavenly host; he has presented his great sacrifice, the only true and efficacious sacrifice, to his Father who gave him to be the Redeemer and Savior of men; he has prayed for, and has obtained for us, the promised Spirit, and that Spirit has come to dwell among and in his people; he has become head over all things to his Church, the blessed company of all who believe; he sits as king, ruling his willing subjects with love and bringing his enemies to acknowledge his rightful authority; he awaits the time when he may return, when all things shall be subdued unto him, when, in actual fact, as now in possibility and gracious design, all things shall be gathered together in him, and when his Church, "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," shall be presented to him as his Bride, and the faithful shall be called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

The Lord ascended in triumph. Victor over sin and death, though victor after a hard struggle and by means of apparent defeat, he sits in glory; victor, he stands to help us; victor, he pleads our cause; victor, he awaits the time of his triumph. It would have been defeat if he had escaped the cross, if he had not risen from death, if he had remained on earth. It is a proof, did we but realize it, of the truth of his Gospel and of the reality of his work among men to-day, that we do not see him dwelling among us. We touch him, now that he has ascended, as we could not have touched him during the great forty days. The inspiration

¹ John vi, 62.

² Acts ii, 32, 33.

³ I. Peter iii, 22.

⁴ Ephesians iv, 8-10.

and strength of all the Christian centuries has been the glorified Christ; the life of the Church, the life of each Christian disciple, has been the life of the ascended Lord; and each has borne witness to that which is, as we use the word, supernatural, and which yet is in most absolute harmony with all else that God has made or does. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Yet the Church and each of her members, though living a life of faith, based on and

nourished by love, is supported by hope of that which is yet to come, and which is to be the crown and perfection of all the Lord's own work, all the work of his body, all that has been done by and through each of its members. There is still a manifestation to be made, and for it each faithful one waits, eagerly though patiently; "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

"Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Samuel H. S.



JOUVENT.

THE PALSIED MAN CURED.

BOOK XIV.

FROM THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT TO THE DEATH OF ST. PAUL.

BY REV. J. MONRO GIBSON, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE ADVENT OF THE SPIRIT.

OUR period lies just within the forty years which extend from the Ascension of our Lord to the destruction of Jerusalem (30-70 A. D.)—a time of surpassing interest as at once the close of the old dispensation and the opening of the new; the last years of the Temple, the first years of the Church.

It was in the year 30 of our era—allowing for the four years of acknowledged error in the reckoning of the date of our Lord's birth—that Messiah the Prince entered his capital as its King, and the Temple as its Lord. Had he been received even at that eleventh hour, the fate of Jerusalem would have been averted, and from the Temple would have flowed the river of the water of life to gladden all the world. But the Lord of the Temple was despised and rejected, forced to turn his back upon the holy place, and to pronounce the word of doom, "Behold your house"—my Father's house no longer—"is left unto you desolate." Not the Temple, then, but the humble upper room¹ became the birthplace of the Church.

For forty years the old Temple and the new Church will stand side by side—in the colossal pile, with all its great historic memories, death; in the little upper room, life, new life, with all its potency and promise. As the forty years roll by we shall see Judaism waxing old and ready to perish till it finally expires in blood and fire; and side by side with it we shall see the infant Church, full of life and promise, setting out from its manger-like birthplace to the conquest of the world for its Lord.

The materials at our disposal are rich and valuable; for we have no less than nineteen separate documents which purport to be the literary product of the time, and which, after having been subjected to the fires of adverse criticism, are now more fully authenticated than ever. Besides the three Synoptical Gos-

pels, which we do not reckon in our enumeration because they deal exclusively with the preceding period, we have thirteen letters of Saint Paul, two of Saint Peter, one of Saint James the brother of our Lord, one of Saint Jude, the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, and, most important of all for our purpose, the historical book generally known as the Acts of the Apostles, all probably written within the limits of our period—the whole of the New Testament with the exception of the writings of Saint John.

It would be out of place here to enter into the intricate discussions by which these conclusions have been assailed on the one hand and supported on the other. We cannot say, indeed, that the question is closed in regard to all of them; but it is admitted on all hands that the trend of recent investigations has been more and more toward the vindication of the antiquity and genuineness of the sacred books. As, however, the Acts of the Apostles is the authority on which we rely exclusively for the first five years, and mainly for the rest, it may be well to call attention to what we may speak of as its triumphant emergence from the fires of hostile criticism to which it in particular has been subjected. It is now nearly a century since Dr. Paulus of Jena began the attack, and more than half a century since Ferdinand Christian Baur renewed it with a vigor, determination, and apparent success which seemed to many to put an end to the controversy, and to settle it forever that the Acts of the Apostles was no contemporary history, as had been supposed, but a compilation of the second century. He was seconded and followed by many able coadjutors known as the Tübingen School, who were regarded by many as the oracles of the age. But their conclusions are now discredited, and the very foundation on which they built them has given way. One position after another has been established, narrowing the margin of doubt more and more till it has become almost certain that

¹ Acts i, 13.

we have in our chief historical book the work of a contemporary and, for a large portion of what he records, an eyewitness. There is, first, the certainty that the third Gospel and the book of the Acts are from the same hand. On this point even Renan, in his Introduction to "The Apostles" (X), says, "This is a conclusion which has never been seriously disputed." There is next the certainty that those sections in which the first person is used — the "we sections," as they are called — are the work of an eyewitness. Further, the application of close criticism to the entire book has made it more and more apparent that it is all of a piece, so that the supposition of its being a late compilation in which the "we" sections were used as material has been effectually disposed of. Finally, recent investigations have brought to light so many evidences of the author's minute acquaintance with the history of the time, as, for instance, the perfect accuracy with which he uses the varied, ever variable designations of the local authorities, that it has become as certain as can be that it is the work of a contemporary. In this connection it is most interesting and reassuring to find in a recent great work this candid confession: "For years, with much interest and zeal, but with little knowledge, I followed the critics and accepted their results; but after studying the questions on the spot found myself obliged completely to give up those theories of the late origin of the books of the New Testament which had thrown discredit on their authenticity. And this was especially the case with respect to the Acts of the Apostles."¹

We may, then, fairly conclude that in using the Acts of the Apostles as material for this history we are building on solid ground. It is true that there are still men of learning who doubt, but it will be found on examination that the grounds on which they doubt are not critical but dogmatic.

It is the settled prejudice against the supernatural which determines the position they take. This is indeed openly acknowledged. Weizsäcker candidly acknowledges the transparency and apparent truthfulness of the narrative, and, in fact, is artless enough to caution his readers against being misled by this; as when, in speaking of the story of the early years he says, "the clearness of the narrative, with its well-rounded outline, is eminently adapted to influence us unduly in its favor."² But why unduly? Because of the many things in it which, he says, are "inconsistent with history." Let these inconsistencies with his-

tory be examined, and it will be found that the inconsistency is not with history but with the theory he starts with, namely, that there was no real resurrection of Jesus, and no real advent of the Spirit. Denying these great facts *in limine*, he, of course, finds the whole story full of inconsistencies and violent improbabilities. It is fully admitted that the early history of the Church is such as cannot be accounted for, if God is left out of it; but why should God be left out? The marvelous growth of Christianity in the face of obstacles quite insurmountable by any movement merely human is a great fact in the history of the world which happily no sane man can possibly deny; and if the hand of God was in it, why attempt to discredit a story of its origin which not only fully and satisfactorily accounts for the great result, but is so straightforward and consistent with itself as to be, by the testimony of those who try to discredit it, "eminently adapted to influence us unduly in its favor." Once accept the great facts of the resurrection of Christ and the advent of the Spirit, and everything is accounted for; and, as we shall see from time to time as we proceed, we not only find the account given by our historian eminently natural, but the history itself is ever furnishing new evidence to the reality of the great facts on which it is based.

And this brings us to the great theme of the present chapter — the advent of the Spirit. "A body hast thou prepared me" is the utterance of the Christ, which applies to this advent as well as to the former one. The number of the names is about 120, and they are all with one accord in one place, a body of believers waiting — waiting for the Spirit to animate the body and make it thrill with life. The one advent follows the other according to the principle, "first that which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual"; first the Word made flesh and dwelling among men, then the Word become Spirit and dwelling in his body, the Church. "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 everyone that is born of the Spirit." Listen! "Suddenly there came from heaven a sound" — not a blast, only a sound ("thou hearest the sound thereof") — "as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." The whole air of the upper room is electric with a Presence which now shows itself in a sudden illumination, making on all who witness it the impression of tongues of fire alighting on each of them, as if at some mystic touch innumerable carbon points, all dull and lusterless till now, had sprung into flame and filled the place with light. The many branched

¹ Ramsay. "The Church in the Roman Empire," Preface, p. viii.

² "The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church," p. 21.

golden candlestick is now all aglow. How supremely fitting are the signs of this great Advent, this coming of God in Christ by his Spirit to give life and power to his body, the Church, sent forth with new fires of love to make known to every nation under heaven the word of the Gospel of peace!

"Thou canst not tell whence it cometh." But are we not told that it was "from heaven"? Yes; but what does that mean? Does it mean from some distant star, or from some "happy land, far, far away"? Why should it? Had not Christ taught continually that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? And was it not now nearer than ever? Let us not forget the words, "Lo, I am with you alway." This assurance of the Lord himself, given ere he returned to his Father, should forbid us thinking of the Ascension in a geographical or astronomical sense. It was when still well in sight of his disciples that a cloud received him and veiled his transition to the realms of the unseen. And, though when the cloud cleared away he was no longer in their sight, he was with them still, nearer than ever. We have less difficulty in realizing this now that modern science has come to our help, taking the old meaning out of up and down, and telling us of an unseen universe which lies all about us now, of which the seen may be only a passing manifestation; and not the man of science only but the poet teaches us the same lesson, confirming it out of his own consciousness, or rather out of the Universal Consciousness of which he is the exponent:

"For ever am I conscious, moving here,
That should I step a little space aside,
I pass the boundary of some glorified
Invisible domain—it lies so near!
Yet nothing know we of that dim frontier
Which each must cross, whatever fate betide,
To reach the heavenly cities where abide
(Thus Sorrow whispers) those that are most dear,
Now all transfigured in celestial light!"¹

As the Ascension was not necessarily a going up, so the outpouring of the Spirit was not properly a coming down. We speak of the falling of the dew, but dew does not fall. It is ever diffused unseen through all the air; but when the necessary conditions are present it is disengaged, and on each grass blade there gleams a diamond. So was it when, through prayer and waiting upon God throughout the ten days, the conditions were prepared, and presently there appeared, not dewdrops but fire-drops upon each one of them. Whence came this fire-dew? From heaven, no doubt; from the heaven which "lies about us in our infancy" and is never far from us, though we may be far from it, and which, though the consciousness of it may be quite lost, can be re-

stored, is restored, to those who receive the kingdom of God as a little child—out of that heaven the Spirit came to them, comes to us, in fulfilment of the old promise, "I will be as the dew unto Israel."

Have we here the dreaded supernatural? We do not insist on the term. If the definition of "nature" is made so large as to embrace the spirit world and all its phenomena, including the action of him who is the Father of our spirits, then we are not anxious to insist on anything being supernatural. But if nature be understood to mean physical nature, then assuredly we have here that which is above and beyond it. The Spirit of God has been at work in the world from the beginning, so that there is no breach of continuity; but a new cycle of his working is opening out, so that new and strange phenomena may be reasonably expected.

To one who knew nothing of electricity the flashes which mark the passing of the current at particular points would seem a portent. So, also, to the man who knows nothing of the electricity of the unseen universe all spiritual phenomena must seem portentous and incredible, and most incredible of all, perhaps, the outward signs by which on the great day of Pentecost their reinforcement was announced; but to the man who realizes that this heavenly electricity was beginning to manifest itself under the new conditions, as never before, it will seem most natural that there should have been such outward signs, and quite appropriate that the new spiritual power should show itself in the minds as well as in the hearts of those who received it, endowing them with the strange ability to express their thoughts in the tongues of the diverse peoples then gathered in Jerusalem.

The new era is a distinct advance on all that has gone before. The advent of the Spirit takes us a step higher in the evolution of the kingdom. This is evident on the principle already referred to, "first that which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual"; and it is distinctly acknowledged by our Lord himself when, on the eve of his departure, he says, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." We have seen that the Ascension was not geographical or astronomical; but a real ascension it was; it was a stepping up from the plane of the natural to the plane of the spiritual. It is in the full consciousness of this advance that the apostle says, even "though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." It is a great thing that God should speak to the Fathers by the prophets; a much greater that in the last days he should speak to men in

¹ Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

his Son, but the greatest of all that he should dwell in them by his Spirit. It is the same Spirit who in creation brooded over the face of the deep, who moved holy men of old to speak the oracles of God, who dwelt in the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth; but now he comes, in all the fullness and tenderness of the completed revelation of God in Christ, to dwell in all who will receive him. In the Old Testament times there was, as it were, a sprinkling; now it is to be a pouring: in the time of the Incarnation the Spirit descended upon One;¹ now it is to be upon all, on men and women, on masters and slaves, on Jews and Gentiles, on young and old, in fulfillment of the ancient oracle, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh."

"Thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." Not one of the hundred and twenty could tell. Not one of them could in the dimmest way forecast the issues in the years and centuries to follow. They were conscious of new life and power which they knew to be from God; and, accordingly surrendering themselves to the heavenly impulse, they went forth in their Master's name, though like Abraham not knowing whither, to tell his story, to bear witness to his resurrection, to proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins, to persuade men everywhere to press into the kingdom of heaven, brought now within the reach of all. How they fare in their new endeavor the sequel will declare.

CHAPTER II.

THE INFANT CHURCH.

THE Church was born, not made. It was no mere society or association into which men organized themselves for religious purposes. Like him from whom it sprang, it was born from above, "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The advent of the Spirit was the birth of the Church.

For we must not confound the Church, as many do, with the kingdom of God or of heaven, of which Christ had so much to say in the days of his flesh. The work of Christ was not so much to set up the kingdom of God as to proclaim it; to tell how near it was if men would only lift up eyes of faith and look, how gracious a welcome it had for all who would only come to the gate and knock. The Church, on the other hand, though a divine institution, was still an institution—something which had to be begun, to be instituted, to have its foundations laid, and then to be built. The work of Christ on earth in relation to the Church was this laying of the foundation, the preparation for its advent. Hence it is that we hear so very little of it in these early days. He does not even mention it till he is within sight of the end, when at Cæsarea Philippi he begins to tell his disciples of his approaching death. And what he says of it seems expressly intended to keep them from supposing that it is already in existence, "Upon this rock I will build my church." The 120 in the upper room retained still the familiar designation by which they were known throughout the earthly ministry of Christ. They were his disciples. They formed a school, the school of Christ. Not till

the great day of Pentecost, when for the first time they were fully possessed by his Spirit, did they become members of Christ, "His body the Church," the relation of which to the kingdom may be put in this way, that it is a body set apart to seek first the kingdom of God, to pray and work for its coming, and to be the custodian of its keys.

From all this it is evident that what constitutes the Church is the presence and indwelling of the Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." In the same way, and for the same reason, if any religious body have not the Spirit of Christ, it is none of his. It is not a question of orders or of ordinances; it is a question of the presence or absence of the Holy Spirit. The venerable Church Father, Irenæus, expresses it admirably in the memorable and oft-quoted sentence: "Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and every kind of grace."

The infant Church, thus born of the Spirit, at once begins to show signs of life. First it finds its voice: "They began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance; and presently little knots of people gathered round the different speakers, here a group of Parthians, there a band of Medes, beyond a company of Elamites, farther on other nationalities, all marveling greatly because, as they put it, "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." As the crowd increases, the groups become pressed together into a great concourse, and this calls out the natural leader of the hundred and twenty, the Apostle Peter, who lifts up his voice, and, probably in the Greek tongue, since that would be

¹ Mark i, 10, 11.

fairly understood by all, preaches the first Christian sermon, giving forth for the first time the Church's message to the world.

It is a new message; but it does not set aside the old. Christ had come not to destroy but to fulfill, and accordingly his apostle begins by making it plain that he is no apostle of revolution, that evolution rather is the word, for he shows how all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh." This is a feature of the Gospel of Christ which ought never to be forgotten. It was not forgotten by the Apostle Paul, when, in preaching to the Athenians he quoted and confirmed the teaching of one of their own poets. Nor should it be forgotten in these days when the treasures of ancient wisdom are so faithfully and diligently explored. Let us rejoice in all the "broken lights" of other faiths, the stars in the night which heralded the rising of the Sun of Righteousness.

While the message of the new Church is set in no antagonism to any words of the wise, it is something over and above them all. It is no new philosophy. It is no fresh ritual. It is a testimony to the Christ of God and to his great kingdom which embraces all. Having shown its connection with the revelation of the past, the apostle proceeds to his great theme. He begins with the name of Jesus, not hesitating to speak of him as the Man of Nazareth, and then leads up his hearers step by step to the great conclusion, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

It seemed a word of doom. "Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ!" "Then our enemy is on the throne. He has all power in heaven and on earth. Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Not your *enemy*, but your Savior. It is the Prince of Peace, the King of Love, who sits upon the throne. This is the kingdom he preached and now has opened. Here are its keys: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

No wonder hard hearts were melted that day; and no wonder that the same great story of love divine should continue to melt hard hearts century after century, age after age, from then till now! The extension of the gift of the Holy Ghost to the multitude of new disciples meant, of course, the enlarging of the Church; for, as we have seen, where the spirit is, there is the Church. So there were added to them about three thousand souls—not far from the Master's thirtyfold, in a single day. The fire

symbol, however, is not repeated. This has marked the advent of the Spirit; but now that he is here, to abide with the Church forever, the old water symbol becomes the standing ordinance, according to the Master's word: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is an old sign put to a new use; and yet not wholly new, for it still keeps the old reference to repentance and the remission of sins which it had under the ministry of John. But, as water is a familiar symbol of the Spirit, it may well embrace the new gift of the Holy Ghost, now poured out in fulfillment of ancient prophecy.

There have been and still are controversies as to the outward rite. These may have their own importance; but they need not detain us in this hasty sketch. The mind is carried on at once to the great realities, "the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost." That the rite had now the double reference is plain not only from the story of the infant Church, but from the rebaptism, as recorded in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, of those disciples at Ephesus who had not heard of the gift of the Spirit. They had already been baptized into the remission of sins (the baptism of John), but they were now baptized in the name of Jesus and, at the same time receiving the Holy Ghost, were incorporated into the Church of Christ.

So far, we see how the Church became enlarged by additions from without. By the delivery of her message she persuaded large numbers of the hearers to accept Christ as their Savior and King, and then received them into the Church by the rite of baptism. We are next permitted to see how she maintained and developed life within herself: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." In this brief statement we have some insight into the ordinances of the Church, by which she sought to edification of her own members. There is, first, the *teaching* of the apostles. This was distinct from the message to the world. It had, indeed, a separate place in the great commission: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—so far the commission has been already followed, but it does not end here; the next thing is "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The proclamation of the message to lead men to repentance and acceptance of Christ as their Savior and King is one thing; the instruction of those within the Church is another. In modern preaching the two are more or less

intermingled, but they should not be confounded. There is a striking instance of ignorance on this point in Selden's "Table Talk," where, in attempting to show the uselessness of sermons in a Christian country, like England, he says that the object of preaching is "to tell the news of Christ's coming into the world, and when that is done, or where it is known already, the preacher's work is done." As if the mere knowing that Christ has come into the world made people Christians, and not only so, but Christians so very good and strong that they could be left without any help, or guidance, or provision for the daily need! The apostles knew better. The great proclamation of the Gospel on the day of Pentecost had brought to Christ 3,000 souls, but well they knew that the work was just beginning, that the lambs must be fed, the sheep tended.

The prominence given to *fellowship*, which occupies the place next to teaching, shows that in the early days much was made of the mutual help which the members of the Church can give to one another in spiritual things. There was not only a receiving from the apostles but a sharing with one another. Then the ordinary intercourse of life was lifted to a higher plane and hallowed by "*the breaking of bread*," which recalled the time when the Lord and his disciples used to sit at the same table, and especially that night on which he was betrayed, when he instituted the sacred rite of the Supper and asked his disciples to do this in remembrance of him. The "*prayers*," with which the simple enumeration closes, included, beyond doubt, praise as well, all the worship of the Church, that which she offers to her Lord; for she is privileged not only to hear but to speak, not only to receive but to give. All is simple, natural, beautiful. There is no elaborate service, no gorgeous ritual, in this golden age of the Church's history.

That it was a golden age, indeed, is made still more apparent as we follow the sketch which gives us next a glimpse of the life of the Church—full of the soft sunlight of the dawn. Love is the presiding angel. Very fervent is their love to one another. "All that believed were together." There was true unity. Not that we are to suppose there was no difference of opinion. We read that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul";¹ which is happily quite possible even among

¹ Acts iv, 32.

those who are far from being of one mind. They were a true brotherhood—not in spirit alone, for they made it their care to see that none of their number should lack the things needful for the body. There were rich and poor among them, but the rich reckoned not their wealth their own; they counted it a trust, and some of them gave it up to provide for those that lacked—a notable and noble example of true generosity; for there was no legislation, and no thought of it; there was no compulsion whatever; it was the spontaneous outcome of brotherly love. The working of this Christian love solved, for a time at least, the problem of poverty in the Jerusalem Church; and if it only pervaded society as it then pervaded the Church, it would solve the gigantic problem of modern poverty; not by bringing about an artificial equality, which was not even aimed at in the early Church, but by insuring that no one should lack. Law may help to reduce inequalities; but only love—love everywhere diffused, as we believe it will be some time—can bring us the kingdom of heaven.

Not only was there fervent love to one another, but large-hearted charity to their brethren of the old faith, also. They continued "steadfastly with one accord in the Temple." After all that had happened, it would have been only human nature to turn their backs on the Temple, and never cross its threshold again. And had they entertained the modern notion of many narrow-minded people that they could not worship with those from whom they differed in opinion, they would have found it impossible to join in any of the Temple services. But "love suffereth long and is kind; . . . believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things";¹ so they were able still to worship day by day in the Temple. And as love ruled their life, joy pervaded it, "breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people"²—a beautiful picture. It was the time of the Church's child innocence. Heaven lay about her in her infancy. And we do not wonder that, with a message so clear and strong, with a worship so pure and simple, with a life so loving and so joyous, "the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved."³

¹ I. Corinthians xiii, 4, 7 (Revised Version).

² Acts ii, 47 (Revised Version).

³ Acts ii, 47 (Revised Version).

CHAPTER III.

HER WORK AND WARFARE.

THE absence of dates in our sole authority for the earliest years of the Church's history is apt to mislead those who, failing to read between the lines, assume that the story is continuous. The fact is that the Acts of the Apostles is not so much a history as a book of days and of men — of great days and great men. After a slight introductory sketch of the forty-nine days preceding, there is a full account of the fiftieth day, the great day of the Advent of the Spirit, concluding with a picture of the infant Church, of which the Advent was the constitution. Immediately following this we have the story of another great day¹ with what came to pass on the morrow;² and then, after a few lines of general description, we have the story in full of the fate of Ananias and Sapphira — a very sad day; and so we are carried on by leaps and bounds as it were, from milestone to milestone, till we reach the conversion of Saint Paul, by which time we discover that we have traversed a period of nearly five years, though all we really have of it is a clear and full view of five or six specimen days. We may regret that for the rest we have only such general statements as "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," "the Lord added to the Church daily," "great grace was upon them all"; but it is plain that, unless the record had been extended to such dimensions as would have unfitted it for a place in the sacred Canon, it was far better to give a few vivid glimpses such as we have, setting the actors in full light, than to attempt to give the entire course of events in what must inevitably have been a dry and meager summary.

We may assume, then, that after the great day of Pentecost closing with such a marvelous accession to the membership of the newborn Church, there was a time of quiet growth, during which the new converts, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, would be in course of preparation for aggressive work; and if we picture to ourselves what it must have been to deal with such a multitude of people, what organizing into classes would be necessary, and selection of leaders, and planning of courses of instruction, and arrangements for meetings, we can see how fully all the talents, not of the apostles only, but of all the original 120, would be in requisition. All this, however, is left to the imagination. It is read between the lines of the single verse

which follows the mention of the number added to the Church the very first day.

Objections have been raised to the probability that the Church was allowed thus quickly to gather strength after the provocation which the events of Pentecost must have given to the authorities; but all is explained by the natural awe awakened in the minds of the priests and rulers by the tokens of a presence and a power which they could not but suspect at least to be of God. "Fear came upon every soul."

Under the shadow of this fear there may have been occasional opportunities for public preaching by the apostles during these months of comparative seclusion; but it seems more likely that the Church went quietly on its way, worshiping as before in the Temple, and in addition holding its own services in larger or smaller groups as was found convenient or possible, living the new, glad and simple life, without ostentation and with much loving kindness and charity, so that they not only edified one another, but attracted those without — not in crowds any longer, but one by one as opportunities were afforded in the intercourse of daily life. The question "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" was still unanswered; but they were content to wait for the guidance of the Spirit before taking any very decided step. They did not wait in vain; for in course of time there came a day when Peter and John could not but lift up their voices in the most public place of concourse. They had been going up to the Temple at the usual time of afternoon worship. As they passed the gate Beautiful their attention was called to a poor cripple, whom they had, no doubt, seen many times before; for, lame from his birth, he had been carried every day by his friends to the same spot; but some impulse, which possibly they did not understand at the time, though afterward they would recognize it to have been of the Spirit, led them to stop. They had nothing to put into the outstretched hand; but there was something in his eyes that day which appealed to the Christ heart in them; so "Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us."

There is no reason to suppose that the apostles had power to heal every cripple they met; all was under the direction of the Spirit of Christ. It is still the same Jesus who, in the days of his flesh, made it his care to see that the patient's heart was open to God in the exercise of some degree of faith, before he would undertake his cure. If the Master's healing

¹ Acts iii, iv, 1-4.

² Acts iv, 5-31.

was so conditioned, much more may we assume a similar limitation in the servants'. Hence this scrutinizing glance, this reading of the man's soul, before the name of Christ could be invoked to work his cure. We may well believe that the poor cripple had some knowledge of Christ and some rudimentary faith in him. He must have often seen him during the last four years, often heard his voice, perhaps knew of his healing in the Temple some of the lame and the blind;¹ and who knows what thoughts would often pass through his mind as he lay there day by day, and heard something of the story of Pentecost and caught some flying echoes of the apostles' witness to the resurrection of Jesus?

Is it unlikely that this very morning some disciple had talked to him, and told him that the Spirit of Christ was in his people and especially in his apostles? Might not this explain the wistful look which fascinated the two as they passed by? True, he only asked an alms; but this had been so long the summit of his daily ambition that it is not to be wondered at, even if vague thoughts of the love and power of Christ and of his apostles were stirring in his soul, that he should find it difficult to imagine anything better than the best he had known these forty years. But whether or not there was anything deeper in these eyes than found expression on his tongue, the apostle, after a few moments of earnest scrutiny, during which there would rise a fervent prayer to the risen Christ to give the needed guidance, spoke the word of power: "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."²

To encourage him, and help him to realize that this was no mockery of his weakness, but a genuine summons to new life, the apostle "took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength. And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the Temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."³

Why is this work of healing told in such detail and given the place of prominence it holds in the record? Not merely as a seal of apostolic authority—though nothing could have served this purpose better; for the man on whom the cure was wrought was well known as a cripple all his life, so that there could be no mistake about it, especially as it was done in the full light of day, and in presence of a multitude of people, and was afterward canvassed in the highest court of the realm, composed of men who had every motive to cast doubt on it, had that been possible. It was a sign of the

kingdom of heaven, a representation in the realm of the physical of what the work of the Church was to be in the realm of the Spirit. The pentecostal sign had shown what her equipment was to be, what the weapon by which she was to achieve her victories—the tongue of fire; this later sign was to show what her work would be, what the nature of the victories she was to win. To teach and to heal—these were the great functions of the Church. The tongue of fire was the symbol of the teaching power; this miracle was a symbol of the power to heal. The Church of Christ was to be no mere instructor of the world; she must be its physician, too; the Sun of Righteousness had risen, not with light only, but with healing in his wings.

That it was only a sign, not a specimen, is made clear first by the use the apostles made of it in the discourse which follows, and then by the fact that all through the subsequent history the stress is laid on forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. Christ himself had made it clear that the works of healing which he wrought were but signs of a higher healing needed in the realm of the Spirit: "that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house."¹ As these were the days of the Word made flesh, the giving of such signs was a characteristic feature of his ministry, and the prominence of the curing of bodily disease was kept up throughout his whole earthly life; but there is not the same prominence given to the healing of disease by the apostles. The Word made flesh has now become Spirit; and accordingly the ministry is lifted up to the plane of the Spiritual—not suddenly, that is not the method of the divine procedure, but by a natural evolution, the physical receding, the spiritual advancing. There is no breach of continuity either in the doing or in the teaching, though in both there is this development into the spiritual, which our Lord himself forecast in these remarkable and too-little heeded words of his: "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father." It is only in the early part of the history, the time of transition from one period to the other, that we find anything like the same stress laid on works of healing as throughout the Gospels.

There are those in our day who appeal to these cures of bodily disease as a reason why the Church of Christ should have little or nothing to say about sin and salvation, and give all its attention to relieving the sufferings of the poor, and the lame, and the halt, and the blind. This ought by all means to be done according

¹ Matthew *xxi*, 14. ² Acts *iii*, 6 (Revised Version).

³ Acts *iii*, 7, 8 (Revised Version).

¹ Matthew *ix*, 6, 7 (Revised Version).



RAPHAEL.

HEALING THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE.

to ability and opportunity, but never so as to leave the other undone. The special work of Christ, the work to which above all he calls his Church, is to deal with the heart and conscience, to preach a salvation which not the poverty-stricken alone require, but all ranks and conditions of men. So the apostle, in the discourse which follows, addressed himself not to a class, but to the "men of Israel"; and, delivered as it was in the Temple at the hour of prayer and in a place of such resort as the porch of Solomon, the audience would include the *élite* of Jerusalem. To these men of Israel he preached not a Gospel for the cure of other people's bodies, but for the healing of their own souls, awakening their slumbering consciences by reminding them how they had treated the Christ of God, how they had denied the Holy and Righteous One and put to death the Prince of Life, and then summoning them to repent: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." How spiritual it all is—not ankle-bones strengthened any longer, but sins forgiven and the presence of the Lord!

Such is the work of the Church under the dispensation of the Spirit—a work which cannot be accomplished without war. Had the alleviation of suffering been all she undertook to do, she might have had peace; but when she made it her great endeavor to summon men to repentance and new life, she must needs count upon her work becoming warfare. So in fact it proved; for while the apostles were trying to convince their audience that the true blessing of Israel, which according to the ancient covenant made with their fathers was to come to them first, and then through them to all the nations of the earth, was to be realized in the Spiritual sphere, "in turning away every one of you from your iniquities," they were rudely interrupted by a band of Temple officials, who came upon them, carried them off, and "put them in ward unto the morrow"—an ending of the day not fitted to raise their spirits, especially as they had then no means of knowing, what afterward appeared, that "many of them that heard the Word believed," so that with the additions which had been made day by day since Pentecost, "the number of the men came to be about five thousand."

Had the apostles been the same men they were in the old days, this would probably have been the end of their witness. A night in prison, with the prospect of appearing next day before the dreaded court of the Sanhedrim, was not likely to have a bracing effect on one who, when his Master had been arraigned a few months before, had denied him in the most cowardly and shameful manner. But the old

Simon and the new Peter are very different men. The old Simon has been crucified with Christ; nevertheless he lives, a new Peter, and yet not Peter, but Christ liveth in him. The Spirit of the Master now animates the servant; the effect of which is that it is not he who quails before the judges, but they who quail before him. As we read we realize that it is not Christ who has gone and Peter who is there; it is Peter who has gone, and Christ who is there. Well may he keep using that Name—it is no mere name, it is the very spirit of the man. The proof of the reality of the pentecostal advent is renewed in every paragraph. As the cure of the lame man reads like another chapter of the Gospel, the trial before the Sanhedrim reads like a new trial of the Christ. We are told that Peter, as he answered the question of the Sanhedrim, was filled with the Holy Ghost, but it really was not necessary to tell it; it shines out in every sentence of that wonderful address. It has such a rare combination of qualities as irresistibly to suggest that a greater than Peter is here, even he who gave the promise: "When they deliver you up be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

Observe how dignified and respectful is the style of address as it opens, with only a delicate touch of irony in the reference to their being examined for the *good deed* done to the impotent man; the plainness and fullness of the answer given to the question, while the opportunity is not lost of giving the answer in such a way as to produce conviction of sin; the aptness of the quotation¹ and the dexterity in seizing the opportunity of preaching the gospel of salvation through the same Name in which the good deed to the impotent man has been done—think of all this accomplished, and accomplished so perfectly, within the compass of a brief answer to the council's question!²

The court itself had an instinctive feeling that a greater than Peter and John was somehow responsible for it; for "when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

Nonplussed and helpless, they rid themselves of the inconvenient presence of their prisoners and conferred among themselves: "What shall we do?" We are reminded of the question so many asked at the close of the pentecostal sermon; yet what a difference! Then it was, What shall we do to be saved? Now it is,

¹ Acts iv, 11 (Revised Version).

² See whole address, Acts iv, 8-12 (Revised Version).

What shall we do with these men? How shall we get rid of them, and their troublesome message? They cannot think of anything better than to charge their prisoners with threats that they speak henceforth to no man in this Name — which only gives occasion for another word of respectful but firm defiance, which has ever since rung like a clarion in the sacred cause of religious liberty: "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to harken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." Before these unfaltering words, their accusers faltered, and, completely baffled, weakly repeated the same futile threat and let them go.

The record of the two eventful days closes with an exquisite glimpse of the apostles in their own company, a picture of the early Church in prayer. After the storm and stress of the day, it is light at evening time. The clouds have not dispersed, but they are broken, and the sun is tinging them with glory. We are permitted not only to look in upon the company but to listen, for the importance of the occasion is marked by a report of the principal prayer. It is the first recorded prayer of the Christian Church, and how wonderful it is! No infant lisps are these, no rude beginnings of the language of devotion, to be developed in course of time to something high and noble. "Unlearned and ignorant men" are they? Strange how little it shows in what they say either to men or to God! Whether you regard its substance or its form, the prayer is a marvel. How lofty in its adoration, how

penetrating in its use of Scripture, how calm in its trust, how utterly unselfish in its spirit, how definite in its requests, how confident in its outlook on the troubled future!¹

We have spoken of this scene as a picture; it is more: it is an object-lesson for the Church on the secret of power for her work and warfare. Though the Spirit abides with the Church forever, it is only through prayer that his grace and power can be realized. The promise, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," had been gloriously fulfilled, as the events of the two days had abundantly proved; but the power, coming at first in answer to earnest and united prayer, can abide with them only on the same condition; and accordingly, though beyond doubt they would recount the events of the day and make them the occasion of thanksgiving to God, it is not this which gives tone to the gathering. Forgetting the things which are behind, they are reaching forth to those which are before. Presuming not at all on the courage which has brought them forth triumphant from their first encounter with the enemy, they pray that in the coming time they may have strength to speak the Word with all boldness; and, without assuming that the work of cure which came so easy to them the day before would necessarily be repeated when the need should next arise, they plead that still the Lord will stretch forth his hands to heal. It is in this abiding spirit of prayerfulness that we read the secret of the early Church's power, both in her work and in her warfare.

CHAPTER IV.

HER MOST FORMIDABLE FOE.

SO far the Spirit has been all and in all. The divine element in the Church was for the time quite over-borne the human, so much so that, if we were reading the history for the first time, we might almost hope that the second body of Christ would be as pure as the first, that as he himself, though tempted in all points, was yet without sin, so might the Church in like manner prove immaculate. But it was not so to be. Human nature will be much in evidence in the Church's history; so we must not be disappointed to find that the innocence of the early days, like the innocence of childhood, is soon lost amid the rude ways of the world; that the first baptism of the Spirit is like the springtide of the spiritual life in many an ardent soul, carrying everything before it for a time, submerging old lusts, filling every creek and bay with its glorious fullness and so leading the new convert to en-

tain high hopes for the future, which must all too soon suffer abatement by sad experience in facing the stern realities of the battle of life.

One feels the change from "the former treatise," the discouraging difference between the life of Christ and the life of the Church. His path was "like the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"; hers was to be through many a dark valley of the shadow and by many a long and tedious circuit. He could look the world in the face, with the defiant challenge: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" She must often hide her face in shame, with the humiliating confession: "Which of the commandments have I not broken?" But the Lord has never cast off his people. His promise was that the Spirit should

¹ See Acts iv, 24-30.

abide with the Church forever, and it has been kept through all her wanderings. The "Holy Catholic Church" has never been altogether a misnomer, for even in the darkest hour the Spirit of holiness has not been absent from the remnant of his people. Holiness has always been the Church's ideal even when the actual was at the greatest distance from it, and in days when apostasy seemed well-nigh universal there have been at least the "seven thousand . . . which have not bowed unto Baal," and among them true saints of God shining like stars in the dark night.

The early records of the Church are happily true to life on the human as well as on the divine side. It is often painful enough to read the honest pages of the Acts and the Epistles, telling us how soon and with what dark success the serpent stole into the Church's paradise; how among those who were of one heart and one soul there sprang up noxious weeds of discontent and irritation, and that, too, in connection with the distribution of those very charity funds, the contribution of which had been the high-water mark of her early love and brotherhood; how differences of opinion and practice led to long and painful controversies; how the apostles themselves did not always agree and sometimes could not even work together, "the contention was so sharp between them"; how in the different churches there were factions here, false doctrines there, at times grave and serious abuses even in the holiest things, and not infrequently shameful relapses into the old heathen vices from which the converts had been redeemed.

All this is sad enough; and yet how reassuring to read of it in the canonical Scriptures! for if we had seen there only the ideal Church, we might have despaired of the actual Church as we traced its history down the ages and as we see it now. Had we been permitted to see in the inspired page only the heaven which lay about her in her infancy, we could not have recognized her in the stress of the conflict with "the gates of hell." It was in foresight of these terrible times that the Founder of the Church spoke the word which has given fresh courage to the faithful when there was nothing else to cling to, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"; but it helps us the more to stand in the evil day, and to possess our souls in patience and in hope, that we are permitted to see the same conflict with the terrible forces of evil become acute and anxious while yet the apostles were leading the army of the Lord.

But while we are encouraged not to despair, we are warned not to presume. That there will be tares among the wheat is a fact with which we must reckon, but we may not, therefore, think lightly of the enemy who sows

them. "Offenses must needs come; but woe to that man through whom the offense cometh!" Familiar as sin is, and inevitable as is its presence in the Church in the time of her probation, it remains ever that abominable thing which God hates; and it is to impress this upon the conscience of the Church as with an iron pen and as with lead in the rock forever, that the first recorded sin, that of Ananias and Sapphira, is branded with a signal act of vengeance.¹

"The soul that sinneth it shall die" was written on the entrance of sin into the world; it is written again in letters of flame on the entrance of sin into the Church. This seems to be the true explanation of the altogether exceptional act of judgment. There have been many worse sinners in the Church than Ananias and Sapphira whom God has suffered not only to live but to flourish. We are not, therefore, to look for the reason of their punishment by instant death to the special aggravation of their sin. Aggravated it was as not only falsehood but sacrilege, seeing that it was committed as it were in the very face of the Holy Ghost, whose presence was so fully and graciously manifested in the very act and exercise in which the Church was engaged at the time. So the apostle puts it: "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

But even sacrilege in its worst forms has not been so uncommon in the history of the Church as to justify us in finding in this the reason of the exceptional judgment. We have, in fact, here one more sign of the kingdom of heaven. The healing of the lame man in Solomon's Porch was, as we have seen, not for his sake only, but for the instruction of the Church to the end of time; and in the same way the judgment on Ananias and Sapphira was not for their punishment only, but for the warning of all who should come after.

Were, then, Ananias and Sapphira sacrificed to teach a lesson to other people? True, their sin deserved death, but was it fair to single them out for exceptional severity? Before we entertain such an objection we ought to be sure that they were treated with exceptional severity. When the would-be gambler loses all on his first stake it seems hard; but those who know what the gambling spirit means are well aware that it is the best thing that could have happened to him. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." This is so great a danger that the postponement of retribution is often the very worst thing that can happen to a man. Perhaps the very severest word of doom

¹ Acts v, 1-11.

in the whole Bible is this: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." Had Ananias and Sapphira been let alone, they might have been joined to their idols, as Judas was, whom his Master let alone for so long a time, giving him repeated warning, indeed, but postponing the day of judgment. They had not had time, one may surely suppose, to be joined to their idols. They had committed a great sin, but they knew the way of forgiveness and of life, and though their summons was so sudden that they had

opportunity to show their penitence to men, we are not, on that account, shut up to the conclusion that the sentence of death extended to the life beyond. We may at least hope that in their case "mercy rejoiceth against judgment," that even in the swift retribution they were graciously dealt with, while the manner of it was such as to proclaim once for all, on the occasion of the first contact of the spirit of holiness with the spirit of iniquity, that "our God is a consuming fire."

CHAPTER V.

JERUSALEM FILLED WITH THE DOCTRINE.

HEALED of its deadly disease, the Church addressed itself to its work with new vigor, winning the confidence of the people more and more, till the whole of Jerusalem was filled with the doctrine,¹ so that the dominant party found itself compelled in self-defense to take renewed action; and as the former attempt to deal with the two leading spirits had so signally failed, they now seized all the apostles and put them in prison to await their trial before the Sanhedrim.

We can now see, as we look back, that not the apostles but their persecutors were on their trial. They have had already many signs that they are not fighting against men but against God, and their whole conduct, during the former trial and since, shows that they have serious misgivings. A struggle has been going on between the still small voice of conscience, and the loud clamor of worldly interest ever noisily reminding them that to yield now is to surrender position, prestige, influence over the people, every prerogative and privilege for the preservation of which they had already crucified the Christ. It is difficult for us now to understand how they could avoid what seems to us the inevitable inference from the cures wrought by the apostles; but we have only to remember that the current belief of the time left open to them the supposition that these may have been wrought by Satanic power, and that as yet there was no sufficient evidence that the whole movement was not of the Evil One. This would tend to quiet the uneasy conscience. We can see the reason, therefore, why it was desirable that they should not only see such evidence of the Spirit's power as was furnished by the good deed done to the impotent man, but have a demonstration of it which would come more closely home to themselves. Such a demonstration was their discovery that some Unseen Hand had opened the prison doors, foiled the vigilance of the

guards, freed the apostles, and set them at their old task of preaching in the Temple "all the words of this Life." That it was a sign of warning to the Sanhedrim and of encouragement to the apostles, and not a mere rescue, is evident from the fact that the latter were as easily brought before the court as if they had been found safely locked up in the prison.

Now that they have them, what will they do with them? Their trepidation appears in the high priest's challenge; "We straightly charged you not to teach in this name; and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intended to bring this man's blood upon us." The apostles, on the other hand, show the same boldness and unflinching determination as before, and make answer with the same readiness and in a manner which again irresistibly suggests that it is not themselves, but the spirit of their Father who speaketh in them: "We must obey God rather than men. The God of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

While the accused are thus calm, and clear, and resolute, the accusers are distracted between conflicting emotions. Conscience, indeed, receives its quietus without much ado; but still their course is by no means clear. Listening to passion, "they were minded to slay them"; but, with all Jerusalem filled with the doctrine, what would the people do? They must find some safer course, and the suggestion of the prudent Pharisee, Gamaliel, seems to meet the case. In his remarkable speech¹ he makes the policy of non-intervention seem not only safe but even pious, for he acknowledges the possibility that the movement they

¹ Acts v, 18.

¹ Acts v, 35-39.

are trying to suppress may be of God; and if the controversy had been one with which they had nothing to do, the non-committal policy might have been justified; but as the question raised was one they were bound, both personally and officially, to face, selfish neutrality was mere cowardice. The different views on this point which are taken by good men may be accounted for by some confusion of ideas arising from the mixed functions of the Sanhedrim. Had it been a mere organ of the State, the counsel of Gamaliel would have been wholly wise; but as it was, above all, a spiritual court, and therefore bound to undertake responsibility in the matter, its time-serving timidity cannot be justified. In any case the argument of the astute Pharisee was valid against the use of the strong arm of the law; but it was no argument against the careful and conscientious consideration of the claims of this new doctrine with which Jerusalem was filled.

In these days of agnosticism, when it is reckoned a merit to keep the mind in suspense in regard to the great issues of life and death, time and eternity, there is too much temptation to admire and adopt the policy of Gamaliel; but surely all that is best and noblest in us rises up in indignation against the abnegation of manhood on the part of those who make their mere worldly interests the sole concern of life and are willing to "let alone" the great things of God and of eternal life to settle themselves as best they may.

Worldly wisdom was justified of her children from the selfish point of view and for the time, for the would-be persecutors managed to gratify to some extent all their conflicting emotions—their passion in the beating of the apostles, their regard for their own safety in the policy of masterly inactivity, and even their consciences in the convenient position of agnosticism, which seemed not only to excuse their neutrality but even to elevate it to the rank of a virtue. But heavenly wisdom is justified of her children in the end, aye, and even at the time, when all is known; for who would not rather share with the apostles in their beating than with the Sanhedrim in its satisfaction? These worthy Fathers of Church and State went home, indeed, with a whole skin; but who will envy their feelings? The apostles returned to their company with bruised and bleeding backs, for "the forty stripes save one" was no light infliction; but who can fail to envy them, when we read "that they departed from the counsel rejoicing—rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name." It was not the pain of the beating so much as the shame of it they thought of; but even such shame they counted it an honor and a joy to suffer for him who had suffered all for them.

The renewed attempt to stop the movement has again given it a fresh impulse; and every day, in the Temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ. Thus the Gospel triumphed in the capital.

CHAPTER VI.

"IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA."

THE extension of the work from the capital to the provinces was not the result of any deliberate plan. So far as we can see, the apostles had no immediate intention either of going forth themselves, or sending out a mission. It may be that they were so fully occupied with the work which lay closest to their hands that they forgot how wide was their commission. And in this they were not without excuse; for though, as we have seen, Jerusalem was in a certain sense filled with the doctrine, it was as yet far from being thoroughly evangelized; and we can well believe that the duties entailed by their rapid successes would be so exacting that it might seem as if no one could be spared.

But God did not allow them to tarry very long. As the rich harvest fields without did not allure the reapers, the Lord of the harvest thrust the laborers forth. In the portion of the history now before us we shall see, first, the

train of events in which Stephen was chief actor and sufferer, which led to the scattering of the disciples over the country, then the conspicuous success which attended the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom as illustrated in the work of Philip, after which attention is concentrated on the notable convert who was subsequently to figure so largely in the history of the Apostle to the Gentiles, while meantime the way is prepared for the great work in which he is to be the leader by the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. This will give us as principal subjects: The Martyr, the Evangelist, the New Apostle, the breaking down of the old wall, with a parting glimpse of the Jerusalem Church before the interest of the story is transferred to the new center at Antioch. The Church, like the Christian, when in the path of duty, finds all things work together for good. This will be a chapter of troubles;

but each one of them proves a blessing in disguise, and works in the end for the furtherance of the Gospel.

First, there is the dispute between the Hebrews and the Hellenists, or Grecian Jews. We can readily see how it would arise. Though many foreign Jews were present at the first proclamation of the Gospel, most of them would at the close of the feast return to the countries whence they came; so it is probable that the Church in Jerusalem would at first consist almost exclusively of Palestinian Jews. But among the resident population there was a considerable number of the Jews of the Dispersion who had returned to Jerusalem to live, and as the work extended throughout the city many of these were added to the Church and known as Hellenists, or Grecian Jews. Meantime responsibilities had accumulated so fast on the apostles, who seem up to this time to have been the sole officers of the Church, that it was exceedingly likely that the newest comers might have some reason to complain that "their widows were neglected in the daily ministration" of the alms of the Church.

It must have been very distressing to the apostles to hear the complaint; but they met it in the right spirit, and it led to very good results. It taught them not to attempt too much themselves, and set them on the right way of drawing out and developing the gifts of the people. They at once called a general meeting, acknowledged that, occupied so fully as they must needs be with prayer and teaching, they could not do justice to matters of finance, and recommended the appointment of a committee of seven to be intrusted with this department of service.

This accordingly was done. From the interesting account of the proceedings it is clear that the Church had no ready-made constitution, but was left to organize itself as occasion required, always, of course, under the guidance of the Spirit. At the same time we see how under that direction certain great principles were followed which are "writ large" for the future guidance of the Church in the book of the Acts or "Way of Acting of the Apostles," as it is in one important manuscript which gives the first word of the title in the singular number instead of the plural.

In their way of acting here we recognize such important principles as these: the high qualifications¹ required even of those who are appointed to serve tables; the right of the people to choose their own officers; and the propriety of solemnly ordaining the officers thus elected by prayer and the laying on of hands, to indicate that not on themselves must they depend but on the Spirit of Christ dwelling in

them. We may infer from the names that the Hellenists had a majority on the committee, which would make it clear that there was no desire to keep them in the background. The whole matter having been settled so promptly and wisely, we are prepared to learn that there was no hindrance to the work, that, on the contrary, "the word of God increased; and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." For the new officers did not confine themselves to the serving of tables. Men full of the Holy Ghost and of power could not so limit their activity. Probably modesty had kept them silent hitherto; but now that the responsibilities of office were upon them, they began to take part, and that effectively, in the aggressive work of the Church. This was especially true of one of them, Stephen, who, himself in all probability a Hellenist, made no small stir among his old associates.

Some of the synagogues took up the gauntlet which Stephen had thrown down, and tried to convince him with their arguments. But "they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake." Dr. William Cleaver Wilkinson, in his "Epic of Saul," after a powerful description of one of these contests, puts it thus:

"A mien of something more than majesty
In Stephen as he spoke, transfiguring him;
Conscious authority loftier than pride;
Deep calm which made intensity seem weak;
Slow weight more insupportable than speed;
Passion so pure that its effect was peace,
Beautifying his face; betokened power
Beneath him that supported him, behind
Him that impelled, above him and within
That steadied him immovable, supplied
As from a fountain of omnipotence;
An air breathed round him of prophetic rapt
Solemnity oppressive beyond words,
And dread communication from the Throne."

But the Jews were in no mood to yield; unable to withstand the Spirit by which Stephen spake, they appealed to the strong arm of the law, and, securing his arrest, brought him before the council on a charge of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God.

The poet is certainly right in supposing that there was something singularly impressive in the appearance and bearing of Stephen. He was probably a man of fine physique, and when he was confronted with his accusers there was such a light in his face that it could not but be noticed, and was so well remembered that its reflection still remains in the mirror of the world: "all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." It was the glory of Christ in his heart shining out through his

¹ Acts vi, 3.

countenance, a replica in miniature of his Master's transfiguration.

We need not wonder then that his speech¹ should prove less a personal defense than a testimony to the Spirit of God as working through his chosen from the earliest times, and meeting at every stage with just such resistance as his accusers were making now. Inasmuch as use is frequently made of this speech to impugn the history in which it is imbedded, it may be worth while to mention that Zeller, who is perhaps the most thorough-going of the Tübingen School, speaks of it as "not only characteristic, but also better suited to the case and to the accusation raised against him, than is usually supposed."² If so pronounced a rationalist can speak of it in this way, we need not be too much disturbed by the suggestion sometimes made that it is so irrelevant, and even inaccurate, that it cannot have been spoken by Stephen, but must have been put into his mouth by the historian—an argument, indeed, which might rather be reversed, for Stephen spoke on the impulse of the moment, while the historian could work at leisure, and was, therefore, far less liable to fall into irrelevance and inaccuracy.

As before with the apostles, so now the accused becomes accuser, the defense passes into an indictment delivered with such stinging force that "they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth"; and, breaking up in disorder, their excitement so inflamed the people gathered within the precincts of the court, that, all restraint at an end, the multitude became a mob, and, hustling him on till they passed the city gates, they took the law into their own hands and stoned him to death.

It was rather a popular tumult than an execution, else it would have been necessary as in the case of the Lord himself, to ask the sanction of the Roman government, unless indeed, as is not unlikely, the event took place between the recall of Pontius Pilate and the arrival of his successor, when such regulations might be more or less in abeyance. But though there had been no formal sentence, and no attempt at the semblance of public justice in the way in which the martyr was hurried to the place of execution, yet when they reached the spot, the forms of Jewish law concerning death by stoning were to some extent carried out, as is evident from the reference to "the witnesses," whose duty it was to cast the first and second stones, and who were able so deliberately to address themselves to their grim task that they had time to take off their outer

garments and give them in keeping of a young man whose name was Saul.

What was in this young man's mind, we well may wonder, as he looked on Stephen's face, with even more of the celestial light upon it than when he stood before the council, for the heavens had opened to him, and he saw the Christ. What must Saul have thought when that which so impressed Dante in his vision was enacted full in his sight:

"And I beheld him on his knees low bowed,
To earth bent down as heavy death drew near;
But evermore his eyes as heaven's gates show'd,
And in that strife to heaven's high Lord his prayer
He pour'd, that he his fierce foes would forgive
With such a look as unlocks pity's door."¹

His murderers had to stop their ears when he spoke to them of the open heaven, and we may well suppose that young Saul would be fain to shade his eyes when he looked upon the martyr's face.

The death of Stephen was in one respect worlds away from that of his Master: for he had no sins of others to bear, and his own had been all forgiven, so there was no sense of forsakenness, rather was God nearer than ever; but in all else how like!—not only the same patient endurance of injury and loving prayer for his tormenters, but the same upward trustful look in committing his soul to his Lord. Both in the prayer and in the committal he addresses himself to Christ, showing that he knew him as the only way to the Father. It is "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"; and again, "Lord, Jesus, receive my spirit."

Having said this, "he fell asleep." We have been so long accustomed to this beautiful euphemism for death that some may fail to see how exquisitely lovely is its setting here. "The peace that passeth all understanding" is in it.

If young Saul was impressed it was only for the moment, for immediately after we find him heading the fierce persecution which ensued. Or may it be that the very fury he showed was due to the goading of his conscience? In his speech before King Agrippa long afterward he thus speaks of his conduct at this time: "I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blasphemous; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities." What made him so exceedingly mad? Was he already kicking against the pricks?

It must have been a time of sore dismay; for

¹ Acts vii, 2-53.

² "Contents and Origin of the Acts of the Apostles Critically Investigated," I, p. 241.

¹ Dean Plumptre's translation of "Purgatory," XV, pp. 109-114.

so hot was the persecution that many had to flee. The apostles, indeed, maintained their ground. Past experience possibly did not encourage the authorities to make any further attempt on them; possibly, too, the persecution was directed more especially against the Hellenists, one of whom had given the provocation. Be that as it may, the apostles held to their

posts; but it must have been with no little misgiving that they saw so many of their best men compelled to flee for their lives. Yet this, too, worked good in the end, for it came to pass that there were many witnesses to the Lord, not now in Jerusalem only, but in Judea and in all Samaria, for "they went everywhere preaching the Word."

CHAPTER VII.

THE EVANGELIST.

FOLLOWING his usual method, our historian makes no attempt to give a full account of the movement in the provinces, but singles out a particular instance, and gives it in somewhat full detail. Of the evangelists at work in all directions the one chosen is Philip, one of the seven. The position of his name on that committee, standing next to that of Stephen, probably indicates that in natural gifts he stood second only to the great man who had just sealed his testimony with his blood. But the main reason for the selection is likely to have been the opportunity enjoyed by Saint Luke of hearing all about it from the evangelist himself.¹

The City of Samaria, known to the Romans as Sebaste, the capital of the province of Samaria, was a place of considerable importance, and of no little magnificence since its rebuilding by Herod the Great. Orthodox Jews held the Samaritan people in great contempt. Saint John tells us that "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans"; but even this gives us but a faint idea of the force of the antipathy. It is written in the Talmud: "He who takes the bread of a Samaritan is like him who eats the flesh of swine. No Israelite may receive a Samaritan as a proselyte; this accursed people shall have no part in the resurrection of the dead." This quotation, however, evidently represents the extreme view; for it was a moot point among the Rabbis whether they should be regarded as Gentiles or placed on the level of ignorant and misguided Jews. They were more than half heathen by race, as is clear from the account of the settlement of Samaria after the deportation of the ten tribes;² but they received the Pentateuch as of divine authority, and they looked for the coming of the Messiah. So far as faith was concerned, therefore, they had more in common with the Jew than with the Gentile, and on the whole were reckoned among the chosen people in theory at least, though in practice they were treated with far more indignity and scorn than any of the Gentile nations.

It is evident that our Lord took the liberal view; for though he considered his personal mission to be to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," he not only did not exclude the Samaritans but had peculiar satisfaction in his ministry among them. The knowledge of this would prepare the minds of the disciples for recognizing the claims of Samaria; and, if any doubt remained, the express mention of that province in the commission he gave them made it imperative that the despised people should not be passed by. Yet it must have required no little exercise of the charity characteristic of the Gospel of Christ to induce even a Hellenist Jew, as Philip probably was, to make the City of Samaria the field of his evangelistic labors.

Like his Lord at Sychar ten years before, he found the fields white unto the harvest; and, putting in his sickle, gathered many golden sheaves. But "it is not all gold that glitters," and the evangelist had to suffer a signal disappointment in the case of his most notable convert. It is a sign of the frankness and scrupulous veracity of the historian that the worst case should be precisely the one he singles out for special detail.

From all we know of the City of Samaria it would be a fair field for the operations of such an adventurer as Simon Magus, a man possessed in a special degree of those powers which are exercised on the border land of the material and the spiritual, and which present so much reality on the one hand and mystery on the other as to suggest grave problems to serious thinkers, and afford to designing persons only too good opportunities for trading on the superstitions of the unthinking multitude. This man, by the practice of his occult art, had given himself out to be "the great power of God"; and in default of anything better to meet their spiritual cravings, his pretensions had gained the acceptance of almost the entire population. But when Philip came, accredited not by mere marvels which filled them with amazement, but by genuine works of healing, the sight of which inspired them

¹ See Acts xxi, 8.

² II. Kings xvii, 24, *et seq.*

with new hope, they recognized "the great power of God" of which they were in search as being with him, and joined themselves to him in such numbers that Simon the magician found it necessary seriously to consider the whole position. The result was that he "believed also." He was convinced probably by what he saw Philip do rather than by what he heard him say, that his power, whatever it might be, was greater than his own; but, as the sequel showed, he had none of the sense of personal need and genuine faith in Christ which mark the beginnings of new life.

That not righteousness but power was what he sought—more of the same power with which he was already familiar—is made evident by his eager application to the two apostles who had come to see and sanction the new movement, to sell him the secret of the occult influence which he saw attended the laying on of their hands. The noble answer of Saint Peter, with its lofty indignation at the mercenary motive of the man on the one hand, and on the other its kind consideration for the man himself, combining as it does the sternest faithfulness with the most tender solicitude, is still another token of the indwelling in him of the Spirit of his Master: "Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." What a condemnation is here not only of the ecclesiastical offense of simony, and of all that traffic in holy things which has been associated with the magician's name, but of the too common superstition of expecting spiritual results to follow so-called apostolic acts, apart altogether from the state of mind and heart of him for whose supposed benefit they are performed.

Later Christian literature has much to say of the subsequent career of Simon Magus. Much of it is doubtful; but enough is well established to make it only too certain that he did not lay to heart the apostle's warning, but went to greater lengths in daring impiety thereafter than before. It is an awful thing to be near the kingdom of God, and yet refuse to enter.

It may be worth while to note, in dismissing the sorcerer from our view, that, while the stories concerning him in the early Fathers were largely made use of by the Tübingen School in framing the theory by which they sought to discredit the Book of Acts, not only was the attempt a failure, as is shown in Professor Harnack's article on Simon Magus in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," but these very stories on

which they relied have proved of value in confirming the authenticity and antiquity of our history, inasmuch as it contains no trace of them, as would almost certainly have been the case if they had been published before it was written—one more instance of the impugners of Scripture being "hoist with their own petard."

But we must not allow the painful interest of this disappointing case to hinder our recognition of the great and good work done by Philip in Samaria. The general statement "there was much joy in that city"¹ means a great deal; and it is evident that the two apostles who had come from Jerusalem were not hindered by their experience with the great magician from finding satisfaction in what they had witnessed, so much so that before they returned they continued the work on their own account, preaching the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.² We may reckon then that it was no small trial to the evangelist to be obliged, in obedience to directions which he could not refuse to follow,³ to leave the busy scene of his successful labors and go south to a desert place, where there seemed nothing to do. What could be the reason of so strange a providence?

Was it needful for him, after all the distractions of the city and its work, to have some time for quiet converse with God? Was it the same voice which said to the tired disciples, "Come ye apart into a desert place and rest awhile?" Undoubtedly it was; and it is well for us, when changes come into our life which make a wilderness about us, to recognize the voice, and realize the love which thrills in it.

But it was a mistake to suppose that even in the desert there will be nothing to do. For what is this *cortège* which sweeps up toward him along the road from Jerusalem? As it draws nearer he sees it is the retinue of some man of rank sitting in his chariot with an open scroll before him, from which he seems to be reading. With interest he waits till the company is close upon him, and as soon as the nobleman, for such he must be, comes within hearing, he knows what the scroll is, for according to the frequent custom in these days the man in the chariot is reading aloud in a kind of chant. Prompted by the spirit and invited by the man, Philip joins him, and soon discovers who he is and what he seeks.

He is a man in high authority at the court of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, "over all her treasure," and therefore presumably not only of high rank but of great wealth and large influence. But these things had not satisfied him; nor had the religion of Ethiopia fed the

¹ Acts viii, 8 (Revised Version).

² Acts viii, 25.

³ Acts viii, 26.

hunger of his soul. From those of the Dispersion who had found their way as far south as Meroe he would hear of the Jews' religion, and of their Sacred Scriptures, a copy of which, in the Septuagint translation, he had procured. This he would carefully study, but not finding even there what he craved, he undertook the long journey to the Jewish capital to worship the God of the Hebrews and seek for further light. We can imagine the disappointment he would have in listening to the dry prelections of the Rabbis, and how sore his heart would be as he turned sorrowfully home again. But the Scriptures, even to his dim comprehension, have more of light than these; so, still continuing his quest, he keeps the scroll open before him, and broods over the words of sacred prophecy which seem to promise much, though he can make of them but little. As he meets the stranger he is busy with the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and the passage he is reading is this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." A nameless pathos in it touches him; but what can it mean?

What a notable example of earnestness, diligence, and perseverance in seeking after God! Here is a man who knows what asking, seeking, and knocking mean. And presently he will see just as clearly the meaning of receiving, finding, entering the open gate of the kingdom.

His perplexity has prepared him for the stranger's question, not necessarily proposed in the brief and blunt-like words into which it is condensed in the report of it, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Such a question, with whatever polite preface prefixed, might well have given offense, especially as coming from a pedestrian with no appearance of rank or station corresponding to his own; but the man is so thoroughly in earnest that he never thinks of this, but, with readiness to welcome light from any quarter, however obscure, invites the stranger into his chariot and eagerly listens to him, and as he listens finds what he so long has sought. For Philip takes the very passage which is perplexing him, and tells him all about it, tells him that the prophet is not speaking of himself, but of another, even of the Son of God, who had come from heaven to save men from their sins, and had offered up him-

self as a sacrifice upon the cross, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Thus "he preached unto him Jesus"—not doctrines, not duties, not rites and ceremonies, but Jesus—with the result that he believes, eagerly asks and gladly accepts Christian baptism, and, though he loses his instructor before he has had time to realize it all, he goes on his way rejoicing.

The circle is widening: from the Hebrew to the Hellenist, from the Hellenist to the Samaritan, from the Samaritan to the proselyte of the gate from far off Meroe, in whom Ethiopia stretches out her hand to God.

While we have no additional details of the evangelistic work of those who were scattered abroad by the persecution, there are general notices of great interest which show that the "Judea and Samaria" of the commission were taken by the disciples in a large sense, as including Jews and even proselytes far beyond the limits of the Holy Land. We shall presently find, as we follow the story of Saul's conversion, that there were disciples in Damascus, nearly a week's journey from Jerusalem; and when, later on, attention is called to the new departure in the Church at Antioch, and we naturally ask "How comes it that there are believers in a heathen city so very far away?" the answer is: "They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews." This last clause makes it evident that up to this time there has been no thought of a strictly foreign mission. In Damascus, in Antioch, in Cyprus, it was still to Jews only that the Gospel was preached—first to the Jew proper, then to the Grecian Jew, and, as in the case of the Ethiopian, to the Jewish proselyte. If any thought of "the uttermost parts of the earth" were in their minds, it must have been with the idea of following up their brethren of the chosen nation into all the lands where they were scattered, and, besides, gathering in as many proselytes as they may be able to persuade to add belief in Christ to their faith in Moses and the prophets. It had not yet dawned on the mind of the Church that to the Gentiles should be preached the unsearchable riches of Christ. But the hour is at hand and the man, as we shall see in the chapters which follow.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW APOSTLE.

WHEN Saul of Tarsus first received his commission from the chief priests, he no doubt expected, in the eagerness of his youthful ardor, to be able to stamp out at once the new heresy which, after having apparently had its deathblow in the crucifixion of its Christ, had in some unaccountable way burst out afresh in Jerusalem. But when he saw that the scattered embers only kindled new fires, he found it necessary to address himself to a larger work than he had at first anticipated. He must follow these wandering evangelists to Samaria, to Cæsarea, to Tiberias. Must he go still farther? It would appear so; for what is this news he hears from Damascus? There is one Ananias there making a commotion in the synagogues, of exactly the same kind as Stephen made in the synagogues of Jerusalem. He must go and put a stop to that; for Damascus is a most important city.

It may be much more difficult to secure convictions in the foreign city; but the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem has jurisdiction over the Damascus Jews; so the arch-inquisitor provides himself with the necessary letters to secure the extradition of the offenders, and sets off on the long, slow journey, occupying nearly a week, the last two days of which would be spent in traveling the stony desert which flanks the base of the snowy Hermon. What his thoughts might have been as he passed through those northern solitudes where there were no Nazarenes to prosecute, we can only conjecture. True, he was acting in all good conscience. "I verily thought within myself," he said long afterward to King Agrippa, "that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." But other thoughts are beginning to intrude. There is still the loud voice of his burning zeal for the faith of his fathers, and of his righteous indignation against those who would set aside the law, and so blight forever the hope of Israel; but there is also a "still small voice" which whispers in the name of pity, and even suggests the doubt whether these men and women, with such calm on their faces and such noble words on their lips, can really deserve punishment and death. And then, that look of Stephen, and that prayer of his—how they come back!

After all, there is a wonderful difference between this man and the party of which he is the representative. It has been made an objection to the credibility of the history that a man brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, should pursue a policy so different from that advo-

cated by his master in the Sanhedrim. But these critics only show their ignorance of human nature, and their inability to recognize the force of conscience on the one hand and of self-interest on the other. It was Gamaliel, indeed, who had been mainly instrumental in impressing his pupil with that reverence and enthusiasm for the law for which he himself had been so distinguished, and, so long as there was no danger to be incurred, master and pupil would be wholly at one. But as soon as the motive of fear comes into play, the opportunist betrays himself and retires to the background, while the man of conscience springs to the front. Gamaliel no doubt deplored that the hand of his party had been forced by the popular fury which was enkindled by the oratory of Stephen; and, while he could no longer suggest that things be "let alone," he would naturally keep in the background himself till he should see "whereunto this would grow." But Saul of Tarsus was a man of very different mold. His ambitions were not personal. His zeal was in the main a genuine zeal for the Lord; and for this very reason he was, at his worst, in a much more hopeful position in relation to the kingdom of God than any haughty Sadducee or time-serving Pharisee who might from motives of prudence be rather disposed to moderate his zeal.

It is important to bear this in mind in endeavoring to understand the conversion of Saul. We are in danger of making the same mistake about him which was long made about Bunyan by exaggerating the force of self-condemnatory references to past guilt. Why do men like these call themselves "the chief of sinners?" Because, having learned to regard all sin with unutterable horror, and accustomed as they are to be charitable to others and severe on themselves, they are phenomenally impressed with the heinousness of their own sin, both because it is their own, and also because it is "naked and open" to their sight as no other sin can be; but to take their own estimate of themselves so conveyed and make it ours of them, is to show a lack of discrimination fatal to just conclusions.

Wherein, then, lay the sin of Saul? There seems to have been no moral obliquity. It is true that in his letter to the Romans he acknowledges his condemnation by the law, instancing the tenth commandment as the one the remembrance of which had brought him conviction of sin; but even at the worst he struggled and cried out, so that his sensitive-

ness on this point only confirms the general impression of his moral integrity. What was wrong, then? Was there anything worse than an error of judgment; and, if so, was it not correction rather than conversion that he needed?

Now, it cannot be denied that he was wrong-headed more than wrong-hearted. But what kept him wrong-headed so long? It was pride, willfulness, self-assertion. Had he been a humble seeker after truth he would have found it long ere then. He would have listened in a different spirit to the arguments in the synagogue of the Cilicians,¹ and would have paid more attention to those Scriptures which speak of the Messiah as a sufferer. He would have seen the Christ-like light in Stephen's face, and heard the divine tone in his prayer for his tormentors. Thoughts born of these experiences were pricking him, and he was proudly repelling them and trying to banish them from his mind; instead of yielding to their softening influences he was getting more and more excited and furious, like the ox kicking against the goad. The sin of Saul, then, lay especially in his shutting his eyes to the light of heaven and closing his ears to the voice of God.

If we have been at all correct in estimating the character of this man and the state of his mind, how strikingly natural was all that happened to him as he neared Damascus! He has refused to yield to the gentle pressure of the divine love; pride still rules his will. He is beginning to be haunted with the uneasy feeling that somehow or other he will be balked in his design and miss his prey, but this makes him only the more eager to be at his cruel work. Why else should he be hurrying on in the noonday heat, instead of giving his company the accustomed rest and himself time for calm and earnest thought? If he is to be won, it must be by some means that will overpower his self-will and break down the pride of his heart. And so, instead of the gentle glow of heaven as he had seen it on Stephen's face, there is now a blinding light, above the brightness of the sun, which smites him to the earth; instead of the prayers and entreaties of his poor victims, there is a solemn voice from the Great Victim of his cruel rage, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The voice has in it a tone of authority which commands his conscience, and of tender pleading which touches his heart; so he stammers out, "Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

So Jesus is risen as he said, and as his disciples say! He is not in the grave beside the Damascus road, where I passed a week ago with the thought in my mind, "What poor deluded people these must be to imagine that man to be living yet!" I have been all wrong;

and they have been right. He is in very deed Lord and Christ.

His pride is humbled in the dust; self-will is gone; the strong man is brought low, and from the heart as of a little child there comes the cry, "Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do?" The marvelous change is impressively described by Doctor Stalker: "Instead of the proud Pharisee riding through the streets with the pomp of an inquisitor, a stricken man, trembling, groping, clinging to the hand of his guide, arrives at the house of entertainment amid the consternation of those who receive him, and, getting hastily to a room where he can ask them to leave him alone, sinks down there in the darkness."¹ And there he waits until the very man whom he was seeking to kill, sent by this same Jesus, comes to comfort him and heal him; to receive him as a penitent, and baptize him into the Name he had hitherto hated and despised. What a fall was there! but he felt that he might be raised again, as shown in the condensed account he gave long after to King Agrippa of the Lord's dealing with him on that eventful day. "Arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me."² Dead unto sin, he had become alive unto God, and ready for highest service in his kingdom.

"I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

There is no event in all history better authenticated than the sudden and marvelous conversion of Saul of Tarsus. We have three accounts of it in the Acts of the Apostles,³ with just such variations in detail as confirm the main facts, and in the epistles there are frequent references which give additional attestation, while, as has been shown by Sabatier and many recent writers (for the Pauline literature has been very large of late) the whole of his theology is built upon it, and is really an explanation and development of the great truths of which it was the concrete expression.

No attempt is now made by leading rationalists of the day to dispute the reality of the experience, and some even of those who make it

¹ "Life of Saint Paul."

² Acts xxvi, 16-18 (Revised Version).

³ Acts ix, xxii, xxvi.

¹ Acts vi, 9.

the fundamental principle of their criticism to deny the miraculous are constrained to admit something of miracle here. Weizsäcker, for example says: "Conversion is in this sense a miracle, the genuine and only miracle that belongs to the faith, which in itself is the experience in an immediate form, and from that fact derives the certainty, that the experience has a divine origin."¹ So too Professor Pfeleiderer writes: "Undoubtedly it was a 'Revelation' which here fell to the lot of Paul; not, indeed, a revelation of sensuous realities of a super-terrestrial kind, but a revelation of the Spirit of the Son of God."²

It is no longer, therefore, necessary to argue the reality of Saul's conversion or of the divine revelation which was its cause; what the rationalists still deny, as is seen in the quotation from Pfeleiderer above, is that there was any sensuous reality of the super-terrestrial kind, *i. e.*, that the apostle actually saw with his bodily eyes the risen Christ. It is the resurrection of the body which is still contested; and great stress is laid on the fact that Paul was of an ardent temperament, apt to have visions and revelations, and even to be "caught up to the third heaven"—all of which is true; but our friends fail to set against this, that the apostle always sharply distinguishes this experience from all these. He was of an ardent temperament, but his logical faculty was never in abeyance. Even of that occasion of ecstasy to which special reference is made, he speaks with perfect sanity and soberness. He built nothing whatever on that experience, and, in fact, felt bound to be silent about it to his fellow-men as a matter between himself and God. But with his experience on the day of his conversion it was entirely different. Not only did he tell it, but he virtually gave his life to the telling of it; and that not as a mere spiritual experience, but as one proof more added to the many he had examined and found valid which had been already furnished of the reality of the resurrection—the bodily resurrection—of the Lord Jesus Christ.³ Moreover he grounds his apostleship on it: "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?"⁴ Any disdisciple in any age may have a spiritual vision of Christ,⁵ but an apostle must be a "witness to the resurrection," and this and nothing less was the privilege Saint Paul enjoyed at the turning point of his life.

Still further, it is clear that the ardor of Saul's temperament was carrying him in precisely the opposite direction from that in which such visions and revelations might be expected.

One might just as soon expect him to have the vision of a risen Gamaliel afterward as of a risen Christ now, unless there was a real appearance and a veritable voice from heaven.

On the minor points in the discussion our space will not allow us to treat. But it may be well to give one as a specimen. It has been often remarked that while Jesus drew his illustrations largely from rural scenes, Saint Paul, who, in his restless eagerness, seems to have missed "the harvest of a quiet eye," would borrow his metaphors from the objects which were familiar to the throngs of busy men. Now, suppose for a moment that Renan is right when he says, "The Christ who personally reveals himself to him is his own ghost; he listens to himself, thinking that he hears Jesus," can we think it possible that the utterance would have taken this form: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad"? How unlike the man of Tarsus, how characteristic of the Man of Nazareth! Still more remarkable, perhaps, in the same connection, is the form of the question, "Why persecutest thou *me*?" as coming from him who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

It may be well, also, to say just a word on the most considerable variation in the accounts. In the apostle's speech before King Agrippa nothing is said about the three day's blindness, the visit of Ananias, and the receiving of the commission through him, so that, if we had only that one account, the impression would be left that the commission to bear the name of Christ to the Gentiles was given on the spot, whereas we are told it was given in Damascus, three days later, by the mouth of Ananias. But, though the statement made to King Agrippa is incomplete, there is not a word of it untrue. The Lord did give him the commission, and that was all it was necessary for him then to mention; so he leaves out the part Ananias had in it; but in his other speech before the council,¹ he goes into full detail, and in doing so corroborates the minute accuracy of the historian.

The conduct of Ananias is exceedingly touching and impressive. He has heard of the wolf coming, and now he is asked not only to acknowledge him as a sheep, but to appoint him a shepherd in chief. No wonder the good man pleads, "Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name." But the Lord said unto him, "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and

¹ "Apostolic Age," p. 80. ² "Philosophy and Development of Religion," Vol. II, p. 153.

³ See I. Corinthians xv. ⁴ I. Corinthians ix, 1.

⁵ John xiv, 21.

¹ Acts xxii

the children of Israel." "And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

"He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles." The new wine needed a new wine skin. It was necessary, as

we shall see, that the mind of Saint Peter should be prepared for a new departure; but it would have been cruel to have made him the leader of it. The peculiar fitness of the new apostle for the new work, by his parentage, the place of his birth, his education, his character, his temperament, his talents, is so familiar that we may not in our brief space enlarge on it. Never did chosen vessel more fully justify the choice.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OLD WALL BROKEN DOWN.

"THE middle wall of partition" had served a good purpose. It was necessary that Israel should be separated from the nations—a garden inclosed, a nursery fenced in—until the time when the plant of righteousness should become a tree, strong enough to stand the exposure of the open field. The fruits of righteousness are now ripe, and the leaves all opened out for the healing of the nations. While the fruit was unripe, a wall was needed to keep intruders out for their own sake, as well as to preserve the tender growth. But now "the fullness of the time" has come, "all things are ready"; and the fence must be taken down.

It was a hard thing. The wall had stood there for so many centuries. Would not its demolition be an undoing of the work of God, continued through all these ages in his mercy and faithfulness to his chosen people? No wonder the very thought of it was gall to the Hebrew soul, and bitterest of all to those who were most devout of heart. Besides, had it not gates, gates opening inward easily? Who more welcome than a proselyte? And even for those who did not see their way to submit to all the rigor of the law, there was still a welcome to take the position of "proselytes of the gate," so that, while still remaining of the Gentiles, they might also enjoy some sight of the beauty and some waft of the fragrance of the garden of the Lord.

We can well understand, then, that the apostles and early Christians whom we have seen worshipping in the Temple, and observing all the ordinances of the law, if the thought were ever suggested of carrying their new Gospel to the Gentiles, would be inclined to say: "Yes, they may have it, if they will only come within our sacred inclosure, or at the very least stand close to the gate." But now these conditions are all to be done away with. The Gospel is to be offered to all without exception and without distinction, no other condition asked but

faith, which is simply willingness to receive it. The Jew is to have no substantial advantage over the Gentile. He gets the offer first, that is all; the rest, however far off, are to be made as thoroughly welcome as if they had come all the way to Jerusalem to submit themselves to the commandments and ordinances of the law. That is revolution. It means the utter demolition of the old wall.

How is this revolution to be effected without shattering the Jewish Church? A man has actually been chosen to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles; but how is the Church in Jerusalem, especially the mother church of the scattered bands throughout Judea and Samaria, with its twelve apostles taught by the Master himself to think of themselves as in some sense representing the twelve tribes of Israel,¹ to be brought to sanction the new departure, to say nothing of promoting it?

The question was a very important one, as is made evident not only in our book of history, but in all the Christian literature of the period within our purview. It is difficult for us now to realize what a herculean work it was to emancipate the Church from the wrappings of Judaism, which however useful, and even necessary to its existence, in the days of its infancy, would have arrested its development, and caused it to be not only small and weak but distorted, like a Chinese lady's foot. But Saint Luke, living as he did in the midst of the agitations which followed the new departure, familiar with the long controversy to which it gave rise, and which taxed to the utmost the talents and resources of the great apostle, felt that it was the question of the day; and, accordingly, he tells the story of the revolution with great fullness of detail and with the utmost care. He gives even more space to it than to the conversion of Saul, and uses the same reiteration, for again we have three

¹ Matthew xix, 28.

accounts, first the historical statement,¹ then the speech of Saint Peter defending his action before the brethren in Jerusalem,² and, later on, a brief statement by the same apostle before the assembly convened to deal with the appeal from Antioch.³

As so often happens in the divine providence when great movements are inaugurated, the way is prepared at different points far apart. When the times are ripe for some fresh discovery it will present itself to the mind of different observers or thinkers quite independently, so that perhaps it is difficult afterward to tell which has the prior claim to the credit of it. So here we shall find that both at its center and in the outskirts the Church was providentially prepared for the new departure—at its center by the novel and strange experience of the chief of the apostles, in the course of which he was led first to see for himself, and then to bring convincingly before the mind of the Church that it was the Lord's will that the Gentiles should be received; and at the circumference by the progress of the work of evangelization, extending itself so far beyond the bounds of the Holy Land as to enlist the services of men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, taking it for granted that what was good for the Jew must be good for the Gentile also, and, without any authorization beyond the instinct of their own loving hearts, preached the Gospel to the Greeks at Antioch,⁴ and that with such wonderful success that the attention of the whole Church was directed to it.

In the process of transition the feelings of "the apostle of the circumcision" were very tenderly dealt with. This, too, is the story of a conversion; but it is as gradual and gentle as the other was sudden and startling. The apostle is first induced to leave Jerusalem for a time on a tour through the churches in the pleasant plain of Sharon. He is cheered by many tokens of the Lord's presence, two of which are specially recorded, the cure of Æneas and the raising of Dorcas, so that he carried gladness with him through all that western region. Having reached the coast, he takes a needed rest at Joppa, and surely it was no accident that he should be led to accept hospitality from a man whose trade was reckoned unclean by strict Jews on account of the contact with dead bodies it so frequently involved. It probably required considerable exercise of the grace of brotherly love to associate so intimately with a tanner, and this very circumstance would awaken in his mind some question as to the compatibility of these Jewish ideas with the freedom and brotherhood of the Gospel of Christ.

¹ Acts x.

² Acts xi.

³ Acts xv, 7-11.

⁴ Acts xi, 20 (Revised Version).

The days of the rest were also days of prayer, for which the flat housetop, with its outlook over the blue Levant, afforded the best of opportunities. As he gazed across what seemed a limitless expanse, and thought of the countries lying beyond, of which he must have heard from Roman visitors to Jerusalem—Greece, Italy, Spain, Britain, far-away Thule—he could scarcely fail to recall the terms of the great commission, especially the words, "ye shall be witnesses unto me to the uttermost parts of the earth." Would he not long for the time when the gladness he had helped to diffuse through the plains of Sharon would overspread these distant lands as well? And would not thoughts of how it was to be accomplished exercise his mind? During those "many days"¹ of quiet thinking and prayer, the great problem must needs have been turned over in his mind; and the more he thought of it, the more would he be prepared to welcome some solution of the many difficulties with which it bristled.

On one of these days the apostle, as is his wont at the hour of noon, is on the housetop praying. He has had a scanty breakfast, his appetite affected possibly by the perplexity of his position, at the limit of the field westward so far as he can see, though the great Western World lies there before him unreached, apparently unreachable. Faint with hunger, he falls asleep, and, as is natural, he dreams of food. But what a strange banquet! If he felt a natural revulsion from the thought of the dead bodies with which the tanner had to deal, what will he make of the assortment on that tablecloth which seems let down from heaven to appease his hunger: "all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and fowls of the heaven"? And what is he to make of that voice, the tones of which recall the days of old: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat"? It is the same voice, but what a strange command! No wonder he replies, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." But again the voice is heard, "What God hath cleansed, make thou not common."²

The answer to all his perplexities about the Western land is there, if only he will think it out. The distinction of meats into clean and unclean had more practical effect than any other regulation of the law in keeping Jew and Gentile separate; for, touching the daily life as it did at every meal, it proved a complete barrier to social intercourse. It was in effect a separating wall, and this command meant the taking of it down.

It was little wonder, however, that Saint Peter found it hard to think out the answer

¹ Acts ix, 43.

² Acts x, 13-15 (Revised Version).

for himself, especially as the conclusion to which it pointed was one so utterly opposed to all his most cherished convictions. But the process is greatly helped by the next link in the chain of God's wise and gracious providence. Three men from Cæsarea are now announced. "What can they want? I have my doubts of them, coming from that Roman place." But the Spirit of Christ encouraged him to put aside his doubts and frankly to entertain the men. Thus was he little by little prepared to accept an invitation which a week ago he would have firmly declined—an invitation to carry the word of life to a Roman centurion, without any pledge as to his being, or becoming, a proselyte to the Jewish faith.

The way by which Cornelius was led was quite as remarkable as that by which the apostle was induced to visit him. He was a devout man, generous, thoughtful, prayerful, with enlightenment enough to appreciate the monotheistic faith of the Jews, and to recognize what was good in their religious aspirations. Though the gates of the Temple would have been closed to him, the gate of heaven was not; so he, too, had his angel guidance and had been led in answer to his prayer to send to Joppa for the apostle. Thus was it proved that "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." Cornelius, however, has still so much of the pagan in him that he prostrates himself before Saint Peter as if he were, indeed, what the emperor pretended to be, the representative of deity on earth. But Peter was no pope, and would not allow it. "Stand up," he said; "for I myself also am a man." He then talked to him in a friendly way, half apologizing for what still seemed to his own mind the inconsistency of accepting such an invitation—a veritable touch of nature—and afterward joined the little company which the good centurion had assembled to share the blessing. In a state of high spiritual excitement, as one would gather from the style of the report, he delivered his message, not beginning with Moses and all the prophets as would have been necessary had he been minded to make a proselyte of him, but with Jesus as Lord of all—Gentiles as well as Jews—and setting forth the great facts of his life, death, resurrection, and appointment as Judge of the living and the dead, till he had put his hearers in the position to realize the presence with them of a divine Savior, in whose name

was offered to everyone who believed on him remission of sins.

The effect was electric. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard." It was a second Pentecost, so like the first that the six men whom Saint Peter had taken with him from Joppa as witnesses were filled with amazement. Again there were the tongues, not this time shown by the use of different languages, for which there was no occasion, but by utterances of praise and holy joy, which, coming from men who had never heard the name of Christ until that day, were as much a marvel to the on-lookers as when the different peoples gathered in Jerusalem heard in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. "Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

Thus was the old wall broken down, and the Gentiles made free of the city of God; and it only remains for the apostle to answer the natural questions, and to quiet the not unnatural complaints of the astonished Church at Jerusalem when the first rumors or these strange doings reached it. This he did, not by asserting his infallibility, or giving an *ex cathedra* pronouncement, but by modestly telling his thrilling story, and setting forth the great principle of justification by faith alone without the deeds of the law (which is thus proved to be Petrine as well as Pauline), and with such effect that "when they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."¹

The whole story is a most interesting and instructive unfolding of divine providence. Each one of the actors is led in a way he knows not of. Heavenly guidance is granted to each only in so far as is necessary for the guidance of his own steps. But the Spirit of God is in all, making all work together for the accomplishment of his holy, wise, and gracious purpose. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen."

¹ Acts xi, 18 (Revised Version).

CHAPTER X.

SUNSET IN JERUSALEM.

THE first great day of the Church's history is closing. The morning was bright and clear, and though clouds began to gather as the day wore on, the promise of the dawn was well fulfilled at noon, when even the enemy had to confess that Jerusalem was filled with the doctrine. But the noon time of success soon passed, the clouds gathered, the storm broke, the lightning struck the foremost man, and the fickle people, who had flocked around when all was fair and begun to favor the new doctrine, now went to the opposite extreme and joined the hue and cry against it; the Church was thinned and scattered; and, though the exiles carried the torch of God in all directions, those who remained at home were sorely straitened and beset. We shall presently hail the sunrise at Antioch, the brilliant opening of the Church's second day; but in the meantime we must watch the sunset at Jerusalem.

There are angry clouds in the evening sky; and yet we think less of their threatening masses than of the golden radiance which shines wherever they are touched by the light of heaven. The glory of the morning was one, the glory of the evening is another; that was calm and clear, this has a fiery luster all its own.

The famine cloud is the first we see. The Church in Jerusalem has always been poor. It had a few wealthy members who, by their liberality, relieved their poorer brethren; but since the persecution, which would naturally strike the wealthiest first, there is serious suffering; and, to crown all, the great famine of which we read not only in the Acts of the Apostles, and the work of Josephus, but in such historians of the empire as Dion Cassius and Suetonius, is now impending.

But who are these who have just arrived from the rich heathen city of Antioch, travel-worn with their long journey? They are representatives of the new Church there, which, knowing the straits of their brethren in Judea from whom they had received the evangel, and learning from one of their prophets that worse is yet to come, has made a contribution, every man giving according to his ability, and despatched it for their relief.¹ There is the light on the dark cloud.

But famine is not all. Herod, the king, is stretching forth his hands to vex the Church,

and seems determined to use his great power to destroy it utterly. The mention of this monarch brings us for the first time into clear connection with the history of the empire; so it will be necessary to make a slight digression to show exactly where we stand. By doing so we shall also have some light on questions of date, which for some time we have not ventured to touch, the data being so vague and unsatisfactory.

The emperor Tiberius, in whose reign our Lord was crucified, died 37 A. D., supposed by many to be the year of Saul's conversion, though recent authorities incline to an earlier date for that event. For the four years following—37-41 A. D.—Caius, better known by his nickname of Caligula, disgraced the imperial purple. He it was who gave orders for the setting up in the Temple at Jerusalem, in its very holy of holies, a statue of himself, to make it impossible for the Hebrews to avoid worshiping him as God. The outrage was insupportable, and the whole country resounded with indignant protests. There are those who think that it was in part, at least, owing to the distraction caused by this high-handed proceeding that the persecution of the Christians ceased for a time. "So the Church throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria had peace, being edified."¹

Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, was one of the many political adventurers who were watching their chances at the Roman court. In the closing years of the reign of Tiberius he attached himself to Caligula, whose star seemed to be in the ascendant. For this he suffered imprisonment till Tiberius died, when his services to the new emperor procured him freedom first, and then appointment to a considerable portion of his grandfather's dominions. Acquainted as he was with the prejudices and passions of the Jews, he saw the folly of the reckless policy of the emperor, and it shows the strength of his influence with him that his intervention proved successful and the obnoxious order was first deferred and then withdrawn. The whole story is told by Josephus, very fully and vividly in his "Antiquities,"² and again briefly in his "Wars of the Jews."³

When Caligula was assassinated in January, 41 A. D., Agrippa managed still to keep in favor at Rome, and, indeed, succeeded so well

¹ Acts xi, 29.

² "Antiquities," XVIII, viii.

³ "Wars of the Jews," II, x.

in ingratiating himself with the new emperor, Claudius, as to obtain from him almost immediately on his accession, the addition to his dominions of Judea, which, since the deposition of Archelaus, in 6 A. D., had been governed by procurators, Pontius Pilate being the sixth of the eight whose administration filled up the interval from 6 to 41 A. D. Thus, by the favor of the two emperors in succession, Herod Agrippa was raised to the same high position his grandfather, Herod the Great, had occupied, becoming one of the greatest princes of the East. In this way it came about that, in the story of Jerusalem at the time we have reached, we read not of "the governor," as in the narrative of the Crucifixion, but of "Herod, the king," who, as we have seen, renewed the persecution which had ceased to rage since the emperor Caligula diverted the fear and fury of the Jews from the Christians to himself.

From the dark cloud of the great king's hate there comes a lightning stroke which carries off one of the three chief apostles: "He killed James the brother of John with the sword." We have heard nothing of him till now, but when we remember his prominent position among the twelve, and the temperament which in early days gained for him and his brother the surname of Boanerges—sons of thunder—we may well suppose that he was not wanting in that energy and aggressiveness which would give occasion to his being singled out as the first victim of the new tyranny.

The brevity of the notice of this apostle's death has been often remarked on, especially as contrasted with the full account of Stephen's martyrdom; but is it not quite enough to suppose that the deed of blood was done in secret, as it was certainly done swiftly and unexpectedly, so that there would be nothing to report but the bare fact; and, though there was abundance of room for sentiment, the sacred historian never so indulges himself. He leaves it to his readers to recall the old days when the two sons of Zebedee asked that they might sit the one on the right of their Master and the other on his left in his kingdom, and received the thought-compelling answer: "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"¹ James understands it all now. He drinks of the cup, is baptized with the baptism, and takes his place at his Lord's right hand, as the first of the twelve to win the martyr's crown, while the other son of Zebedee, after long years of toil, and faithful service, and patient suffering, brings up the rear, and takes his place on the left in "the glorious company of the apostles."

Herod, the king, was astute. He had no

doubt heard how signally the Sanhedrim had failed when they made their first attempt on Peter and John; so he would reckon it scarcely prudent to make a beginning with either of them. It was safer to pass the first and second, and make the experiment on the third. But as no unseen hand had interposed, he saw nothing to fear from above, and as the Jews were well pleased, he had something to gain from below; and accordingly he felt emboldened to strike a blow which was likely to be fatal, by putting the great leader under arrest with a view to his public execution.

"These were the days of unleavened bread." Why is this so specially noted? Is it not to suggest the parallel which will at once occur to every reader of the Gospel: "Now, after two days was the Feast of the Passover and the unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by subtlety and kill him: for they said, Not during the feast, lest haply there shall be a tumult of the people." So Herod, having seized his victim, dared not kill him till the feast was over, but "put him in prison, delivering him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people."

On the eve of that Passover, Peter had said, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thee." But when the Shepherd was smitten, the sheep were scattered, and he was the weakest of them all. He is a different man now, and though he has to think not of himself alone but of the sheep of which he is now the shepherd, he does not shrink or quail. Despite the cheerless cell, and the iron chains which bind him to his guards, he sleeps as soundly as his Master did upon the storm-tossed sea, and we can fancy him dreaming, as he sleeps, of Calvary and "the glory that should follow."

Will Herod, the king, sleep as soundly and dream as sweetly on his couch of down? The days of the feast had been passing too slowly for his impatient spirit; but at all events he has his man quite safe. The prison is a fortress; the sixteen soldiers are strong and trusty; the chains, a needless precaution, yet make assurance doubly sure; several days are gone, and all is quiet and safe; to-morrow he will have his will. Such as these would be his waking thoughts; but, if he dreamed, would there be any vision of the theater at Cæsarea, with the crowd shouting his praises and proclaiming him a god, while the angel of death was at the very moment aiming at his heart his most poisoned shaft? We think of Browning's "*Instans Tyrannus*," after the tyrant had "soberly laid his last plan to extinguish the man."

¹Mark x, 38.

"When sudden . . . how think ye, the end?
 Did I say 'without friend'?
 Say rather, from marge to blue marge
 The whole sky grew his targe
 With the sun's self for visible boss,
 While an Arm ran across
 Which the earth heaved beneath like a breast
 Where the wretch was safe prest!
 Do you see? Just my vengeance complete,
 The man sprang to his feet,
 Stood erect, caught at God's skirts, and prayed!
 —So, I was afraid!"

In this case, however, it was not the prayer of the man, for at the critical moment he was sleeping soundly in his chains, but the supplication of the faithful! The Church had been praying ever since the arrest. It seemed for a time as if there were no answer. Day after day, night after night had gone, and still there was no sign. But they ceased not. It is now the last night, and hope deferred is making hearts sick; but still they keep on, through the long night, for they too have their quaternions to relieve each other in their watching unto prayer. It is nearly six in the morning, and the dread day is breaking. May not the prayer meeting in Mary's house be now dismissed? Perhaps some of the more faint-hearted of them thought so, but, if they did, their unbelief soon had a glad rebuke, when there came a knock, a sharp startling knock for such an early hour, and a minute after they saw the maid's astonished face as she ran back from the unopened gate, declaring it was Peter, for she knew his voice.

How true to nature it all is: the excitement of the maid Rhoda, the incredulity of the disciples, the supposition that it might be "his angel"! And how much more encouraging to ordinary mortals whose prayers at best are, what they are, than if we had been told they were all so confident of the answer that not one of them expressed the least surprise.

It was Peter himself, not his angel; and yet he had a story to tell them of his angel who had come to him in his cell, arrayed in light,

waked him from sleep, unbound his chains, opened the doors one after another, swung back the iron gate, led him along the street till the prison was out of sight, and then, before he had time to make up his mind whether it was dream or reality, left him to find his way to his own company.

The tale is one that does not, of course, commend itself to those who, like the Sadducees of old, "say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit." If this be quite certain; if it be assuredly ascertained that there is no such being in the universe as an angel, or that, if there be, none of them can by any conceivable possibility visit this earth or give help and comfort even to the purest and most heavenly minded of its inhabitants—if all that be quite certain, then we must, with the modern Sadducees, do our best to explain it all away, and with our friend the critic warn people that "the clearness of the narrative is eminently adapted to influence us unduly in its favor." But is it quite certain? Perhaps the poet may have a deeper view than even the most learned critic:

"And is there care in heaven? And is there love
 In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
 That may compassion of their evils move?
 There is: else much more wretched were the case
 Of men than beasts: but O th' exceeding grace
 Of Highest God! that loves his creatures so,
 And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
 That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
 To serve to wicked men, to serve his wicked foe!"

"How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
 To come to succor us that succor want!
 How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
 The fitting skies, like flying pursuivant
 Against foul fiends to aid us militant?
 They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
 And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
 And all for love, and nothing for reward;
 O why should heavenly God to men have such
 regard!"

Were there no angels would there be for the sorrow-laden light at evening time?

CHAPTER XI.

TO THE UTMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH.

THE center is now shifted from Jerusalem to Antioch. We shall still have glimpses of the Jerusalem church, but only in so far as it comes into relation with the work which centers in the great capital of the East. The Church has now left its Jerusalem cradle, has passed through its Judea and Samaria school, and, set free from the law of its mother, is about to enter on the responsibilities of independent life and action. The great field of the world is opening before her; and, as her Moses

retires, her Joshua comes to the front to lead her across the Jordan into the promised land, for she has been given "the heathen for her inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession." The prominent figure will no longer be Saint Peter, the great apostle of the circumcision, but Saint Paul, the still greater Apostle of the Gentiles.

Antioch was the third city of the empire, coming close after Alexandria, which was second only to Rome. It held almost the same

position in the early Roman empire, as Constantinople afterward reached, as the gate of the East. It had been the center of trade and commerce for 300 years, during which time it had grown so rapidly in wealth and magnificence as almost to rival Rome itself. Some idea of its magnitude may be conveyed by mentioning that the city wall, very broad and high, formed an irregular ellipse, more than twelve miles in circumference, the long diameter of which was the famous Street of Herod, nearly five miles in length, paved with blocks of white marble for one-half the distance, lined with trees, adorned with statues, and furnished with a colonnade on both sides all the way to shelter from the sun and rain. The northern part of the city, through which flowed the noble navigable river, the Orontes, was scarcely less magnificent, while outside the walls there were fine suburbs, and near the river below the city the famous groves of Daphne, a pleasure park ten miles in circumference devoted to the worship of Apollo the favorite deity of Antioch. Famed for its magnificence, the city was no less notorious for its vice, a striking proof of which is found in the fact that when the satirist Juvenal wished to express the increasing moral degradation of Rome in the strongest terms he put it thus: "the Syrian Orontes has long been flowing into the Tiber." Dean Howson says: "It is probable that no populations have ever been more abandoned than those of Oriental Greek cities under the Roman empire, and of these cities Antioch was the greatest and the worst. If we wish to realize the appearance and reality of the complicated heathenism of the first Christian century, we must endeavor to imagine the scene of that suburb, the famous Daphne, with its fountains and groves of bay trees, its bright buildings, its crowd of licentious votaries, its statue of Apollo—where, under the climate of Syria, and the wealthy patronage of Rome, all that was beautiful in nature and art had created a sanctuary for a perpetual festival of vice."

There was a large Jewish colony at Antioch, which, so far as its members were at all faithful to the law, would be a standing protest against these heathen abominations; but having its own separate quarter, and its own jurisdiction—for this was allowed under the empire—and being prohibited by its ordinances from holding any social intercourse with the Gentiles, its influence on public morals would be reduced to a minimum. Besides, their conception of the calling of Israel would lead the Jews to regard it as their duty, not so much to exercise direct influence on the life of the city, as to endeavor to induce as many as possible to abandon heathen society and cast in their lot with them as proselytes to the Jewish faith.

When those of the refugees from the persecution at Jerusalem who were enterprising enough to travel so far afield, reached Antioch, they preached their new Gospel, but only to the Jews. It had not occurred to them that they had any message except for the Jewish quarter. Meanwhile, however, believers in Christ were arriving, not directly from Jerusalem, but from places to which the Gospel had been carried by other exiles, for there was a constant stream of visitors from all quarters pouring into the Eastern metropolis; and the natural result of this would be to awaken a feeling of the expansiveness of the new Gospel and its adaptation to divers people, which could not but sooner or later find some emolument in fact. So it came to pass that certain unnamed disciples from Cyprus and Cyrene, while resident in Antioch, and under the influence of its cosmopolitan ideas, bethought themselves of trying the experiment of speaking the word to the Greeks also.¹ "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord."

This seems to have happened quite independently of Saint Peter and the Church at Jerusalem; and it is instructive as showing that the Spirit's guidance was no special prerogative of the apostles, but was enjoyed by simple, earnest men who surrendered themselves to the love of Christ, and the longing for the advancement of his kingdom which glowed in their hearts, and impelled them to dare to be original in their aggressive work.

It was not very long, however, till tidings of these strange doings did reach the Church at Jerusalem; but in all probability not till after Saint Peter had made his report of what had befallen at Cæsarea. This we may infer from the fact that, instead of sending a deputation to remonstrate, they despatched a commissioner to inquire, and chose for the purpose a man as likely as any to be in sympathy with the new movement; for Barnabas was himself a man of Cyprus,² who had shown by his kindly interposition on behalf of Saul, when no one else seemed willing to trust him,³ that he was singularly free from prejudice. Such a man was not likely to object to an innovation which had so evidently the sanction of the Spirit of God; and accordingly far from criticising, he rejoiced, and gave every encouragement to the new movement; for, as Saint Luke significantly remarks, "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord."

Our translation of the surname Barnabas, "Son of Consolation," gives undue prominence to the tender side of his character.

¹ Acts xi, 20 (Revised Version).

² Acts iv, 36.

³ Acts ix, 27.

"Son of Exhortation" is the translation in the Revised Version; but that sounds bald and does not really give the sense to an English ear. The word in the original is the abstract noun corresponding to the designation Paraclete, which though translated "Comforter" in the English Bible, includes all the work of the Holy Spirit, in its full strength (as is implied in the syllable *fort*, and in the original meaning of the word "comfort"), as well as in all its tenderness. Barnabas had indeed a tender, loving heart, but he had also a strong, far-reaching mind, and a wise discrimination. He saw that the new mission was developing so fast that a strong man was needed at the helm, and, recalling the impression he had formed of the gifts of Saul of Tarsus, concluded that he was the very man for the position, and accordingly sent to his native place to seek him, apparently not very sure whether he was there, or where he was, for he had been out of sight for years. But the Spirit's guidance did not fail the Son of Comfort; for he not only discovered his man, but found him quite ready to give himself to the work.

The history of Saul during the uncertain number of years that must have elapsed since his conversion is wrapped in considerable obscurity, lighted up, however, here and there by personal references in the epistles. From his letter to the Galatians¹ we learn that immediately after his conversion he went away into Arabia. How long he remained there we have no exact means of knowing, but it must have been a considerable time—probably more than a year—for he tells us that from Arabia he returned to Damascus, and later on went up to Jerusalem, this visit being three years after his conversion,² so that the three years must have been distributed between Arabia and Damascus. We can understand how much he would feel the need of prolonged meditation and fresh study of the Scriptures before he was ready for his lifework. For this purpose no place was better suited than those solitudes of the southern desert where Moses and Elijah had both spent so long time in solitary communing with God. We can fancy him there with the roll of the Hebrew Bible or the Greek translation spread out before him, re-reading the entire Scriptures under the new light now flashing on almost every page, and, guided by the Spirit of God, patiently thinking out, in its relations to the old truth, the Gospel he was burning to declare as soon as God in his providence should open the way.

The way was not opened for many years; for, though he returned to Damascus and thereafter went to Jerusalem, the attempt he made

in both places was frustrated by the rage of the Jews against their renegade leader,¹ and it was found necessary for his safety that he should again retire to the comparative seclusion of his native place,² in the neighborhood of which he probably remained until he was summoned, as we have seen to Antioch.³

The long delay between his conversion and his entrance on his lifework is full of instruction as showing once more how necessary time, and thought, and much prayer are to the equipment of those who are called to be teachers and leaders in the Church. If ever a man might have dispensed with any further preparation than was secured by his marvelous conversion, it would have been Saul of Tarsus, the accomplished Rabbi, with all the learning, and talents, and force of character which had brought him to the front among the Pharisees, and with the intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures he had acquired during his long curriculum of study. But if even he needed so many years of thought, and study, and waiting upon God before taking up the work of his life, it surely cannot be wise to lay hands suddenly upon any man, however promising, who has no other qualification for the work than the suddenness and thoroughness of his conversion.

We can admire the providence of God also in the successive failures at Damascus and Jerusalem, as necessarily turning his mind away from those of his own old faith and preparing him for going forth, with all the onrush of the pent-up force of his soul, on the mission to the Gentiles for which from the first his Master had set him apart. Moreover, it was necessary that the way should be prepared for the Church at Jerusalem accepting the new policy, else there would have been, not merely friction, but direct antagonism between the old apostles and the new one. It is evident that the Apostle Paul realized this danger from the very beginning. He gives this, in fact, as one reason for retiring at once to Arabia. It might have seemed most natural that he should join himself to the Church in Jerusalem, and by prolonged conference with its leaders become acquainted with the apostolic doctrine. But in this there would have been great risk of compromising both himself and them. For as yet there was no thought in their minds of breaking down the middle wall of partition, and how could he consult them as to his commission to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ? Here is the way he puts it in his letter to the Galatians: "But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called

¹ Galatians i, 17. ² Galatians i, 18.

¹ II. Corinthians xi, 32; Acts ix, 29.

² Acts ix, 30. ³ Galatians i, 21.

me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus."¹ But by the time he was called to begin his work in Antioch, the way of the Lord was prepared, and it was with the full concurrence of the Mother Church that he and Barnabas gave themselves to the work among the heathen in Antioch.

For a year the two labored together in the great city and made such an impression on it that the inhabitants felt the presence of a new force among them. As long as the movement

had been confined to the Jewish quarter, it attracted no attention. One more sect among Jews was neither here nor there to Antiochenes. But now that, instead of keeping to themselves in their own quarter, these new agitators had invaded the city proper, and were beginning to exercise a powerful influence on the life of the Greek population, they could call them Jews no longer, for they were as different as possible from that exclusive separatist community. They must have a new name for them, and as in their addresses to the people there was one name reiterated over and over again, the ever-recurring name of Christ, they called them Christians: "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."

CHAPTER XII.

THE FIRST FOREIGN MISSION.

THE new expansive spirit of the Church cannot long confine itself even to so wide a field as the great city of Antioch. The year already spent has afforded time for fully testing the principles to which the followers of Christ are now committed, and for securing a sufficient foothold in the metropolis to afford a strong base of operations in pursuing the large enterprise on which they are bent. For the same Spirit which prompted them a year ago to leave the Jewish quarter and invade the Gentile city now inspires them with the great thought of making Antioch not their field but only the center of a world-wide propaganda, having for its ultimate object the carrying out of the great commission to its last word by sending the Gospel of the Christ of God to the uttermost parts of the earth.

With such thoughts in their minds the leaders of the Church observed a special season of waiting upon God, their earnestness and deep sense of responsibility showing itself in the fasting which accompanied their supplications. As they so "ministered unto the Lord and fasted," it was made plain to them to be the will of the Lord that their best two men should be set apart to carry the Gospel to the regions beyond: "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Thus their way was made plain; and though it must have been a severe strain upon their faith to allow the two men on whom they depended most for the prosecution of the work at home, to leave them so soon (for what was a year's work in a great city like Antioch?), they did not hesitate a moment, but at once made arrangements to carry out the instructions.

Another season of prayer and fasting introduced the solemn act of ordination and the two missionaries, henceforth spoken of as apostles (a Greek word having the precise significance which missionary has in Latin), set out on their adventurous, and to all human appearance quixotic, expedition with the clear conviction, shared in by the Church which bade them God-speed, that they were "sent by the Holy Ghost."

1. CYPRUS. It was natural that they should go to Cyprus first, for it was the nearest and most accessible of the countries to the west of them, and had special claims as the home of Barnabas, and of those men who, with others from the distant Cyrene, first preached the Gospel to the Greeks. Moreover, it had a very large number of Jewish settlers, chiefly on account of the famous copper mines (*aes Cyprium* or *Cuprium* was the name by which the metal was known to the Romans, whence our word "copper") having passed into Jewish hands, for Josephus, writing to Herod the Great, tells us, "Cæsar made him a present of one-half the revenue of the copper mines in Cyprus and committed the care of the other half to him."¹ As a natural consequence large numbers of his Jewish subjects settled there to manage the trade, and some of them, of whom Barnabas himself was probably an example, would share in the wealth derived from it.² True, their mission was more particularly to Gentiles; but even the Apostles to the Gentiles never forgot the original instruction, "beginning at Jerusalem," "to the Jew first." The Jews were the prepared people, and not only loyalty to their Master's instructions but the sound policy of beginning with those with

¹ Galatians i, 15-17 (Revised Version).

¹ "Antiquities," XVI, iv, 5.

² See Acts iv, 37.

whom they had most in common, prompted them to make a practice of delivering their message first in the synagogue if there were one, and if not, then in any gathering of their countrymen they could find, like the prayer meeting by the river side at Philippi.

The way lay by Seleucia, the port of Antioch, from which they took ship to Salamis, a large mercantile town with several Jewish synagogues in which the apostles preached the Word, with what results we are not informed. Nor have we any particulars of what befell them as they traversed the island from east to west, a distance of about 100 miles. At the other extremity of the island was Paphos, a name infamous on account of its associations in classical history with the worship of Venus in its worst and most odious forms. It is not, however, for this reason that the historian dwells for a moment on the work in Paphos, but because of the importance of the personage who is here numbered among his converts, being none other than the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus.

The reference to this proconsul is one of the illustrations to which we referred in the introduction to this book, of the accuracy of Saint Luke being triumphantly vindicated where it seemed to be most successfully assailed. A general statement of Strabo, the geographer, referring to the time of Augustus, classed Cyprus among the provinces over which not proconsuls but propretors were appointed; and it was quietly assumed by critics of a certain type that it was a blunder in the Acts, and so far a proof that the book could not have been written by a contemporary. Later on, however, a passage was discovered in another historian, Dion Cassius, which confirmed the statement of Strabo, indeed, but added that five years later the distribution of provinces was so altered that Cyprus was put in the other class. And this is not all. Still later, coins were discovered with inscriptions on them which demonstrated that Saint Luke was right, and last of all, as one of the results of the investigations carried on since Britain obtained control of Cyprus, a coin was discovered actually bearing the name of Paulus the proconsul!

The proconsul seems to have been a man with deep spiritual cravings which had found no satisfaction in the Roman Pantheon. We are apt to think meanly of him for allowing himself to come under the influence of a charlatan like the Jew Bar-Jesus, who called himself Elymas, the wise man. But we must not forget that at this time the Jews were the only people who had deep religious convictions; and while this explains the fact that, in spite of the unattractiveness of their creed and cult, they gained so many proselytes, it also gave to

designing men like this Bar-Jesus the opportunity of trading upon the spiritual hunger of seekers for the hidden things of the universe like this Sergius Paulus. Such heartless villainy was surely not too sternly rebuked, when, seeing him striving to keep the proconsul in his toils, Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, fastened his eyes on him and said, "O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Nor was the punishment too great when he was suddenly smitten with blindness for a season.

It is from this time that the old name Saul is dropped in favor of the now familiar Paul. The two names, though similar in sound, are quite different, the one being the royal Hebrew name, the other a Latin name, which had been borne by many members of the distinguished Roman family to which probably the proconsul belonged. The change seems to be in some way connected with the conversion of this Paulus, but how, precisely, we can only conjecture. It has been supposed that the name belonged to him as a free-born Roman, in addition to his Jewish name of Saul; and, if this be so, it is not unnatural to suppose that the meeting with the proconsul revived the recollection of it, and that it was adopted and used thereafter because, being a Gentile name, it was in keeping with his work as the Gentiles' Apostle.

2. ASIA MINOR. From Cyprus the missionary party proceeded to the main land, their objective point being Antioch in Pisidia. When they landed at Perga, the courage of one of the three failed. As is the wont of the dispassionate historian, the simple fact is noted without a word of comment that "John [Mark] departed from them and returned to Jerusalem"—a great grief no doubt to his cousin Barnabas,¹ and so impressing the mind of Paul with his unsuitability for the work that later on he separated from Barnabas rather than take up again with his cousin. Perhaps the "perils of robbers" were too much for him to face, for Antioch in Pisidia, was in the midst of a country which then, as now, was infested with brigands.

This portion of the missionary tour has recently been invested with fresh interest by the new evidence brought forward by Prof. W. M. Ramsay, who has made a most careful exploration of the entire region, in support of the view long held by a small number of scholars that Phrygia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, were not separate provinces, but mere districts of the southern portion of the great Roman province of Galatia, which extended from north to south

¹ See Colossians iv, 10 (Revised Version).

right across the plateau of Asia Minor, nearly reaching the Mediterranean on the south and the Black Sea on the north. According to the view which has prevailed hitherto as to the extent of the province of Galatia, we have on the one hand a group of churches in which Saint Paul evidently took the deepest interest, to none of which is any of his numerous extant letters addressed, and on the other hand we have an important epistle addressed to a people among whom we have no record of his having founded a single church. Both these suppositions are, of course, separately admissible; but it certainly adds much to our interest, both in this missionary tour and in the Epistle to the Galatians, to be able to connect them together.

Antioch in Pisidia, though it had no pretensions to rank with the great Syrian Antioch, was nevertheless a city of much importance, situated as it was at the convergence of several important Roman roads, and holding the position of "a governing and military center" for all these districts which, according to Professor Ramsay, made up the southern and by far the more considerable portion of the great province of Galatia. This may account for its being singled out for a full notice of the apostle's work there, which is given in the Acts.¹

This lengthened notice furnishes us with an interesting sketch of the apostle's method of proceeding in his missionary work. He first found out some leading synagogue, if there were many, or where there was only one, as in this case, "the synagogue," and took his place among the worshipers. When the regular service, the most important part of which was "the reading of the Law and the Prophets," was over, it was the custom to invite any Rabbi or stranger of distinction who might be present to give "a word of exhortation." This was the apostle's opportunity, of which he would avail himself, as on this occasion, by giving an address based in all probability on the passages which had been read. This would enable him to begin on the common ground of their faith in Jehovah and appreciation of his dealings with his people in the ages past;² then he would proceed in the most natural way to speak of Jesus, making as much as possible, perhaps, as here, of the witness of John, whom all accounted to be a prophet;³ after which he would pour out his heart to them in speaking of the great salvation accomplished in his death, which was no calamity but the fulfillment of the divine purpose, and completed in his resurrection, of which their own Scriptures gave many a hint and forecast;⁴ and conclude by a free offer of forgiveness in his name, not to Jews alone, but to "everyone that believ-

eth," and a solemn warning not to neglect so great salvation.¹

As long as his countrymen would listen, as in this case they did with great interest, both on the part of the Jews and the proselytes, he would continue the work among them, in the hope of making them the lower courses of the spiritual building he hoped to erect in the place. But when they rejected the Gospel, as in this case they did later on when their passions were inflamed by jealousy at the sight of "the whole city gathered together to hear the word of God," Gentiles just as welcome as themselves, he would turn from them with some such words as those reported here: "It was necessary that the Word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth." Something like this seems to have been the usual practice of the apostle wherever there was a Jewish population to claim his first attention: how he acted with a purely Gentile population will appear when we watch his conduct at Lystra.

After the Jews turned away, the Gentiles of Antioch still maintained their interest; and that it was no mere passing excitement is proved by the recorded result that "the Word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region." We can understand, then, how, notwithstanding the success of the plot of the leading Jews against them, aided by some wealthy lady proselytes who probably had much influence with the authorities, in consequence of which they were expelled from the city as disturbers of the peace, they shook off the dust of their feet, according to their Lord's instructions, and departed in no crestfallen spirit but "filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." They would need such spiritual exultation to sustain them in the hot march of twenty-eight hours, along a road with scarce a tree to shade them, and scarce a spring to quench their thirst, before they could reach Iconium, which was their next field of labor and suffering. As, however, their experience at Antioch was so nearly repeated there,² we shall not dwell upon it.

At Lystra, however, the events recorded are of such interest that we must beware of dwelling too long over them. It was natural that, after being expelled from two cities in succession by the machinations of their countrymen, the apostles should prefer to pay their next visit to a place where they would have a purely

¹ Acts xiii, 4-52.

² Acts xiii, 16-22.

³ Acts xiii, 23-25.

⁴ Acts xiii, 26-37.

¹ Acts xiii, 38-41.

² Acts xiv, 1-7.

Gentile population to deal with. This was found in Lystra, and the fact that there was no synagogue here to afford a base from which to work may have been the reason why it was necessary that some sign should be given to the people that the strangers had indeed a message from heaven to deliver. This purpose was served by the cure of a well-known cripple, which, however, led, in the most natural way, to exceedingly embarrassing consequences; for the people, becoming greatly excited, at once concluded that in the persons of Barnabas and Paul they were favored with a visit from their tutelary deity Jupiter, and his attendant Mercury.

It has been pointed out that in this we have a hint of the personal appearance of the apostles, for Jupiter was always represented as tall and majestic in appearance, while Mercury was small and insignificant in comparison, with the liteness and agility appropriate to the swift messenger of the gods. This confirms the impression made by Saint Paul's own reference to the disparaging remarks of some of his detractors: "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible,"¹ and strangely enough there is an old legend entitled "The Acts of Paul and Thekla," which Professor Ramsay proves to be of some historical value, in which it is related that a certain Onesiphorus of Iconium met Paul on the Lystra road, and described him as "a man small in size, with meeting eyebrows, with a rather large nose, bald-headed, bow-legged, strongly built, full of grace, for at times he looked like a man and at times he had the face of an angel."

Another point of great interest is the connection of this experience of the apostles at Lystra with the well-known classic legend of Philemon and Baucis, an aged couple who resided in this very region, and as a reward of their piety enjoyed a visit from Jupiter and his attendant Mercury. Their poor cottage was transformed into a splendid temple and the aged couple were installed as priest and priestess; and when they died they were changed into two trees that grew side by side in the neighborhood, an oak and a linden. The Latin poet Ovid takes this Lycaonian legend and works it up into one of his "Metamorphoses," very much as Tennyson takes the Arthurian legends and works them up into the "Idylls of the King." How interesting it is, and how strengthening to our confidence in the accuracy of our historian, to find this confirmation of the popular superstitions of these people in the pages of the famous Roman poet! If the fame of this reputed visit of Jupiter and Mercury was so widespread as to make it famil-

iarly known in far-distant Rome, we can well believe that the people of the place would be very full of it, and that nothing would be more natural than that they should conclude that the visit which had made their country so famous long ago was vouchsafed them a second time.

It is a touch of nature also that their jubilant cry should be "in the speech of Lycaonia,"¹ the effect of which seems to have been that the apostles did not understand what they meant, so that there was time for the people to go to the temple of Jupiter and stir up the priest and get oxen for sacrifice and deck them with garlands for the great occasion, before Paul and Barnabas knew what they were about.

When they did understand what all the excitement meant, they were horrified beyond measure: "they rent their garments and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that you should turn from these vain things unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. And yet he left not himself without witness in that he did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."²

This impromptu address is remarkable for many things. It is Paul all through, marks of genuineness in every clause, every thought of it echoed afterward in his later speeches and his letters. It differs entirely from his addresses to his countrymen, making no use of the Scriptures, but appealing to the great principles of natural religion which they might be reasonably expected to hold in common with himself. Many a lesson in dealing with men may be gathered from a study of the words of Saint Paul.

If the apostles expected by transferring their labors to Lystra to escape the machinations of their countrymen, they were doomed to disappointment; for, learning where they had gone, and fearing that they might get too strong a footing in their neighborhood, the Jews of Antioch and Iconium followed them up, and, learning the state of things, so worked on the excited feelings of the people as to impel them to the opposite extreme. In all probability they would represent that the visit was not of gods, but of demons, for according to the notions then current, the one hypothesis was as good an explanation as the other; and those who are at all acquainted with human nature, especially as showing itself in the actions and

¹ II. Corinthians x, 10.

¹ Acts xiv, 11.

² Acts xiv, 14-17 (Revised Version).

passions of mobs, will not be at all surprised that the same people who were ready one day to worship the apostles as gods, were as ready the next to drive them out of the place with brutal violence. So it was; and so rough had been their treatment, and so well aimed the stones which had been cast at Paul, that the few friends who gathered round him when the mob scattered took him for dead.

It has been surmised with some degree of probability that in this little group was young Timothy, whom Saint Paul found at Lystra on his next visit,¹ and to whom later he wrote in these terms: "Thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings; what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me."²

Undeterred by all this hard experience, the apostle still went on, and preached his Gospel in Derbe, where he "made many disciples," and then with a splendid courage returned

upon his own tracks, revisiting the places where he had suffered so much, not for the purpose of renewing the provocation of public preaching, but to strengthen and encourage the little band of believers in Christ who were the fruit of his labors: "confirming the souls of his disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith," at the same time telling them with all frankness "that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." He was careful, too, to do some organizing after a simple fashion, by ordaining elders in each church. And so they worked their way back, avoiding Tarsus the old home of the one apostle, and Cyprus the old home of the other; for their movements are guided not by any personal preference but by the Spirit of the Lord, doing some evangelistic work in Perga, which they had only passed through on their way out, and then journeying to Attalia, from which port they took ship to Antioch, and to the brethren assembled there gave in their first report.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY.

IF the apostles expected rest from tribulation on their return home, they were sadly disappointed; for a reaction had set in at the south on the burning question of the terms on which Gentiles could be received into the Church, and a strong party were insisting on the old position of compelling them to acknowledge themselves proselytes to the Jewish faith by submitting to circumcision before they could be entitled to salvation by Christ. This position was so completely antagonistic to that which had been taken by the Church at Antioch, and applied with such marked success by Paul and Barnabas, that it was no wonder that the arrival of some of these narrow-minded brethren from the south on a crusade against the advanced ideas of the Northern Church should give rise to "no small dissension and questioning."

It is hard for us now to realize the magnitude and difficulty of the question. The bringing in of the Gentiles was no new subject to the Jew. His Scriptures were full of it. His temple was not for Isaac alone, but "a house of prayer for all nations." There was no objection, therefore, to as many Gentiles as chose coming to share their privileges. But surely not without submission to the law! It was on that condition that the Jew himself enjoyed them; why, then, should a Gentile have them

on any easier terms? Let them come and worship in the Temple by all means, provided that in doing so they obey the regulations which have been in force from time immemorial. Let them share in the blessings of the kingdom of God, and the reign of Israel's Messiah, but not without as strict obedience to the laws of the kingdom on the part of the foreigner as of the home born. If we try to put ourselves in the place of a devout Israelite of the time, who had by no means parted with his old convictions, but had simply accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah for whom he had been taught to look, we shall be able to see not a little reason in their contention, and to understand why they should even lose their temper in defending their rights.

But had not all been settled by the vision at Joppa, the reception of Cornelius, and the discussion at Jerusalem when Saint Peter's explanations were accepted and his conduct approved? No doubt it was, in a way; but the convictions of a lifetime can scarcely be uprooted in a week; and we can well understand that the first impression made by the apostle's recital and the evidence he furnished that it was of the Spirit that these converts at Cæsarea should be received, would overbear all opposition, and yet that some of the sterner spirits would only be half convinced, and would take the first opportunity of reimposing the restrictions which had been so suddenly

¹ See Acts xvi, 1.

² II. Timothy iii, 10, 11 (Revised Version).

removed. And when they heard that not merely a few converts at Cæsarea, whose case might be regarded as exceptional, but Romans and Greeks everywhere were being brought in by these innovators at Antioch, they would think it high time to raise aloft the old banner, and contend earnestly for the old faith of Israel. It was one thing to admit a few Gentiles who would be in a hopeless minority, and leave the Church as a whole Jewish and the control in Jewish hands; it was quite another thing to go all over the world and establish Gentile churches, so numerous, and growing so rapidly, that the Jewish element would be completely overwhelmed, and the nations, instead of being ruled by Israel and its Messiah, would extinguish Israel altogether, put aside its Law, set at nought its Temple, forget its Scriptures, and accept nothing but its Christ.

Let us not be too hard, then, on these conservative Jews, or wonder what a controversy which is now so completely dead should be so very serious in the apostle's day. There can be little doubt that this "dissension and disputation" raised by the visit of these men from Judea caused Saint Paul much more anxiety than anything that he had encountered in his missionary tour.

The account given in the Acts is very brief, but it is supplemented by the apostle himself in the Epistle to the Galatians¹ from which we gather many interesting particulars. From it we learn that it was in communion with God² he gained the assurance that the best way to meet the crisis was to send a deputation to the Church at Jerusalem. This he proposed to the Church at Antioch, and they agreed, appointing himself and Barnabas, and "certain other of them," one of whom we learn from the epistle was Titus, appropriately included as a Gentile convert who had not been circumcised.

The apostles, while ever looking upward for direction, left no stone unturned to further their cause. All along the route to Jerusalem, they told their story, and that with such effect that it was received not with suspicion but with gladness. And when they reached Jerusalem Saint Paul took the precaution of seeing some of the leading men privately first, to make sure that they would have the whole case before them, before they committed themselves in public. How natural it all seems, and how clearly it shows on the one hand that the guidance of the Spirit is never intended to supersede the fullest use of all the ordinary means by which conclusions are reached, and on the other that the use of proper means need not weaken, but may rather strengthen our conviction that the result is of God! It was

because there had been so much earnest consultation, first in private and then in public, that in the end the Church could preface her decision with the words: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us." There is, indeed, always the possibility of error, of mistaking our own conclusions for the mind of the Spirit, but this danger is not at its maximum but at its minimum, when all proper means have been used, and all fitting counselors consulted.

When the question came up for public discussion in the regularly convened assembly, the party of opposition, consisting as was to be expected of those who had been strict Pharisees and, in fact, still remained so though they had accepted Jesus as their Messiah, took a definite stand, declaring, even after hearing of the wonderful work among the Gentiles in the north, "that it was needful to circumcise them, and command them to keep the law of Moses." It would be an anxious moment for the deputation, for the advanced party was not at all likely to be in force here as in Antioch. But the intervention of Saint Peter saved the day. He does not speak as a pope, or even as a prelate. He takes his natural place as a leader, and speaks early as one who has special acquaintance with the subject. And what he says is in the highest degree honorable to him. His prejudices would be all on the conservative side, and it must have cost him much to take a decided stand in favor of the new apostles and their ways. But he is a true man, and has not only asked direction from the Spirit but has accepted it when it came; so he simply reminds the brethren of what had happened "a good while ago" in the matter of Cornelius, and candidly confesses that the plain inference was that God "put no difference between them and us." What a surrender of cherished rights and privileges was there, and how nobly does he press for the inevitable conclusion: "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they."¹

So honest, brave, and timely a speech from the leading apostle produced a profound impression, which was greatly deepened when Barnabas and Paul followed it up by a fresh recital of what God had wrought by them among the Gentiles; and before the opposition had time to recover, James, the brother of the Lord, who seems to have been the presiding officer of the Mother Church, brought the matter to a point by a wise address, confirming the position taken by Saint Peter by an appeal to

¹ Galatians ii, 1-10.

² Acts xv, 2.

¹ Acts xv, 10, 11 (Revised Version).

the prophecy of Amos, and concluding with a judgment, or as we should say in modern ecclesiastical phrase, "a deliverance," to this effect, "that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles turn to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood."

The proposition was something of a compromise, conceding the principal point, by declining to insist on circumcision and strict obedience to the law, but at the same time recommending that, in certain particulars which were peculiarly offensive to the Jewish brethren, the Gentiles should be careful not to injure their susceptibilities. It casts a lurid side-light on the state of the Gentile world in respect of morality, that a breach of the seventh commandment should be put in the category of things to be abstained from out of regard to Jewish sentiment. It is explained by the well-known fact that not only was there in such society as that of Antioch no conscience against this sin, but that it was an acknowledged and applauded part of their heathen worship. Well, then, might the Jews regard it as of great importance that there should be a special safeguard against the possibility of intrusion into the Church of this heathenish abomination.

The decision of the council was embodied in an official letter which was handed to the deputation, strengthened by the addition of Judas and Silas as representatives of the Mother Church; and so the whole matter was happily settled — for the time.

Only for the time, however; compromises may be useful to tide over a crisis, but so long as a great question remains open, difficulties are sure to recur. And so it was here. There had been a relaxation of the law in favor of the Gentiles who did not wish to become Jews, but the Jews themselves and the proselytes were still bound as before; and the question was sure to come up, Is that quite fair? If a Gentile can be a good Christian without keeping the law of Moses, why not a Jew? The fathers, indeed, might not be likely to raise that question, but the children certainly would. Contrasting their own bondage with the freedom of the others, they would naturally ask, If there is no real necessity for all these restrictions and regulations, as is proved by the admission of the Gentiles without them, why should we be expected to comply with them? In any case there would be a cleavage in the Church so long as the question was not settled in such a way as to apply to all alike.

Difficulties would be always cropping up, and at times serious misunderstanding would be the result. A remarkable illustration of this is furnished by the dispute between the two

leading apostles, of which an account is given in the Epistle to the Galatians. On one occasion when Saint Peter was visiting the Church at Antioch, he very naturally and properly associated on the most familiar terms with the Gentile Christians, acting in the spirit of the great lesson he had been taught at Joppa. If he was invited to partake of the very varied food set before him in the vision, he might surely live in free intercourse with the members of the Antioch Church, sharing the common meal even where Jewish formalities were not observed. Meantime, however, some narrow-minded people had come from the Jerusalem Church, and, hearing of what their leader had done, took him to task. "It is all very well," they would say to him, "for you to let Cornelius do as he pleases in such matters; and all these Gentile Christians are free, according to the decree of the council; but you are a Jew, you are bound by the law as much as ever, and it is not right for you to eat with the Gentiles." The good man was sorely perplexed, lacking the full courage of his convictions, and naturally anxious not to alienate his old friends in Jerusalem; so he yielded, and withdrew from his new friends, his influence leading others to do the same, among whom, strange to say, was Barnabas himself. The crisis was acute; for to refuse fellowship with Gentile Christians was virtually to retract what had been done; so the Apostle Paul withstood his colleague to the face, and set before him in a few strong sentences the plea for Christian liberty and the full equality of the Gentiles in the sight of God, which he afterward elaborated in the great argument of the Epistle to the Galatians. Saint Peter was too good and true a man to harbor resentment towards his brother whom he truly loved,¹ or to do anything to hinder him in his great work. But there were others of a very different spirit, bigots, who, not content with denouncing him in Jerusalem, followed him up in his missionary tours, trying to stir up the Jewish Christians everywhere against him, casting doubts on his right to be an apostle, and insisting that, after all, there could be no salvation except on condition of obedience to the law of Moses. It was a terrible trial, and many an anxious day and sleepless night it cost him. The personal opposition he must have felt very keenly; but most of all did it distress him that the doctrines of these men set aside altogether the Gospel of the grace of God, annulled the righteousness which is by faith unto all and upon all them that believe, and sought to reintroduce the old Jewish idea of righteousness by the works of the law. This he knew by painful experience to be no way of life; and

¹ See II. Peter iii, 15.

it was terrible to him to think that seekers after God should be so grievously misled by men speaking in the name of Christ.

Was this fierce controversy an unmixed evil? By no means. It did much for the apostle's own development, enabling him with ever-increasing clearness to see, and with growing fullness to state, the Gospel of the grace of God; and who can estimate the gain of the Church in the possession of these priceless letters, generally spoken of as the Great Epistles, to the Galatians, the Corinthians, the Romans, which were wrung from his busy brain and throbbing heart by the exigencies of the strife?

We have much to learn, also, from a careful consideration of the apostle's own action in those cases of difficulty which were ever confronting him. We have seen how he characterized the conduct of Saint Peter and those who acted with him in the matter of intercourse with the Gentile Christians at Antioch. He would have made no objection to their observing all Jewish formalities among themselves, but when they made the non-observance of these on the part of the Gentile Christians a ground for separating from them, and denying to them the right hand of fellowship, he was up in arms at once. On the same principle, when he was in Jerusalem he made no objec-

tion to adopting the suggestion of the brethren there that he should join in a votive service which was then proceeding in the Temple.¹ He had not ceased to be a Jew, and, therefore, he had no objection himself to complying with Jewish observances, especially if it would bring comfort to the Jerusalem Christians; but he would have resisted to the last any attempt to impose such observances on anyone, Jew or Gentile, as necessary to salvation. He had no objection to Timothy being circumcised, because his mother was a Jewess, and, if the family desired it, there was no reason why it should be forbidden; but when it was proposed to compel Titus, he "gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour." His whole conduct throughout the entire controversy turned on this simple principle: obedience to the ceremonial law was optional with those Christians who had been Jews; if any choose, no one need hinder; but if any refused, no one must compel. But for Gentiles no other door than Christ himself was needed; and no law, no ceremonies, interposed between them and full salvation by faith alone. In all things he acted on his own great principle: "With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

WE are now entering on the story of a campaign which in point of real interest and importance throws all others into the shade. It is the invasion of Europe by Asia, not with a force of 3,000,000 of warriors, as when the renowned Xerxes led his hosts against the little Greek republic, but by four unarmed men who had to earn their living as they went along, and seemed at the mercy of any magistrates who might arrest them, or any mob that might be minded to maltreat them; and, though often hauled before the authorities and often in danger of their lives by the violence of the populace, they won the day, they planted the standard of the cross on the continent of Europe and left the flag flying from all the principal strongholds, often to be dishonored, indeed, but never again to be torn down.

The story is told so simply and has become so familiar that it is very difficult for a modern reader to realize how great it is. It suffers also from the unhappy division of the chapters, which is so badly done here that neither the beginning of the journey nor the end of it is marked in any way, the result being that few

ordinary readers get a distinct conception of it as a whole. If the entire section² within which the record of it is comprised had been in some way set off from the rest, it would have been much more easily grasped. Perhaps sometime we may have an edition of the Bible for popular use with the same advantages for ordinary readers which all other books enjoy.

Who was the general of this great campaign? Not Paul; he certainly did not plan it out; nor did the Church at Antioch. Saint Paul was the captain in the field; but who was the commander-in-chief? This is made very plain as we follow its movements. It was the "Spirit of Jesus."³

All Saint Paul thought of when he resolved to set out again from Antioch was to visit with Barnabas the brethren in the churches they had planted, and see how they fared; and even for that he made a very bad beginning, for the two leaders had a quarrel before they started. Barnabas wanted to take with him his cousin Mark, who had by this time seen his mistake in leaving the former expedition at Perga; but

¹ Acts xxi, 18-26.

² Acts xv, 36, to xviii, 22.

³ Acts xvi, 7 (Revised Version).

Paul would not have him, thinking no doubt that the man who had put his hand to the plow and turned back was not fit for the kingdom of God. Possibly Paul was too severe, and, it may be, somewhat dictatorial, of which, perhaps, we have an indication in one of his latest letters where he is careful to speak of Mark as "profitable for the ministry";¹ and Barnabas evidently allowed private partiality to influence him too much on a question of great public importance. Neither would yield to the other; so they had to separate. It must have made them both very miserable at the time, and done great harm to the cause; and some of the more fainthearted of the Antioch Christians would think that the mission was spoiled, for how could the Spirit of Jesus acknowledge an enterprise begun in such a temper? But the Spirit of Jesus is no less patient and forgiving than was the Man Jesus in the old days; and he could see better than any of their brethren could that both men were thoroughly conscientious, and sinned not willfully, but through weakness of the flesh; so he could find it in his great heart both to bless Barnabas in Cyprus and greatly to prosper Paul in his far larger circuit.

Here, as so often, God "made the wrath of man to praise him," for it is probable that more would be accomplished by the two men apart than they could have done together; and he "restrained the remainder thereof," for we know from a casual reference in one of the epistles that the two apostles did not continue estranged, but could work together very well when the heat of their contention had had time to cool.² The painful incident supplies another instance of the fidelity of the historian, and furnishes us a valuable and often much-needed lesson of charity, and patience, and hope, when the inconsistencies of good men tempt us to despair of the future of the Church.

Saint Paul chose Silas, known as Silvanus in the epistles, as his colleague, in place of Barnabas. He was one of the deputation that had been sent from Jerusalem with the decrees of the council, and had been so much interested in the work at Antioch that he had cast in his lot with the brethren there,³ his co-deputy Judas returning to Jerusalem. It is an interesting token of the cordial relations between Saint Peter and Saint Paul, notwithstanding their temporary antagonism on the matter of intercourse with the Gentile Christians, that the former in his First Epistle speaks of the man who left the Jerusalem Church and became the companion of the Apostle of the Gentiles as "Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I account him."⁴

We shall find it of advantage to distinguish three stages in the expedition: (1) the work in Asia Minor; (2) in Macedonia, the centers being Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea; and (3) in Achaia, where the interest is divided between Athens and Corinth.

1. ASIA MINOR. As Barnabas was taking Cyprus, it was not necessary that Paul should follow the same route as before; so, restricting himself to the mainland, he traveled over the mountain passes into Cilicia, where he would have the opportunity of visiting the region of those early labors in Tarsus and its neighborhood of which we read in the Epistle to the Galatians.¹

The tour of visitation of the churches from Tarsus in the east to the Pisidian Antioch in the west must have occupied considerable time; but as the main object of the historian is to tell of the new departure, no details are given except the adoption at Lystra of Timothy as a third missionary, completing the familiar trio in the epistles, "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy." We know, not only from the statement in the Acts that this young disciple was "well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium," but from the interesting particulars mentioned by Saint Paul himself in one of his letters² that he did not "lay hands suddenly" on him, but had the best of reasons for believing that he would be a worthy and well-qualified coadjutor in the work, as indeed he proved. The fact that his mother was a Jewess, while his father was a Greek, would be an additional advantage in view of the delicate relations between the two elements in the Church.

Having now finished the visitation of the churches, the apostle seems to be groping his way very much in the dark. He is earnestly desirous of knowing the will of the Lord, but he does not recognize it with perfect clearness. In this respect we discover a striking inferiority to his Master who in the days of his flesh, walking in the light in perfect purity, knew always what was his Father's will. It is quite different with the servant here. His first idea is to "speak the Word in Asia," by which he understood the most western of the provinces into which what we now know as Asia Minor was divided — Asia Minima we may call it for distinction. But he finds he is mistaken, for he is "forbidden of the Holy Ghost." The next idea is to go north to Bithynia, but again "the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." Thus the smaller doors on the left and on the right were closed that he might be constrained to go up to the "wide door and effectual" which was awaiting his touch right in front to open

¹ II. Timothy iv, 11.

² Corinthians ix, 6.

³ Acts xv, 27.

⁴ I. Peter v, 12 (Revised Version).

¹ Galatians i, 21.

² II. Timothy i, 5, iii, 15.

for the reception of his Gospel. One thinks here of "the bit and bridle," rather than of the clear guidance of the Eye.¹

Saint Paul at Troas suggests a picture which has been peculiarly fascinating to the classical imagination. The scene has been depicted by Dean Howson in a noble passage too long to quote, but which should by all means be referred to.² We are reminded of Saint Peter at Joppa; only, instead of the waste of waters, there is a narrow strait and beyond it a pleasant land lying in clear sunlight — the island of Tenedos — which seems a stepping-stone to Europe. "Can it be that the Spirit of the Lord is calling us to cross the Ægean?" While the light lasted he thought, and when the night fell he slept and dreamed — of a man from the other shore, beckoning and saying, "Come over and help us." So, next day, Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus had taken ship, and with them another, too modest even to mention in his history that the party is increased, the fact betraying itself, however, in the change of the pronoun from "they" to "we," an indication that "the beloved physician" had joined the little missionary band.

2. MACEDONIA. Philippi, the scene of a decisive battle which nearly a century before had transformed the Roman republic into the empire, was a strong military post, representing the majesty of Rome in the province of Macedonia; for such is the import of the, to us, somewhat misleading, term "a colony." Here the apostle commenced his European labors. The port of landing had been Neapolis; but according to his invariable custom Saint Paul made straight for the populous center. His object was not merely to gain converts but to occupy positions of strategic importance, with a view to the ultimate conquest of the land for Christ. A walk of eight miles along a well-made Roman road would bring the four men to the city.

They took a few days to rest and reconnoitre, but found no synagogue in the place. The sabbath day came round, but there was no sign of sabbath worship. We can fancy how lonely they would feel, how completely out of touch with the life of the place until, having explored the streets in vain, they went outside the gate and found by the river side a little band of women worshiping the God of Israel. Gladly did they join the company, and tell their story; and before the service was over a loving heart and a hospitable home were opened to the Lord Christ and his ambassadors. The conversion of Lydia was the first fruit of the European mission.

¹ Psalm xxxii, 8, 9.

² Conybeare and Howson, Vol. I, viii.

Another woman of a very different type was the occasion of the visitors attracting more attention than they desired. They were proceeding with their work in the quiet way in which they had begun, attending the meetings by the river side and gathering converts by slow degrees. But one day, as they were making their way to the place of prayer, they were followed by a well-known wild woman of the place who was reputed to have "a spirit of divination." She had probably been a listener to the preaching of the Word, and excited by the apostle's ardor and catching up some of his phrases she was carried away by a sort of frenzied impulse to follow them, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation." The apostle, having no relish for such an advertisement and touched with compassion for the poor woman, was "sore troubled." For many days he had to bear it, no doubt lifting up his heart continually for guidance, until at last he felt authorized by his Master to speak the word of power in his name; and the woman was restored to perfect sanity.

But now her masters were to be reckoned with. She was of no more use to them, and what right had these foreigners to ruin their business? So they laid hold on Paul and Silas and brought them before the magistrates on a charge — not of casting out the evil spirit — that would not have been an offense against the Roman law — but of troubling the city and introducing new customs at variance with the use and wont of Rome. Naturally enough the mob sided with the masters against the foreigners, and such a tumult was made that the magistrates were fain, without waiting for the course of Roman justice, to take summary proceedings. They were but a couple of wandering Jews, and what harm would it do to give them a beating and put them in gaol for a night? So the shameful torture was inflicted, and the two men, bruised and bleeding, were thrust into a dark, foul dungeon, the jailer with gratuitous aggravation wedging their feet into the stocks.

"But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them." So they too rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. Comments innumerable have been made on this inspiring scene, but perhaps none more beautiful than that of the Latin Father Tertullian: "That gloomy prison was to them what the desert was to the prophets — a holy retreat; one of those solitary places in which by preference Christ reveals his glory to his disciples. While their body was in fetters, their soul, sublimely free in spite of grating doors and guarded passages,

was pressing on the way to God. The flesh feels no ill, when the spirit is in heaven."

Then comes the earthquake; and the jailor's suicidal alarm, allayed by the kindly words of the apostle, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here"; the eager question, "What must I do to be saved?" with the prompt reply, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"; and the joyful change in the jailer's heart and home, making another holy household in the faith like that of Lydia, the result the same though the method and manner so strangely different—the one a gentle opening of the heart as to the dawning light, the other a terrible convulsion which laid the old life in ruins to make room for the new man in Christ Jesus.

It is a most thrilling story, very distasteful to the rationalistic critics as indicating so strongly the divine Hand in the history, but happily it is specially authenticated, for it is one of the "we sections," with all the marks of the report of an eyewitness. And here, as elsewhere, all research into the antiquities of the empire and of Philippi confirm the references to the state of matters in this Roman colony even to the minutest detail. There is no series of events in the book more thoroughly attested than the doings, and sufferings, and triumphs of Paul and Silas at Philippi.

Next day the magistrates, realizing how unjustly they had treated the poor men, sent to have them set at liberty; but they had yet to learn what manner of men they were whom they had so "shamefully entreated." "Paul said unto them, They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? Nay, verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out." They did come, and asked them as a favor to move quietly away, which they were quite willing to do, for the work had been so well begun that Luke could be trusted to carry it on, while the two leaders with Timothy passed on to the next great center of population 100 miles to the west. True ever to his unconquerable modesty, Saint Luke says nothing of the difficult task assigned him; we only gather it from another change in the pronoun from "we" back to "they."

We shall have occasion to speak of the Epistle to the Philippians when we reach the place where it was written, but we may refer to it now to call attention to the proof it affords of the faithfulness and steadfastness of the converts who were the first fruits of the apostle's European harvest. Bishop Lightfoot, in the introduction to his invaluable commentary on the epistle, says: "The unwavering loyalty of his Philippian converts is the constant solace of the apostle in his manifold trials, the one bright

ray of happiness piercing the dark clouds which gather ever thicker about the evening of his life. They are his joy and crown, his brethren beloved and eagerly desired."¹ From them only he consents to receive alms for the relief of his personal wants. To them only he writes in language that is unclouded by any shadow of displeasure or disappointment.

The experience of Paul and Silas at the next two places—Thessalonica and Bercea—was so similar to that of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia, and Iconium that we shall not dwell on it, but pass on to the visit to Athens which is so full of interest that we must study it with care. Let it only be noted as we pass that although, by the machinations of his jealous countrymen, and the violence of the rabble, he was driven from both Thessalonica and Bercea, it was not till the foundations of a noble spiritual temple had been laid, and the word of the Gospel had been so effectually lodged in so many faithful hearts that he was able afterward to write to the Thessalonians: "Ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you hath sounded forth the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth."²

3. ACHAIA: ATHENS, CORINTH. Victory in defeat might have been the apostle's motto throughout his wonderful campaigns. "It is enough for the servant that he be as his Master"; and had not he found the defeat of the cross the only path to his victory of love? "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." So we find the apostle, in city after city, repeating in miniature the experience of the Christ: welcomed by a few, listened to by many, then contradicted and oppose by those in high position among the Jews, the fickle people turned against him, and the Roman authorities called in to set the law in motion for his overthrow, and the end—in the case of the Master, death; in the case of the servant, ignominious expulsion from the place. But even when he fled for his life, it was with a certain consciousness of victory, as having finished the work his Lord had given him to do, and laid, in sorrow and pain, the foundation of the Church that was to be. Thus, as he put it to the Colossians, he filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church.³

¹ Lightfoot, "Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians," p. 58.

² I. Thessalonians i, 6-8 (Revised Version).

³ Colossians i, 24.

Though the apostle had to fly in secret from the Macedonian province, it was not without taking with him some trophies of his victory; for what meant that escort from the Berean Church? Think how great a thing it was that converts of a few weeks' standing at most should show themselves so self-sacrificing, and so devoted to their spiritual father, as to be willing to take that long journey of 500 miles—250 each way—the first twenty by land and the rest by sea, in order to see their teacher safe to his next field of work. It is told so simply that the ordinary reader is apt to miss the force of it. "They that conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens"—less than two lines: but read between them, think of the distance, the fatigue, the expense, the danger, the sacrifice of time; and the lines expand into a volume.

The voyage was through splendid scenery, and the first sight of the world's intellectual capital must have been thrilling to a man like Saint Paul, who, though learned chiefly in rabbinical lore, had yet given some study to the poets and philosophers of Greece. But "this one thing I do," was his motto, and "this one thing I tell" was the motto of his recorder; so we have not a word to show what appreciation the voyagers may have had of the beauties of nature presented to the eye or the wonders of history suggested to the mind. And when the apostle took his first walk through the city and saw the innumerable statues of the Greek divinities, so multiplied at every turn as to give point to the witticism of the Roman satirist that in Athens gods were more plentiful than men, it was not the glory of art that filled his mind, but the shame of idolatry: "his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols."

He seems to have felt lonely and sad when the Berean brethren left him. This we gather from his earnest request that Silas and Timothy, who had been left behind in Macedonia, should be asked to come forward as soon as possible, and from the pathos of an expression in the Epistle to the Thessalonians where he speaks of being "left in Athens alone" with something of the same feeling in the wilderness of gods as is suggested by the words "alone in London," in a wilderness of men. This feeling of isolation would be only increased by the want of interest on the part of the few Jews he found in the synagogue. They seemed to receive his reasoning with true Athenian indifference, having probably caught so much of the spirit of the place as to weaken, if not to dispel, the religious earnestness which for the most part was characteristic of the Hebrew race. So the apostle turned from the synagogue to the Agora, much frequented by the schools of phi-

losophy. There he found a certain interest, but of a very languid kind. The Epicureans and Stoics had sufficient intellectual curiosity to be willing to hear what the stranger had to say; but in the absence of all sense of sin or feeling of need, how was it possible for them to understand the impassioned earnestness of such a man as Paul? "What would this babbler say?" yawns an Epicurean. "He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods," mutters a Stoic. "But it is something new at all events," says another, an Eclectic perhaps; "let us take him to the Areopagus, the proper place for all such questions to be discussed." So a congregation of typical Athenians gathers on Mars Hill; and Saint Paul begins his famous speech.

A condensed report is given, which is of great importance as affording a specimen of the manner in which the apostle presented the truth to a purely Gentile congregation, just as in the discourse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, we had a specimen of his preaching to his countrymen.

The exordium is unhappily translated in our version as if the apostle had begun by an attack on Athenian superstition. The alternative translation in the margin of the Revised Version, which speaks of the men of Athens not as "too superstitious" but as "somewhat religious," is more in keeping with the general strain of the discourse; but the peculiar compound adjective in the original requires more than a single word to translate it. Alford renders it, "I perceive that in all things ye carry your religious veneration very far."

This respectful and, on the whole, appreciative introduction prepares the way for the reference which he makes next to the objects of veneration which have attracted his attention as he has passed through the city—the temples, the statues, the altars. It is clear that, though stirred in spirit at the sight of so much idolatry, his search was not to find what he could most effectively condemn, but rather to discover if there were anything which he could conscientiously commend. How easy it would have been for him to have made a fierce attack on their worship of Dionysius or Aphrodite! How hard it must have been to find anything at all which he could accept and use as a starting point from common ground! We can imagine him thinking of Athene, the purest and best of their divinities, and coming sorrowfully to the conclusion that, whatever good may have come to the Athenians from the feeling for beauty and grace which was associated with her worship, it would be hopeless to attempt to use a mere local goddess as any help toward realizing the great god who made the heavens and the earth. Mars would naturally be suggested to him by the place where they

stood, and if he had wished to convict the Greeks of absurdity he had an excellent opportunity in the legend which gave it its name, which was that here the god Mars was tried for murdering a son of Neptune. The most hopeful of all the gods whose names were familiar to the people would have been Zeus; but, though some of the best of the philosophers and the most advanced of their poets had had conceptions of the supreme god of Olympus which were not altogether unworthy, Zeus was so degraded by the current mythology that no good use could be made of the popular faith in him. It must have been a most difficult task to find anything that would do; yet he does find it. As he goes on reading inscription after inscription, each one probably with associations more fatal to his purpose than the one before, at last his eye rests on a writing which he can use, for it is an inscription "To the Unknown God." This accordingly he makes his text, and on it he preaches a sermon of which this is the sum: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

It is obvious, therefore, that instead of finding fault with the religious veneration expressed in their worship, he approved it so far; and not only so, but used it as a foundation on which to build, as a starting point from which he might lead them up to the truth after which they were blindly groping. To have held up their faith to ridicule and stigmatized it as mere superstition would have been to act the part of a destroyer; but he had too much the spirit of his Master to do this. Like him he came not to destroy but to fulfill; and accordingly he recognizes that all these temples, and altars, and statutes are expressions of the feeling after God to which he so beautifully refers in the course of his address,¹ a feeling after God which is not to be discouraged, not to be suppressed, but to be directed to its proper object and so fulfilled. Not only does he accept the spirit which prompted them to worship, but he recognizes that in some dim way, in dense ignorance, indeed, as groping in the dark, as feeling after God, if haply they may find him, it is God, the God who made the heaven and the earth, to whom their hearts are turned: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

We have seen that he takes his text from a heathen altar; and it is interesting to observe that the only text he quotes is from a heathen poet. He does not begin by telling them that their Homer and Hesiod were all lies and nonsense, which they must utterly reject. It was after that fashion the Mohammedans were

taught to force the Koran on the foreigners they sought to convert. All other books were worthless; for if they agreed with the Koran, they were unnecessary, and if they disagreed, they were bad. There is not a vestige of this spirit in the apostle. Filled as his soul was with the deepest reverence for the Hebrew Scriptures, he did not think it necessary to decry the literature of the heathen. It was not the book he was anxious about in the first place, but the truth it enshrined. The apostle, accordingly, here sets before his audience the great truths of which the Scriptures were full, but he does not support them with texts from the Scriptures; he appeals to the heart and conscience of the people; and when he has occasion to quote, he quotes from their own poets: "as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'" The reference is probably to the two Greek poets Aratus and Cleanthes, in the writings of both of whom this sentiment is found, the former using the identical words which the apostle quotes. Now, consider what this implies. In the first place, the apostle had read these poets sympathetically, with a readiness to recognize and welcome anything in them that was good and true. But next and more particularly, in both poems the reference is, not to the God of the Old Testament, but to the Zeus of Greece. Can it be, then, that an inspired apostle quotes with approbation the saying of a heathen poet that we are all the offspring of Zeus? It is even so. And it is a good thing he was an inspired apostle; for, if anyone else had done it, there are many good Christian people who would have branded him as a heretic. Why should he dare to say any good thing of such gross heathenism as all intelligent persons know the worship of Zeus to have been? Yet the apostle was perfectly right, and only showed himself possessed of that large charity which the majority of Christian people are only reaching now after so many centuries of schooling. The feeling, indeed, is very much the same as that expressed by one of our poets in the well-known lines:

"Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe, that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
For the good they comprehend not;
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness
And are lifted up and strengthened:—
Listen to this simple story,
To this song of Hiawatha!"

Observe, however, on the other hand that, while he is eminently charitable, he is thoroughly faithful. His spirit has been stirred

¹ Acts xvii, 27.

within him as he has seen the city crowded with images, so repugnant to the soul of one of the nation to whom had been given the law, the law of which this was one of the strongest clauses, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." He must censure here, therefore. But how does he do it? Does he quote to them the second commandment, and tell them that they are a set of wicked transgressors of the law? In no such spirit does he approach the subject. He knows that it is not denunciation but enlightenment they need; so in the quietest and most natural way, not from the second commandment, not from the Hebrew Scriptures at all, but from their own poets' teaching, he leads them to the great truth of the spirituality of the Divine Being, and the duty, therefore, of spiritual worship: "Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man." Then, still in the spirit of him who "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the soul of the hungry with goodness," he puts in place of the innumerable images of their innumerable gods, that Man ordained of God to be the Savior and the Judge of men, who is "the image of the invisible God," "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life."

Did the apostle preach Christ any less earnestly because he looked with such charitable eyes on the religion and literature of the Greeks? There are those who, as soon as they discover that heathen religions have their good points and have developed some good men, straightway infer that there is little or no need of preaching Christ. What would one think of a city missionary who would make the discovery of good points in many of the people of his district a reason for giving up his work? One would think it would be a great encouragement to him. It is the old wrong notion that the function of Christianity is to root up all the religion it finds in the world and plant itself upon the ruins. It is not religion with which we are at war, but irreligion and sin. There is always sin enough to destroy everywhere, and so long as that remains true, there will be work enough for all the disciples of Christ; and it is so gigantic an undertaking that, instead of regretting to find that which makes for righteousness among the heathen, we should rejoice in it, and welcome it, feeling sure that whatever is good is of God, is part of that great light which has been diffused more or less all over the world, though it centers only in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the Sun of Righteousness." He has come to "fulfill the desire of them that fear him;" and how great a thing it is to have a Gospel of fulfill-

ment for all mankind, fulfillment of all that is pure, and high, and hopeful, with satisfaction of every hunger for God all the world over. Those who make the truth and goodness found among the heathen a reason for not preaching Christ to them are like engineers who, on surveying some country through which a canal is to be cut and finding here a lake and there a river, would report that it was of no use to proceed farther; if there had been a range of mountains they might have gone to work, but when so much was already done by nature, why trouble to do any more? The only objection to the illustration is, that engineers never report in that fashion; they have too much sense. They hail every cutting which they find ready made, utilize every little lake that lies in their way, and as a rule they find use enough for their picks and shovels after all!

This is, perhaps, too long a digression, and to be excused only by the importance of the occasion and the timeliness of the questions raised; but we must now return to our history. The apostle was not allowed to finish his address, for when he came to speak of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked and some said the sermon was too long. The indifference of the Athenian was a more fatal obstacle than either the opposition of the Jew or the superstition of the barbarian. No church was founded, though the seeds of one were planted in the hearts of a very few, one of whom, Dionysius, was a member of the court of Areopagus. It is interesting to come across, in one of the Fathers of the second century, the statement that this Dionysius was the first bishop of the Church at Athens; and though this may have been conjecture, we do know that a church was established which showed something of the Athenian spirit of intellectual distinction, as furnishing from its membership the two earliest of the "apologists" for the faith—Quadratus and Aristides. All we know of the former is by a quotation from his apology by the historian, Eusebius; but the work of Aristides has been recently discovered,¹ and proves to be of great interest and value. The date is 124 A. D., and a strong argument for the apostolic date of Saint Luke's history has been built on the absence from the report of the speech at Athens of all traces of the thought which the new-found document proves to have been characteristic even of the early part of the second century.

The apostle was far more depressed by the small number of converts at Athens than he had been by all he had suffered in the cities of the north; and it was with a heavy heart that he set out alone—for his colleagues were all in

¹ By Prof. Rendel Harris, in 1889.

Macedonia—for Corinth, the commercial metropolis of the Roman province of Achaia. "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling," he wrote afterward to the Corinthians in recalling the experience of that sorrowful time. But "the Lord is mindful of his own"; and from the day he entered the wealthy, wicked city one encouragement after another revived the spirit of the weary soldier of the cross.

First came the meeting with Aquila and Priscilla, Jews from Rome, banished by the decree of the emperor Claudius, of which we read in the secular history of the period; Christians, too, it would seem; for, if their conversion had taken place after meeting with the apostle, the fact would surely have been noted. They were originally from Pontus, one of the countries specially mentioned as having its representatives at Jerusalem when Saint Peter preached his first sermon; so they may have been the fruits of that earliest work of all, or they may have been brought into the Church at Rome. It must have been a great joy to find these "like-minded" ones in the large strange town, and all the more that, being of the same trade, he could cast in his lot with them, and find employment in their establishment. This coincidence discloses to us how the apostle provided "the sinews of war"; and from sundry references in the epistles,¹ we gather that he sometimes had difficulty enough in securing the bare necessities of life.

The next encouragement was the arrival of Silas and Timothy, for whose company he had been eagerly longing; and again we learn from the passage just referred to, and from another in his letter to the Philippians² that they were the bearers of a contribution from the Macedonian Christians. There were more reasons than one, therefore, why their arrival gave the new impulse to the work which is recorded in connection with their visit. But the fresh energy of the apostle only stirred the more the opposition of the Jews, so that he was driven out of the synagogue, and compelled to hold his

meetings in the private house of one of the converts.

This new trial was relieved by fresh encouragement from above, a vision of his Master in the night, with this cheering message: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city." Thus fortified he labored on, holding the difficult post for a year and a half, gathering many converts and establishing an important church notwithstanding the hardness of the field, for Corinth vied even with Antioch, in Syria, in its evil reputation for luxury and debauchery; so much so that the word "to Corinthianize" meant to be addicted to all sorts of vice.

His labors were not confined to the city, for we know from his letters that he carried his Gospel throughout the regions of Achaia, and we read of converts and even of churches in some of the neighboring towns. It was during this period, also, that he wrote his two earliest letters, both to the church at Thessalonica, which ought not only to be studied chapter by chapter for the instruction they convey, but also to be read through at a sitting as letters usually are read, and if we keep well in mind the circumstances under which they were written, we shall appreciate their deep pathos, and almost feel the beating of that noble heart.

In Corinth, as elsewhere, the attempt was made to set the law in motion against the apostle, and so secure his expulsion, but this was frustrated by the firmness of the proconsul Gallio, a name well known in history, for he was the brother of the great Seneca, one of the purest and best of the Roman writers. His conduct on this occasion is quite in harmony with what is known of him from other sources.

So, from one city the apostle was permitted to depart in peace; and, as now three years have elapsed since he left home, he judges it time to return to Antioch and give in his report; which he does, after calling on the way back at Ephesus, and disembarking at Cæsarea for a flying visit to Jerusalem to pay his respects to the Mother Church.

¹ Especially II. Corinthians xi, 9.

² Philippians iv, 15.

CHAPTER XV.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

"H AVING spent some time there, he departed"—this is all we are told of what passed at Antioch when the victorious general returned from his great campaign. Had he been a Roman general returning to the capital, he would have been received with all public honors, a great procession waiting for him at the city gates to escort him in, at its head the magistrates and senate, then trumpeters, trophies of the fights, white oxen with gilded horns garlanded for sacrifice, prisoners of war also destined for sacrifice as soon as the procession halted; in the center the general himself, riding in state in a magnificent chariot in robes of purple and gold, a golden crown held over his head by a slave whose duty it was to keep reminding him (the one redeeming feature of it all) that he was but mortal; and in the rear the victorious army shouting *Io Triumphe*, while the whole city would resound with plaudits of joy. Nothing of this in Antioch; but something better, let us hope. "My kingdom is not of this world," said the Master.

We are embarked on the third journey before we know it, for even the Revised Version fails to indicate its beginning by so much as a new paragraph.¹ Its objective point is Ephesus, chosen, as it would appear, because of what many would call the accident of the apostle's visit on his homeward way. It is not likely that he would have embraced it in his programme then, seeing that he had been at the very beginning of that journey turned aside from preaching the Gospel in Asia; but, as his friends Aquila and Priscilla had to go there on business, he landed with them, and found a field so inviting as to give it a strong claim for his early consideration. We see here again, as so often, that the guidance given to the apostle does not differ essentially from that which is within the reach of all who are of like precious faith with him.

This journey begins, like the last one, with a visit, the third, to the churches of Galatia and Phrygia; but this is only noted in passing on to the center of interest. When Saint Paul reached Ephesus, he found the work already begun through the labors of a man of great ability who hailed from Alexandria—that great city, second only to Rome in size and importance, which Saint Paul seems to have avoided because it had a population so largely Jewish as to mark it out as the proper field for the Jerusalem Church, to which also it be-

longed geographically. Apollos of Alexandria was a disciple of John the Baptist, having received his baptism of repentance, and accepted his testimony to Jesus as the Messiah; but, living at such a distance from Jerusalem, he had been out of touch with Christ himself and his apostles, and so remained in ignorance of many things, especially the truths connected with the cross of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit. There were a few others, not more than twelve in all, in much the same position, whose presence in Ephesus may have been one of the attractions the city had for the Alexandrian orator. That he was earnest, and sincere, and open-minded is proved by his readiness, notwithstanding his superior education and position, to sit at the feet of these worthy tradespeople, Aquila and Priscilla, who, "expounded to him the way of God more carefully." He had gone to visit the Church at Corinth before Saint Paul arrived at Ephesus; but the little band of John's disciples, prepared in part by the preaching of Apollos in the synagogue, at once received the full doctrine of Christ, and became the first fruits of the apostle's harvest in the Asian capital.

This was a most encouraging beginning, but the experience in the synagogue was as disappointing as ever; for, after three months' labor he was obliged, as before at Corinth, to abandon it, and find another place of meeting, not a private house this time, but "the school of Tyrannus," where he labored steadily on for two years, not alone in Ephesus, but taking evangelistic tours, so that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." No details are given, and the Epistle to the Ephesians does not help us here, for it is so taken up with the highest things that there is no room in it for those personal allusions which abound in some of the other letters; but we can gather something of the nature of the work from the farewell address to the elders of the Church. From this we learn that, while his own hands ministered to his necessities, and though sorely tried by the plots of the Jews, he "ceased not to admonish everyone night and day with tears"; teaching not only publicly but from house to house, and showing by his example how to help the weak and be generous to the poor.

During this time, also, the affairs of the Church at Corinth gave him much uneasiness. The visit of Apollos had done much good, and his eloquent preaching had attracted many; but Satan had been busy sowing tares among

¹ Acts xvii, 23.

the wheat, taking occasion of the popularity of Apollos to stir up party feeling, so much so that some said, "we are of Paul," and others "we are of Apollos." To make matters worse, the party of bigotry in Jerusalem had sent its emissaries to discredit the Apostle of the Gentiles if possible, and, in spite of him, to enforce the ordinances of the Jewish law upon the Christian people, and they, too, gained their followers whose cry was, "we are of Cephas," while still others, instead of trying to heal the breach, made it worse by constituting a fourth party, taking the name of Christ as a distinctive badge. The result was chaos and spiritual decline, the growth of grave disorders and abuses, even the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper desecrated, while there were sad cases of immorality in practice and on the part of some a serious denial of vital doctrines. What distraction and distress must all this have brought to the apostle in the midst of his great work at Ephesus; but again what a gain has it been to the Church in the possession of those priceless Epistles to the Corinthians of which there seem to have been three, the first one lost to us, the second our First Epistle written from Ephesus, and the third our Second Epistle written afterward from Macedonia! Many of the questions raised were of passing interest, but the principles laid down in dealing with them are of eternal obligation, and their clear statement of perpetual value; and are not the discords of the Corinthian parties more than compensated by the glorious panegyric of love which still sings on its heavenly melody, when their jarring voices have long passed into the silence?¹ and is not the Epicurean denial of the Resurrection far more than counterbalanced by that majestic epic of the life to come which still, every day of the year throughout all Christendom, brings heaven down to the darkened room and the opening grave?²

Toward the close of the third year's work in Ephesus there was a series of events of so much exciting interest that it is given in full detail, with such wealth of local color that we can point to the record as almost a demonstration that it is no secondhand report of a later age, but the testimony of one who was living at the time and quite familiar with the place. This was amply illustrated by the earlier writers;³ but recent discoveries, especially the excavations⁴ on the site and in the neighborhood of ancient Ephesus, have given additional confirmations of the minute accuracy of our historian. It is impossible in our limited space to do anything like justice to the large subject, but reference may be made to the full treat-

ment of it by Professor Stokes of Dublin.¹ We can attempt little more here than a bare enumeration of the principal points.

That Ephesus was a favorite haunt of such strolling exorcists as the seven sons of Sceva the Jew, who tried to make a talismanic use of the name of Jesus is abundantly proved; and, as the emperor had recently expelled the magicians as well as the Jews (and many of the magicians were Jews) from Rome, a large center of population like Ephesus was the more likely to be infested with them. We can quite readily see, then, how the attempt would be made to rival the apostles as workers in the spiritual sphere, and how the humiliation of the imposters and the triumph of the apostle would naturally lead to the impressive scene of the burning of the great pile of books of magic by the disillusioned people.

As was to be expected, such a demonstration would cause "no small stir concerning the Way." So long as the work went quietly on, the great city would pay little heed; but when the new doctrine began to tell on a large scale, and books of magic were burnt, and silver shrines thrown aside as useless things, there would be excitement and alarm; and an interested person like Demetrius, the silversmith, would have the opportunity of which he so skillfully availed himself. It so happens, however, that the incidental reference to the apostle's plans,² taken in connection with certain passages in his epistles, fixes the precise time of the year, and shows it to have been the very month which we know from other sources was given up by the Ephesians to a series of festivities in honor of the great goddess Diana, during which the large populous district round about flowed into Ephesus and made it for the time a Vanity Fair. How natural, almost inevitable one might say, under these circumstances, the disturbance and excitement caused by the harangue of Demetrius.

Among the discoveries made at Ephesus are inscriptions which make pointed reference to this business of making shrines for Diana, and show how extensive it was; and, curiously enough, it has been found that there was less exaggeration than might have been supposed in the statement in the silversmith's speech that "all Asia and the world worshiped" the goddess; for these shrines and similar objects of veneration have been found at different points on the Mediterranean shore even as far west as Spain. The cry "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" has been deciphered on many inscriptions, not in the ruins of Ephesus only but all over the region of which it was the center.

¹ I. Corinthians xiii. ² I. Corinthians xv.

³ Notably Conybeare, and Howson, and Mr. Lewin.

⁴ Made by Mr. J. T. Wood.

¹ Commentary on the Acts in "The Expositor's Bible," and articles in the *Sunday at Home*, for 1891-2.

² Acts xix, 21, 22.

There is the same accuracy here as elsewhere in the use of the local official titles. The Asiarchs¹ have been found to be officials specially appointed to preside over these festivities, and it shows how far-reaching the apostle's influence had been that some of these were so well disposed to him as to beg him not to go into the theater while the excitement lasted. Remains of the theater, too, have been discovered, as well as of the magnificent temple. Another new title of office appears in the town clerk, who quieted the multitude with his judicious speech, and, again, there are inscriptions in which this very official is mentioned; and, moreover, the peculiar word used by the town clerk to denote the relation of the city to the goddess, the word translated "temple-keeper" in the Revised Version, has also been found on inscriptions in the same connection. These may serve as specimens of the minute correspondence between the details of the record and the testimony of the recently disinterred witnesses.

It is interesting, also, to find in the town clerk's speech a proof that the apostle showed the same charitable spirit at Ephesus as he had manifested at Athens. There are those who have suggested that the apostle made a mistake at Athens, which he afterward corrected at Corinth, in being too liberal in his views toward the Greek worship; but it is surely sufficient evidence that he was still of the same spirit, that, after the Gospel had been preached for nearly three years in the place, the town clerk should be able to say, "these men are neither robbers of temples, nor blasphemers of our goddess."

But before leaving Ephesus it may be well to notice the remarkable fact that just here, where, as at Philippi, the occurrences are of the kind that offend the anti-supernaturalists, there should again be special confirmation of the truth of the record.

The rest of the journey is given for the most part in mere outline. It embraces (1) *a tour in Macedonia* with the addition of a circuit as far as Illyricum,² during which time was written, as already noticed, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, addressed also to "the saints which are in the whole of Achaia," and, therefore, including the Athenians—an epistle which gives us an affecting glimpse into the apostle's burdened heart at the time the troubles at Corinth were weighing very heavily upon him; (2) *a visit to Greece*, three months being spent in Corinth, from which, in addition to the labors he had in putting matters right in the Church, he found time to write the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans, weighty treatises

both of them, the latter a work of transcendent importance, though Renan perhaps puts it too strongly when he speaks of it as having in it "the whole future of Christian theology"; and (3) *the return homeward*, not by direct sea-route, which was rendered impossible for him by the plots of the Jews, but back over land by way of Macedonia again, where he kept the Passover at Philippi; Troas, where took place the restoration of Eutychus; Miletus, the scene of the affecting parting with the elders of the Ephesian Church; Tyre, where the disciples implored him not to risk his life in Jerusalem; and Cæsarea, where he met Philip the Evangelist, and was again entreated by the brethren, warned by the prophet Agabus, and besought by his own companions not to go up to the feast, and gave for answer these impressive words: "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

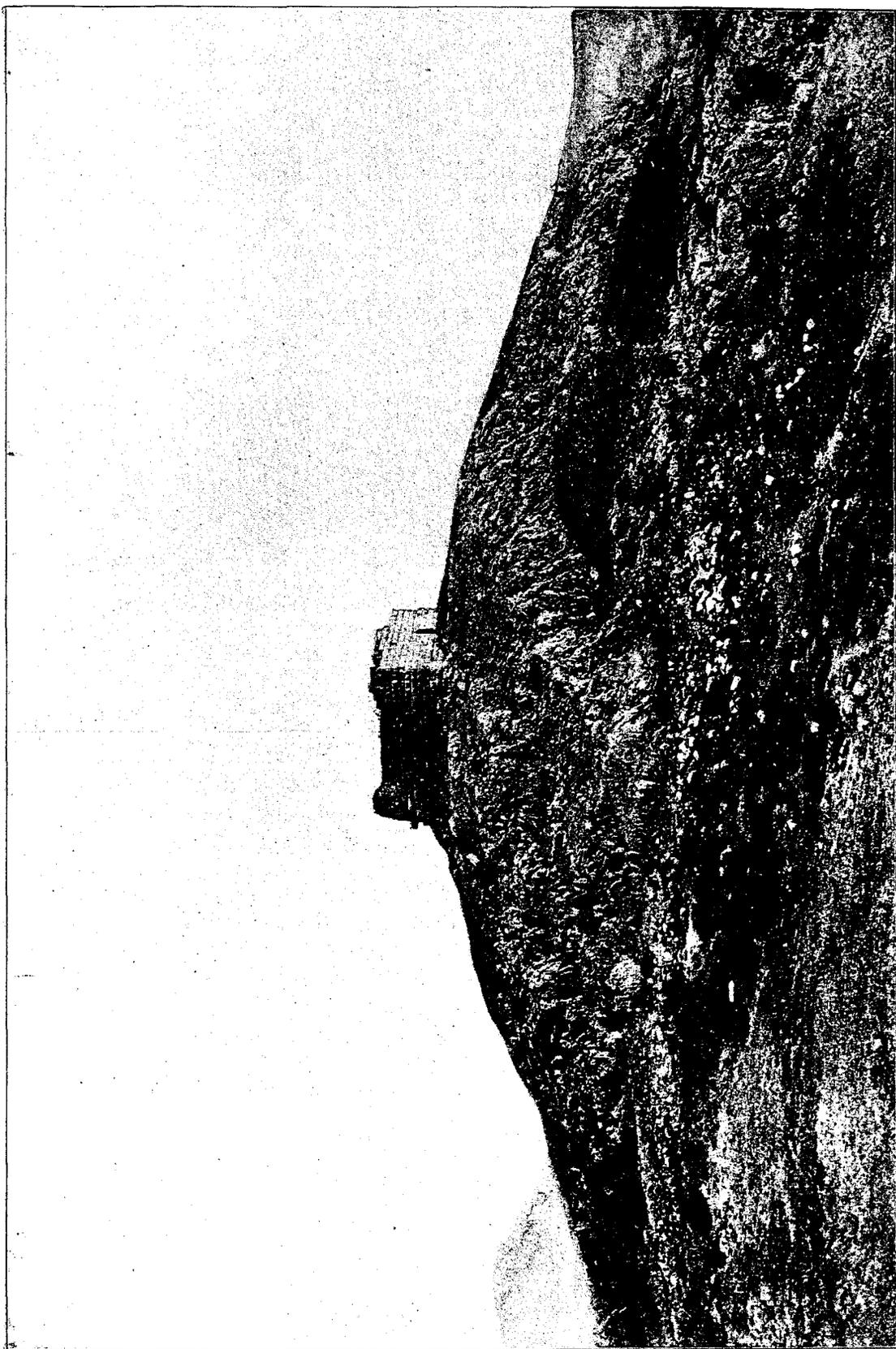
It will be observed by the careful reader that from Philippi onward the homeward journey is told with much more detail than the previous portions; and the reason of this will appear in the silent change of pronoun again from "they" to "we." The first person was dropped at Philippi on the last journey, and not resumed till now, an indication that Saint Luke had been left by the apostle in charge there, and did not rejoin him till he passed on his homeward way in the third journey.

Those who follow the route on the map will see that this journey, though told in so brief a space, covered immense distances, and the mere fatigue and exposure meant not a little in the way of hardship. But when we add to this all the labors, the sufferings, the distractions, the painful controversy with Judaizers then at its height, the letters and treatises, the collection made for the poor saints in Judea, with all the precautions taken to keep the accounts and money transactions as clear as day, the care of all the churches pressing upon him, the prayers for them all which were never intermitted, and the great plans for the future for carrying the Gospel next to Rome and then on to Spain—when we think of all this, we do not so much admire the man—that would be quite at variance with his thought and wish—as join those who made his heart glad because he could say of them, "they glorified God in me."

It is important, also, to bear in mind that we have in the Acts only specimens of the perils, privations, and sufferings he underwent. A striking proof of this is found in the enumeration of these, which, under the pressure of the fierce opposition to his claim to be an apostle, he gives in the Epistle to Corinth he wrote from Macedonia: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I

¹ See Revised Version, margin.

² Romans xv, 19.



MOUNT CORESUS, EPHEBUS.

Frith Series.

speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the

Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is made to stumble, and I burn not?"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PRISONER OF THE LORD.

THE third journey ended at Jerusalem. It was no doubt the apostle's intention, had the way been clear, to return to Antioch as before and give in his third report; but the forebodings of danger which darkened as he approached the capital were only too fully realized; and it is doubtful if he ever saw Antioch again.

Why was he so determined to go up to Jerusalem again? We cannot suppose, his views being what they were, that he thought it necessary, as a mere matter of compliance with the law, to be present at the pentecostal feast. It must be remembered, however, that his controversy with the Judaizing teachers who professed to represent the Mother Church was then at its height, and that there was danger, real and imminent, of so complete a rupture between Jerusalem and Antioch—between Jew and Gentile—that a new wall of partition would be erected between them far worse than the old, for that had served a good purpose in its time, whereas this would be "only evil, and that continually." This would have meant the rending of the Church in twain and the ruin of his work. At all costs, therefore, Saint Paul must heal the breach; and how could this labor of love be more hopefully undertaken than by the Apostle of the Gentiles going himself to the Mother Church, taking brotherly counsel with Cephas and with James, and coming to a full understanding, if possible, with the brethren there? He must go to Jerusalem, whatever betide.

All this gives a deeply pathetic interest to his unyielding firmness. It seemed to everyone else as if he were throwing his life away. All the brethren on the route besought him not to go, the earnestness deepening as the capital was approached; all his traveling companions joined them in the pleading; his own heart was full of foreboding; and when to all this was added the solemn warning of an acknowledged prophet of the Church, what strenuousness of resolve, what clearness of conviction, and what splendid courage must there have been to en-

able him to resist and to persist! It was no stubbornness of will, it was no disregard of his brethren's pleading; it was a heart-break to refuse their affectionate entreaty: "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?" But the old question—old yet ever new to him—"Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do?" had been so distinctly answered in this case that, though he must disappoint brethren, fellow-laborers, an honored prophet of the Church, and the pleading of his own heart, he must obey, must follow his Master who in his day had to "set his face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem," though he knew that he "must suffer many things of the chief priests, and elders, and scribes, and be killed." Had he turned at Tyre, or at Cæsarea, we should have had a *Domine quo vadis* of Saint Paul. The last rendering of this striking legend of Saint Peter by Mr. William Watson tempts one to refer to it more particularly. Saint Peter was sorely beset with entreaties of the same kind as those used to move Saint Paul from his purpose. For a time he strenuously resisted, quite in the spirit of the Apostle of the Gentiles, but when one after another of his flock tearfully besought him, for the sake of his sheep whom he loved so much, and who could not spare their shepherd, to save his life by flight, he at last allowed himself to be persuaded that duty called him to the path of prudence, and so turned his steps from Rome and from the persecution raging there; when

"Lo, on the darkness brake a wandering ray:
A vision flashed along the Appian Way.
Divinely in the pagan night it shone—
A mournful Face—a Figure hurrying on—
Tho' haggard and disheveled, frail and worn,
A king of David's lineage, crowned with thorn.
'Lord, whither farest?' Peter, wondering, cried;
'To Rome,' said Christ, 'to be re-crucified.'

"Into the night the vision ebbed like breath,
And Peter turned, and rushed on Rome, and death."

Saint Paul had had his vision, and so was able to answer the last entreaties as he had answered the first, with such calmness and "clear settled will" that even the prophet

Agabus recognized that, true as his warning was, another summons was ringing clear above it, so that they must cease, and say "the will of the Lord be done."

This part of the history may be best studied by dividing it into three parts, which may be marked by the three cities in which, in succession, the apostle was imprisoned: Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Rome.

1. *At Jerusalem.* It must have been with no little misgiving that Saint Paul reported himself to the brethren at Jerusalem. Was it possible that there might be more truth than he allowed himself to believe in the representations of the Judaizers? Was it possible that Saint Peter had not been able to forgive the strong words he had felt it his duty to speak at Antioch? Might it be that he and James had resiled from the position they had taken up at the council and allowed themselves to be brought into bondage again to the beggarly elements? All this was quite possible; therefore it must have been an immense relief to be welcomed at all and listened to with sympathetic interest as he told the story of his work at Ephesus and in the West. Saint Luke makes no mention of the way in which the alms were received, from which Archdeacon Farrar draws the conclusion, perhaps correctly, that there was not as much gratitude shown as there ought to have been, and certainly they seemed to have been in haste to remind him of the very strong prejudice against him, and rather disposed to exaggerate the number of believing Jews who remained zealous for the law. Be that as it may, they strongly recommended, in order to remove or allay the prejudice, that he should take on himself a charge, the observance of which by King Agrippa, as we learn from Josephus, had recently won him golden opinions among the strictest of the Jews. As the doing of this involved no sacrifice of principle, seeing that it was done by him simply as a Jew, and not at all as a Christian, he complied, associated himself with the four men of whom the brethren had spoken as about to take the Nazarite vow, so far at least as to undertake the expense of it on their behalf. The question has been raised as to whether this compliance was worthy of him; and we do not wonder that such a stern and uncompromising controversialist as Knox should severely condemn it, or that some of those modern critics, who are ever on the watch for some excuse for their unbelief, should represent it as incredible that a man of such spirit should do it at all; but when we bear in mind what the apostle himself says as to the principles on which he acted, we can see not only that it was credible that he should so act, but that, from the highest point of view, it was creditable, not to say magnanimous. It

may be well to quote the very words he uses: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, not being myself under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak; I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the Gospel's sake."¹ Had it been to secure his own safety, it would have been entirely different; but from the spirit he showed throughout, this is altogether out of the question. It was for the sake of Christ and his Gospel that he subjected himself to what must have been a humiliation.

The feeling which had been aroused among the foreign Jews, especially those from the region of Ephesus, where in spite of their opposition, the Gospel had made great progress, was so great that not only did this compliance fail to allay it, but it actually afforded the occasion for an outbreak of hostility which resulted in his imprisonment. For, toward the end of the seven days needed for the completion of the vow, some of the Asiatic Jews, recognizing him, raised a hue and cry, and accused him of bringing Greeks into the Temple, so defiling "this holy place." Immediately a tumult was raised, and the fury of the mob was such that the apostle would have been torn in pieces had not the captain of the Roman guard, stationed in the tower of Antonia which commanded the Temple area, seen the disturbance and called out the cohort to suppress it. Finding that Paul was the object of their rage he arrested him, so as to ascertain the cause of the tumult. The Jews had, of course, to keep their hands off the apostle when he was in the custody of the soldiers, but they still kept crowding and pushing after him with the same angry shouts which nearly thirty years before had rung on Calvary, and the apostle conceived the bold resolution of addressing them. He had faced many a hostile audience before, and he was not afraid even of this one. A few words in Greek with the chief captain secured the favor he asked, and, standing on the staircase, he stretched forth his hand as if to make a speech to them. This awakened their curiosity, so that "there was made a great silence," on which would break with winning power the familiar accents of the mother tongue, suggesting, perhaps, that this advocate of Gentiles was more of a genuine Hebrew than they had supposed.

The speech on the stairs is quite characteristic of the man. It was a brave and manly

¹ I. Corinthians ix, 20-23 (Revised Version).

utterance from first to last, and yet so skillful in its presentation of his case that he carried the hearers with him while he told them of his early training as a Rabbi, his persecuting zeal, the great crisis of his life when he recognized the Messiah, his anxiety to stay among his brethren, and the peremptory orders he had received through a vision in the Temple to leave his beloved country and go "far off to the Gentiles." "They gave him audience unto this word"; and, had they been at all true to their own Scriptures, they would have waited to hear what he would have presently explained, that all this was in fulfillment of the high calling of their privileged nation; but prejudice and intolerance were so strong that at the bare suggestion of any Gospel for the Gentiles, they broke into wild fury with all the extravagances in which Eastern mobs are wont to express their rage, throwing off their garments, casting dust in the air, and shouting, "away with such a fellow from the earth." The chief captain, not understanding the Hebrew tongue, could have no idea what it was all about; and, thinking he had made a great mistake in granting any indulgence to such a firebrand, and that he ought rather to atone for his leniency by rushing to the other extreme of severity, ordered him to be examined by torture. With the same calmness he had shown throughout, the apostle quietly claimed his right as a Roman, and again as at Philippi secured more respectful treatment. By this time the chief captain had become quite convinced that not civil but religious questions were involved in the case, and accordingly called the Sanhedrim together, hoping that they might be able to dispose of it.

In the appearance of Saint Paul before the Sanhedrim we see human nature more in evidence than on any previous occasion since his conversion. It was a very trying position to be in. He had been one of themselves, and now he was a prisoner at the bar; and when, having begun his speech with a clear consciousness of the purity of his motives and the rectitude of his whole course, he was interrupted by the cowardly insult of a blow on the mouth at the order of the high priest, we need not wonder if the rising of temper in so fiery a nature betrayed him into language which certainly contrasts with the quiet dignity of his Master on a similar occasion. But it certainly is uncharitable to suggest that, besides hot temper in his answer to the figure in white which had given the brutal order, there was also untruth in his statement that he did not know it was the high priest. The whole thing would pass in less time than it takes to tell it—an unknown voice, a sudden blow, a swift retort—it was surely far more likely than not,

under such circumstances, that he should have to be told it was the high priest who had provoked his indignation; and it was quite natural and altogether worthy of the gentleman and the Christian that, on learning who it was, and remembering the Scripture, "thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people," he should have made a dignified apology. But whether the incident had thrown him off his balance, or whether the temptation to exert his strategic powers was too great for him, it must be acknowledged that there seems not only much of the wisdom but some of the wile of the serpent in his suddenly throwing an apple of discord into the council by claiming to be a Pharisee, and to be in the position of having to answer for believing in the resurrection of the dead. Both statements were true in their terms, but neither was relevant to the occasion; and, as Archdeacon Farrar points out, his acknowledgment before the tribunal of Felix¹ showed "a certain sense of compunction for the method in which he had extricated himself from a pressing danger."

The shell had the desired effect. It made an explosion, and, amid the noise and dust of it, the captain removed his prisoner and consigned him again to the castle. There he would have time to review the events of the day; and who can tell what of self-condemnation there would be in his meditations? If there were, and if he humbled himself in the dust before his Lord for not having followed him as closely as he might that day, we can understand how the Lord, in his forgiving love, would grant him one of those manifestations which were once and again his solace in times of special depression: "the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." The whole circumstances suggest an experience as that which Mr. Myers, in his striking poem "Saint Paul," seems to have in his mind in the following verses:

"Nay, but much rather let me late returning,
Bruised of my brethren, wounded from within,
Stoop with sad countenance and blushes burning,
Bitter with weariness and sick with sin,—

"Then as I weary me and long and languish,
Nowise availing from that pain to part,—
Desperate tides of the whole great world's anguish
Forced thro' the channels of a single heart,—

"Straight to thy presence get me and reveal it,
Nothing ashamed of tears upon thy feet,
Show the sore wound and beg thy hand to heal it,
Pour thee the bitter, pray thee for the sweet.

"Then with a ripple and a radiance thro' me
Rise and be manifest, O Morning Star!
Flow on my soul, thou Spirit, and renew me,
Fill with thyself and let the rest be far."

¹ Acts xxiv, 21.

2. *At Cæsarea.* The cheering vision of the night was much needed, for in the morning a visit from his nephew made him acquainted with a plot of forty sworn assassins, of the secret of which the young man had in some unknown way become possessed. A prompt message to the chief captain frustrated the conspiracy, for Claudius Lysias at once ordered a midnight march to convey his prisoner to Cæsarea, that he might no longer be the occasion of disturbance in Jerusalem, but be dealt with at leisure by the governor, Felix. Again it will be observed, we read of "the governor" as in the days of our Lord, for on the death of "Herod, the king," the emperor Claudius had restored the procuratorship, this Felix being the fourth who had held office since the change.

The lapse of five days sufficed to bring the accusers to Cæsarea. They had engaged as counsel for the prosecution an orator who with true professional skill presented a charge, the one item of truth in which was that the prisoner had been "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." Saint Paul was as usual his own advocate, and after a respectful introduction gave a straightforward account of his object in visiting Jerusalem, and of how he had spent the short time he was there. The charge made by Renan that "it was a skillful apology, clever rather than sincere," seems without a shadow of foundation. The apostle candidly acknowledged what was true in the charge: "this I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers," and though he repeats his conviction of a resurrection, he does so with no sinister purpose this time, and even acknowledges that the use he had made of that point in the address before the Sanhedrim might be put under the head of "wrong doing." Felix was not ignorant of the sect of the Nazarenes, and what he had heard of them had awakened his interest; but it would not have been good policy to give judgment against so influential a deputation from the Temple; so he adopted the safe course of adjourning the trial.

Drusilla, now the wife of Felix, though her lawful husband was still living, was a sister of the second Herod Agrippa, and was, therefore, a Jewess, and presumably interested in the case. It was natural that she should wish to meet with a man of whose strange doings she had heard not a little, and Felix, sharing her curiosity, took occasion to gratify it by summoning his prisoner and asking him to tell them about this Messiah whom he was proclaiming throughout the world. How the apostle responded is well worthy of note. No one could be more eager than he to preach Christ and him crucified, and to tell of the forgiveness of sins freely offered in his name; but,

knowing well the character of his auditors, he dared not speak smooth things to them; he must lead them to Sinai before he could show them Calvary; so he "reasoned with them of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." When it is remembered that the apostle's fate was in the hands of this pair, and that he knew them to be unrighteous, unchaste, and living in defiance of the judgment of God, one must admire the noble courage of the man, his absolute faithfulness, his utter self-forgetfulness. Strange that Renan, so ready to imagine insincerity in the apostle's defense, should not have a word of appreciation here! His sole remark is the half-jesting one, "the subjects were not altogether agreeable to these new catechumens." It gives some idea of the power with which the apostle spoke that a man like Felix, hardened from his earliest years in all kinds of sin, as we know from Tacitus and other independent sources, trembled, and again, as in the court, took the refuge of weakness in delay. Afraid to settle it one way or another, he put it off and — went on in sin. The impression made by the first hearing of Paul seems to have faded away at once, for the hardened sinner found it in his heart to play with the prisoner, seeing him again and again, not with any desire to know the way of life, but in the hope that he might extort a bribe from those well-to-do Nazarenes in the West who had contributed so liberally to the poor Christians in Jerusalem. So two years slowly passed until Felix was recalled, and Porcius Festus installed in his place.

We have no record of these two years; but it is unlikely that Saint Paul should have been content to spend so long a time without writing to any of the churches which were all so near his heart. It is doubtful, however, if any of his extant epistles can be traced to Cæsarea. Many able scholars, among whom are Sabatier and Pressensé, have assigned the epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon to this period; but the weight of evidence seems to be in favor of the opinion which now prevails that all these, as well as the Epistle to the Philippians, were written during the first Roman imprisonment. There may have been other letters, however, which have not been preserved; and it seems highly probable that Saint Luke composed his Gospel at this time under the apostle's guidance. We may be sure, however, in any case, that the time was not lost, that, even if no purpose was served, the experience in Cæsarea of the difficult service of those "who only stand and wait" must have contributed much toward that mellowing of tone and enrichment of spirit which prepared the prisoner of the Lord for leaving to the Church universal that marvelous group of letters which

by general consent are reckoned the high-water mark of his spiritual power.

It was in August, 60 A. D., that Festus arrived in Cæsarea as Roman Procurator. One of his first duties was to go up to Jerusalem and get into touch with the Temple magnates; and the first demand they made of him was that their enemy Paul, so long detained by Felix, should be given up to them. This he was not unwilling to do; but, having some sense of justice, he decided to give the prisoner first an opportunity of confronting his accusers in open court. At the new trial in Cæsarea there was no professional orator, as on the last occasion, to lay the case before the governor; and the witnesses brought forward their charges in so excited and confused a way that Festus, seeing it was not a political but a religious question, began to think the only way to settle the case was to let it be tried at Jerusalem; but, as nothing had been proved against the prisoner, he put it to him whether he were not himself willing to go there. The apostle knew only too well what to expect if he got into the clutches of his unscrupulous foes, though probably he did not know that there was actually a plot on foot to assassinate him on the way up. He did not hesitate, therefore, to claim his right as a Roman citizen, in words showing a spirit of manliness which the two years of imprisonment had in no way weakened, "I am standing before Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest. If, then, I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if none of those things is true, whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar." After a short consultation, the validity of the appeal, against which nothing could be said, was admitted: "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar: unto Cæsar shalt thou go."

We can fancy the exultation of the apostle in the prospect of seeing Rome at last. Had there been any hope of liberation he would no doubt have preferred to have gone as the free apostle of the Lord, and made it the center of a fourth missionary tour; but since all hope of this seemed now at an end, he was quite content to go as "the prisoner of the Lord." It would be with all eagerness he would wait for news of a ship and the order to embark; but meantime another opportunity is given him of bearing witness to his Master ere he depart.

Agrippa II., son of "Herod, the king" whose awful end is recorded in the twelfth chapter of the Acts, had been appointed sovereign of considerable portions of his father's great dominions and was, therefore, a personage of no small importance whose visit to the new governor

was quite an event in Cæsarea. Festus naturally spoke to him of the difficult case he had in hand, and found, probably to his great surprise, that Agrippa was much interested and would be glad of an opportunity to see and hear the prisoner. Accordingly, a public assembly of all the notables of Cæsarea was called, to serve the double purpose of a state ceremonial and an occasion for drawing out the well-known oratorical powers of the remarkable prisoner. Agrippa and his sister-queen Berenice, with great pomp, took the seat of honor, and Festus produced the accused to be examined by the king, who, however, instead of asking him questions, gave him an opportunity to speak for himself. The situation was entirely new, and would have been most disconcerting to a man of less earnest spirit and impassioned purpose. It is easy to speak to a sympathetic audience, and a hostile one will often stir a man up to reach the summit of his power; but what chance was there of getting up any enthusiasm, or showing any spirit, in addressing a company in which apathy was disturbed only by curiosity and contempt? Yet never does he more wonderfully rise to the occasion. This surely was one of the times when he must have felt as the poet so powerfully describes:

"Oft when the Word is on me to deliver,
Opens the heaven and the Lord is there;
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
Melts in a lucid paradise of air,—

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should
be kings,—
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things,—

"Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet-call,—
Oh, to save these! to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all!"

With what impassioned earnestness, after a respectful exordium, he tells once more the oft-repeated story of his conversion, and proclaims the Gospel which had been intrusted to him by his Lord, and with what calm strength he first deals with the suggestion of Festus that his learning has been too much for his brain, and then turning from him to the king, and appealing to his knowledge of the prophets, presses home the truth of God upon him! And when the king, fortified in his assumed indifference by the presence of the audience before which he must maintain his dignity and pomp, says in irony, "With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian," he answers, not as the unsympathetic Renan suggests with a mere sally of wit returning the raillery of the king, but with tears in his voice, and his whole soul in every word,

"I would to God, that whether with little or much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds." But the bonds on both sides still remain—the chains of sin on them, the fetters of iron on him.

"Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in a show of things."

the people, seemed to be to the end; but who will say that there will be for the prisoner of Jesus Christ no better trophies in the day of Christ's appearing, for the sower in tears no sheaves in the great day of ingathering, from the state assembly at Cæsarea? He will look for it beyond a doubt—"forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

3. *At Rome.* The scale on which this sketch is planned will not permit our dwelling on the interesting details of the voyage. The full account given in the Acts has been minutely examined by competent men of large nautical experience, and found not only to furnish abundant evidence of having been written by one of the voyagers, but to supply better materials than any other extant writings of those times for understanding ancient ship-building and navigation. The monograph of James Smith of Jordanhill on the subject, published in 1848, is the standard authority; but full use of his investigations has been made by subsequent writers. The result has been that not only have difficulties been cleared up, such as what seems to many modern sailors the unseaman-like act of casting anchors out of the stern, now acknowledged to have been the very best thing which under the circumstances could have been done, but even the *minutiæ* of the narrative have been confirmed in a most wonderful way, since the careful survey of the coast on which they were shipwrecked, and of the sea adjoining it, has been accomplished with all modern appliances. As illustrations, we may refer to the verification of the series of soundings as the land was approached, the finding of a bank of stiff clay about the right distance from the shore which would give the anchors grip enough, and the discovery on the shore of a mud bank between the rocks which would make it possible to land in safety.

More interesting to us than the nautical details of the voyage is the opportunity it affords of seeing the conduct of the apostle through a succession of trials and perils such as falls to the lot of few. Through all he showed himself the true Christian hero, patient, trustful, fearless, self-possessed, resourceful, submissive when overruled, but ready to take the lead at once when imminent danger summoned him to the front. We shall select only one point for illustration, and it shall be the combination of

two habits of life which are supposed by some to be incompatible, ceaseless prayer and tireless activity, the heart in heaven with God while head, and hands, and heart, are all busy with the duties of the hour and helpfulness to those around.

It was no part of the duty of the historian to unveil the inner life of Saint Paul; so it is only when he has occasion himself to speak of it, as when he would thereby cheer the drooping spirits of his fellow-voyagers, that the veil is drawn aside; but from the self-revelation of the apostle in his letters, we know that prayer was the constant habit of his soul, and we see here again, as more than once before, that at critical times he had visions and revelations in the night. Let any ordinary ship company understand that a man of that type was on board, and the general opinion would be, that however good he might be in his own way, he would be the last man to expect much of in the way of practical help in an emergency. Now, follow the story of the perilous part of the voyage, and see how the apostle bears himself. We find him first giving advice which, if it had been taken, would have avoided all the danger. He had voyaged not a little in these seas, and had been thrice wrecked before,¹ so he had some excuse for putting forward his opinion; and yet it is not to be wondered at that the seafaring men paid no heed to it, and set out in spite of his warning. Then, when the storm came on and raged with such fury and so long as to make the bravest of them quail, so that the crew were in danger of giving way to despair, he cheered them all by telling them of his vision in the night, and assuring them that, though he knew the ship would be lost, all their lives would be saved. When the sailors laid their cowardly plot to get off in the boat on the pretext of lowering another anchor, Paul was the man to discover it, and to frustrate it by communicating at once with the centurion, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." He had assured them all of safety; but he understood himself, and let them distinctly understand, that, in giving such an assurance, it was assumed that all proper means and precautions would be used. When, after fourteen days buffeting with wind and wave, with no chance all that time of sitting down to a regular meal, so that they were all not only worn out with exertion and exposure, but in danger of collapsing from want of food, and yet so panic-stricken that they had no heart to eat, again Paul rallies the courage of the large company—they were 276 in all—infuses into them some of his own calmness, and persuades them to make as good a meal as possible of

¹ II. Corinthians xi, 25.

what remained of their scanty stores, not forgetting at that terrible hour to give God thanks in presence of them all. Had it not been for that quiet meal, we may be sure that many of them would have perished from sheer exhaustion when the ship at last broke up, and each one had to make for the shore as best he could. And not only was the apostle prepared for such great emergencies, but he was quite as ready to lend a helping hand in little things. This appears once and again in the story of the storm, and it happens to come out quite incidentally in telling of Paul's adventure with the viper, which took place when he was busy gathering sticks to heap on the fire which the barbarous people had kindled, "because of the present rain, and because of the cold."

The notice of the work done at Melita (Malta) during the three months' detention is full of interest, as giving an illustration of the preaching of the Gospel to "the Barbarians"; but, as we had a specimen of this in Lystra, in the course of the second missionary journey, we shall content ourselves with referring our readers to the discourse on this subject by Robertson of Brighton in the first volume of the well-known series.

The "Castor and Pollux," which conveyed them from Malta, had a fine run by way of Syracuse and Rhegium to Puteoli, where the apostle was warmly received by the brethren. His heart was still further cheered by the cordiality of the Roman Church, from which two deputations had set out to meet him, the first of which traveled nearly thirty, and the second nearly twenty, miles to give him its greeting and escort him into the Eternal City. If it was as a prisoner that he entered Rome, it was not in ignominy but with honor and affection as became "the prisoner of the Lord."

Still, a prisoner he was, and had to do his work with all the limitations this imposed on him. These, happily, were as slight as they could be made by the kindly prefect of the prætorian guard, who would no doubt learn from the centurion Julius what sort of man he had in charge. Thus the privations and sufferings of the long voyage were the means of opening the door in Rome for the apostle's work. There was one most irksome restraint, however, with which the Roman law could not dispense, the necessity of his being perpetually chained to a Roman soldier—a condition of life so hard, so irritating to the nerves, so depressing to the spirits, that one marvels at the exceeding grace of God which enabled him so to triumph in Christ over this ceaseless humiliation and vexation as to be able not only to continue his work of preaching the Gospel, but to write such letters as that to the Ephesians, which has lifted so many to the heavenly places

in which its author dwelt in spirit; to the Colossians, where, as scarcely anywhere else, we see the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father; and to the Philippians, which, while making touching allusion to his chains, is yet so full of joy that Bengel, that prince of exegetes, can give this as its summary: "I rejoice: rejoice ye." And what delightful evidence of the growing sweetness of the apostle's soul, as the slow years of the long captivity pass, is furnished by the exquisite letter to Philemon, a gem of purest ray, a diamond reflecting the light of the Sun of Righteousness with a luster all its own! Think, also, of the charity and hopefulness with which he regarded even that which was discouraging: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the Gospel: but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds. What then? only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." And, though nothing is said of his intercourse with the soldiers to whom he was chained, many of whom must have been as uncongenial companions as the apostle could well have, there is evidence, especially in the reference to the prætorian guard,¹ that not a few of them were reached by the Gospel which none of them would fail to hear from their strange prisoner.

Ten years had elapsed since the edict of Claudius had been issued, which banished the Jews from Rome. Like most edicts of the kind, it had failed of its object, for, though at first many were obliged to fly, among whom, as we found, were Aquila and Priscilla, it soon fell into abeyance through the impossibility of enforcing it on so large a population; and, the attractions of the great metropolis for a trading people like the Jews remaining as strong as ever, the Hebrew colony soon regained its numbers, and became more flourishing than before. It has been computed that their numbers at the time of Saint Paul's imprisonment could not have been far short of 60,000. The apostle had received such cruel treatment at the hands of his countrymen that he might have been pardoned if he had left the unbelieving Jews of Rome to their fate, and contented himself with the fellowship of those who had already confessed Christ and united themselves with the Roman Church; but, true to the passion of his heart as expressed in the letter he had written to the Romans,² he must in Rome as elsewhere begin at Jerusalem, not merely building on the foundation of other men, but taking the occa-

¹ Philippians i, 13 (Revised Version).

² Romans ix, 1-5.

sion which his own first visit to the great metropolis afforded him of giving the Jewish colony as a whole another opportunity of accepting their Lord and Christ. It was, therefore, his first care after his settlement "in his own hired house" to call together a representative gathering of the seven synagogues of Rome that he might explain to them his position, and deliver his message of salvation. Some of the heads of the Jewish community responded to his invitation and took so much interest in his statement as to appoint a day for a larger gathering, at which he "expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening."

That long day, to the careful reader of the Acts of the Apostles, is invested with a most tragic interest. At the opening of the book the question had been asked of the risen Lord, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" No answer could be given then. It was not for them to know the times and the seasons. They must surrender themselves to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who would bring the kingdom in his own way. The kingdom had come, and had been offered to the Jew first, and for a considerable time to the Jew only; for all the work of the Church, for the space of twelve years at least, centered in Jerusalem. At Antioch again it was to the Jews that the blessings of the kingdom were offered first—and not at Antioch only, but in every place to which the Gospel had been carried. And now once more in the metropolis of the world is the offer made to restore at this time the kingdom to Israel, so that the children of Abraham may still be the princes of Messiah's world-wide dominion. It is the day of crisis for the Dispersion. As the Messiah himself had come to his Temple and given the faithless nation one more opportunity before they finally rejected him, so the Apostle of the Gentiles gives to the metropolitan Church of the Jews of the Dispersion one more opportunity, and pleads with them with an earnestness so impassioned that he can detain them from morning till evening. But it is all in vain. They will not have this Man to reign over them. As Christ himself had to turn sorrowfully away, with the word, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate," so his great apostle, when they departed, spoke out of a breaking heart the word of doom for the Dispersion: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying, Go thou unto this people, and say, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their

ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them. Be it known, therefore, unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: they will also hear."

From this time the Church is Gentile. The Judaizing teachers who had given Saint Paul so much anxiety and pain will presently pass out of sight, as Christianity becomes more and more cosmopolitan, and no longer will it be possible to regard it as a sect within Israel, but as a great and growing community severed from it by an ever widening gulf. There are still Jewish Christians in the Church; but in a few years Jerusalem will be in ruins, the Temple will be destroyed, the daily sacrifice will cease, and those who become Christians will have to "go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." The Epistle to the Hebrews, at the close of our period, marks the transition. It summons the believing Jews to find in Christianity not an addition to their former faith but a consummation of it, a merging of it in the faith of Christ, in whom the law, and the Temple, and the priesthood, and the sacrifices receive their complete fulfillment, the kingdom finding its center no longer in the earthly but in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God which can never be destroyed.

Our history, which has been our main stay throughout the period, now suddenly fails us. It leaves the great Apostle to the Gentiles in his own hired dwelling, still chained to the Roman soldier, but none the less receiving "all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him." How does the imprisonment end? Why are we not told? No better reason has ever been given than the very simple one that, being a historian and not a prophet, Saint Luke had nothing more to tell. As we indicated at the beginning, it is extremely probable that the Book of the Acts was written during these two years of imprisonment, and was finished just at the close of these two years and before the imprisonment came to an end. Had it been written later, it would surely have told what the issue was; or, if for any reason the issue was unknown, there would have been some explanation of so strange a blank.

The Acts of the Apostles is a broken fragment of the history of the Church; but how wonderfully complete after all, as its course proceeds from Jerusalem, where it begins, to Rome, where it ends; from the metropolis of Judaism out of which it sprang, to the metropolis of the world which it claims as its

inheritance! And is it not the end of the age? What conflagrations are these? Rome on fire, and after it fiercest fires of persecution in which the great leaders and vast

multitudes of the flock of God will perish! Jerusalem on fire, and all its ancient glory gone forever! Surely "the end of the world" has come!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TWO MARTYR-APOSTLES.

IT is more than probable that Saint Luke perished in the Neronian persecution, so that there is not even an appendix to tell what was the end of the two great leaders, Saint Peter and Saint Paul. But we have some light upon the subject from the letters of these apostles, and also from the somewhat dubious source of Church tradition. And out of these materials our last chapter must be constructed.

Of Saint Peter very little can be said with any certainty. Like Moses, he disappears from the sacred page: like Enoch, he was not, for God took him. The last indication of his whereabouts is the salutation at the close of his first epistle, "She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you," the reference probably being, as expressed by the Authorized Version, to the Church in Babylon. This would seem to indicate that as Saint Paul had been the great apostle of the West, Saint Peter had been the great apostle of the East; for Babylon, though no longer occupying the proud position it had in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, was still a great city, and the metropolis of the Dispersion. It is plain from the Acts of the Apostles that Saint James, the brother of the Lord, after the transference of the center of interest to Antioch, was the leading spirit in the Church at Jerusalem, and it seems quite natural that the apostle of the circumcision, in his desire to bear his part in carrying the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, should make the great Jewish colony at Babylon his objective point, as Saint Paul had ever in his western journeys made it his great ambition to preach the Gospel at Rome.

This supposition, however, conflicts with the tradition so dear to the Roman Catholic Church that Saint Peter was for twenty-five years bishop of Rome, their contention being that, after his escape from Herod Agrippa, as related in the twelfth chapter of the Acts, he went to Rome, and remained there during all the time of Saint Paul's missionary tours. This tradition is obviously untenable; for we know that Saint Peter was present at the council of Jerusalem, and certainly not as a delegate from Rome; we know further that later on he had an encounter with Saint Paul at Antioch in which all his sympathies were plainly with the East;

and, moreover, the absence of all mention of his name in the Epistle to the Romans, in the portions of the history in the Acts which refer to Rome, and in all the epistles written from Rome, would be quite unaccountable had an apostle of such prominence been the leading man of the Church, or even present in it, during that time.

It is in order to make the epistle square with the tradition that the suggestion has been offered that Saint Peter means Rome when he says Babylon, very much as the term Modern Babylon might be applied to London or New York. We admit, indeed, that Saint John in the Apocalypse speaks of Rome as "Babylon," which is quite in keeping with the highly symbolical style of the whole book; but this is not the character of Saint Peter's letter; and the salutation at the end of it is as simple and direct as any in Saint Paul's Epistles, so that there seems no reason whatever for supposing him to mean one place when he says another. The difficulty has been raised that Josephus speaks of a great exodus of Jews from Babylon in the reign of Claudius, which is supposed to have so diminished the Jewish colony as to deprive it of the importance which would justify Saint Peter making it a center of his work; but those who insist on this seem to forget that a similar argument against the importance of Rome as a Gospel center might be based on the edict of Claudius. It is not so easy as some suppose to expel or exterminate Jewish colonies of such magnitude as those at Babylon and at Rome.

While the twenty-five years' residence at Rome is certainly a fable, there seems no good reason to doubt the well-supported tradition that Saint Peter did visit Rome in his old age, and that he suffered martyrdom there about the same time as the Apostle Paul. It is most interesting to see the two apostles, whose paths had lain so far apart, thus meeting at the close; and it is touching to mark the evidence of their oneness in Christ Jesus. Our appreciation of Saint Peter's nobility and generosity of character is still further heightened by the many indications of his hearty sympathy with the brother who had, in the course of the years, almost overshadowed him. In his First Epis-

tle he addresses himself to the sojourners of the Dispersion in that very region which had been the scene of Saint Paul's first triumphs, and the epistle is sent by the hand of Sylvanus, the associate of Saint Paul in that work, whom he speaks of as "our faithful brother"; and in the Second Epistle, which, though much disputed, seems likely to retain the confidence the great majority of Christians have placed in it, he speaks of "our beloved brother Paul," and of "all his epistles," "wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." The apostles of Jerusalem and Babylon, of Antioch and Rome, are one in Christ Jesus, and in death they are not divided.

But we must now follow Saint Paul, as he finishes his course. We have to guide us, besides tradition, the last group of his letters, known as the Pastoral Epistles—two addressed to Timothy and one to Titus. It is fair to say that the authenticity of these letters is still questioned by men who cannot be called destructive critics; but we have only to study such a calm and candid discussion of the vexed question as Mr. G. C. Findlay's Appendix to the English edition of "Sabatier," to find sufficient grounds for retaining our confidence in these valuable portions of the Canon of Sacred Scripture. From the references in the First Epistle to Timothy and in the Epistle to Titus we learn that Saint Paul, at the close of the long imprisonment which had extended over five years from his arrest in Jerusalem, was set at liberty and resumed his apostolic labors, visiting many of the churches he had planted and carrying the Gospel into the regions beyond, while some ancient authorities state that he planted churches in Spain. As we read the Second Epistle to Timothy we learn that a second time he is a prisoner at Rome, with the conviction that the time of his departure is at hand. It has been conjectured with much probability that he was apprehended at Troas and hurried off so quickly that he had to leave behind him the cloak, and books, and precious parchments which he asks Timothy to bring to him to mitigate the rigor of his prison life;¹ that he was taken to Ephesus for trial and thence by appeal, as formerly at Cæsarea, transferred to Rome, from which he writes.

The state of things is sadly altered since the last imprisonment. Since the great fire at Rome,² the blame for which the emperor wantonly cast on the Christians, with the object, it is asserted, of diverting suspicion from himself, there had been the most savage cruelties

perpetrated on those who refused to abjure the Name of Christ. We can well understand that, when this was the mood of the emperor, there would be no mercy shown to the prisoners awaiting their trial; and we know also from the secular history of the time that the good Prefect Burrhus, who had been so indulgent to Saint Paul during his first imprisonment, was now replaced by the nefarious Tigellinus, of whom the worst that can be said is that he was a man after Nero's own heart.

But the rigors of the imprisonment were not so hard to bear as the loneliness which oppressed the affectionate spirit of the apostle. In a time of such terror, none but the bravest hearts would dare to seek him out in his prison cell. This will account for the deeply pathetic references in that last letter to Timothy to those who had forsaken him, and his delighted appreciation of the kindness of Onesiphorus, "for he oft refreshed me," he writes, "and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently and found me—the Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day."

At the time of writing this he had made his "first defense," and had been "delivered out of the mouth of the lion" for the time. This expression makes it probable, as indeed it is from what we know of Nero and his ways, that he appeared before the emperor himself. What a dramatic situation! The mad Caligula and the cruel Claudius had indelibly disgraced the Roman purple, but Nero went far beyond them both in the shamelessness of his profligacy and iniquity. And at his bar stands the Christ-like Paul! There is no one to tell the story of that trial. If only the same pen which has given us so vivid a picture of Paul before Felix, before Festus, before Agrippa, had been able to reach the climax by giving a sketch of Paul before Nero! But there was no friendly face in the court that terrible day: "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account."

Of the second trial we have not even a notice, for after it there can be no more letters from that dear hand, no more words from these hallowed lips. "From every evil work," indeed, the Lord delivered him, but not from the sword of the Roman executioner. It was an evil work as done by the tyrant, but for the apostle it was the fulfilment of the last utterance of his triumphant faith: "the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Our period closes in thick darkness. The shadow of the cross is on the final page. Is this the end of what opened with such majesty and promise? We began with tongues of fire

¹ II. Timothy iv, 13.

² See Tacitus, "Annals," XV.

from heaven in the upper room; whence are these tongues of fire in the garden of Nero? But let us not forget the Christian badge of victory, the banner of the cross. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord."

But what of the Church? Are there not troubles within as well as foes without? What mean these signs of incoming error and corruption, these dark hints of a sad falling away, a terrible apostasy, which darken the pages of the later Epistles? Are these to be the last words of inspiration? Nay: the Apostle of Love has yet to crown the edifice of the sacred Canon with his Apocalypse, his Epistles, his Gospel of the Son of God; and, though in his day, too, there will be fires of persecution and days of gloom and darkness, a door will be

opened in heaven, and he will be permitted to see and to write how, amid varying fortunes, the kingdom will hold on its course through the stormy years of the future until there are heard "great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever"—and further on still will the vision carry him to "where beyond these voices there is peace"; for, as in our book of history we have been carried from Jerusalem to Rome, in that Book of Apocalypse we are conveyed over the ruins of the old Rome to the New Jerusalem, the city of God, the home of the saints, "where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

J. M. Gibson



F. ROEBER.

THE HOLY FAMILY.

BOOK XV.

FROM THE FALL OF JERUSALEM TO THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY REV. GEORGE C. LORIMER, LL.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHADOW OF ANTICHRIST.

THE student of history must be impressed by the ominous significance which attaches to the term "world" in the vocabulary of apostolic literature. It seems to stand for something dark, forbidding, terrible; something with which there can be no compromise, but which must be shunned, and hated, and overcome. Peter refers to its "corruptions"¹ and "pollutions";² James declares that friendship with it is enmity with God;³ while John, with graphic intensity, sums up our duty toward it as he characterizes its pernicious possessions and predicts its ultimate overthrow: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."⁴ Neither in this passage nor elsewhere have we anything like exact definition. Everything is left vague, shadowy, and obscure. Imagination, combining the various representations given in the New Testament regarding the nature and influence of this foe, readily pictures a baleful presence, almost an incarnation of the debauchery, the avarice, the cruelty, the superstition, the fatalism, the weariness, and the unutterable coarseness of all the ages, having come in its flaunting insolence to reign over the empire of the Cæsars.

To the primitive Church that which it called the "world" was practically a personality, wise, subtle, seductive, and even ubiquitous, blinding the eyes of men to the claims of truth, covertly stealing from the heart the Gospel seeds sown by faithful preachers, and vigorously and persistently assailing the purity and the consistency of Christians themselves. It was to the early disciples of Christ

what it is still, the symbol and synonym of everything vicious and criminal—everything, in a word, hostile to the progress of spiritual religion, and to the regeneration and elevation of mankind. No wonder, then, that the sharp cry of warning sounds perpetually through the closing portions of the inspired Canon, and that the Church is peremptorily summoned not for a moment to tolerate the usurpations of the world, nor in the least degree to submit to the assoilment of its infamies.

Unquestionably the condition of the Roman empire, whose boundaries determined the limits of the world as known to Christianity, was so despicable and so desperate as to justify the repugnance and alarm of every sober-minded and virtuous citizen. Cicero, half a century before Christ, had declared, "The Commonwealth to be utterly lost." This conviction, however, was expressed only in view of the insatiable ambition of Julius Cæsar, and not in view of what was infinitely more perilous, the corruption, licentiousness, wastefulness, superstition, and gross impiety of the entire community. And from the days of the great orator the moral deterioration of the nation had become more rapid and more pronounced. In the times of the emperors, especially from Augustus to Constantine, it had reached its lowest point, and more than once threatened to engulf in darkness the flickering light of the blessed Gospel. Slavery cursed the entire land. Everywhere its enervating, debasing, and emasculating influence was felt. It has been estimated that upward of 60,000,000 human beings belonged to this unhappy class. Mommsen, when describing the city of Rome itself, thus divides its population of 1,610,000 inhabitants: "There were 10,000 senators and knights, 60,000 foreigners, 20,000 garrison, 320,000 free citizens, 300,000 women and children, and 900,000 slaves."

Evidently these multitudes, without rights, without social dignity, and mainly without hope, could hardly fail to contaminate and

¹ III. Peter i, 4.

² II. Peter ii, 20.

³ James iv, 4.

⁴ I. John ii, 15-17.

debilitate their superiors. It is a law of providence that immoral society shall give birth to its own Nemesis. The Erinnys and Eumenides, the Greeks to the contrary notwithstanding, are not the daughters of Acheron and Night, but the direct issue of wrongs and wrong-doing. A civilization grows rich on drunkenness and debauchery. But the vices it has fostered for gain speedily consume its substance, and leave it bankrupt, without the vigor and virtue necessary to restore prosperity. Or it may advance its interests by immolating all that is beautiful in the race. But the avenger is near at hand. The slave is not powerless. He bruises the heel of the foot that is placed upon his neck. Burdened, manacled, lashed, exposed to the cruel passions of master or mistress, he is not impotent. He retaliates without seeming to do so, strikes down his oppressor while cringing before him, and wastes his strength while apparently he is seeking to save him from exhaustion. Chains are always ultimately heavier on the tyrant than on his victim; and the rod on the servant's back will leave its blackest scars upon the soul of the hardened torturer.

Nowhere has the operation of this inexorable law been more distinctly disclosed than in the ethical and social condition of the empire. In the city these 900,000 slaves indisposed the 320,000 free citizens to toil, for industry had been branded with shame. And, as these freemen were idle and had to be supported, they came to depend on the State for supplies. In this manner they were pauperized. The destruction of self-reliance resulted in the loss of courage and self-respect, and they were at last unable to defend themselves from Goth and Hun. The rich suffered as much as the poor. Wealthy Romans regarded their slaves merely as chattels, and dealt with them accordingly; a Flaminius slaying one of his household to show a giddy companion what he had never seen—the agonies of death; and a Pollio feeding his lampreys on the bodies of his poor bondsmen.

These slaves were usually divided into two orders—the *familia urbana* and the *familia rustica*—the former consisting of domestics, the latter of field and other kinds of laborers. Men of the type of vulgar Zoilus, whose character is painted in full by Martial, delighted in a numerous retinue, anticipating every want and ministering to every whim. The *rustica* of a single owner sometimes numbered 10,000, and have been known to equal 20,000. Slaves were also educated in many cases to be teachers, secretaries, librarians, poets, readers, and some were trained to amuse their masters by jests and witticisms. As manual labor had come to be lightly esteemed because of its association with bondage, for the same reason the

haughty patricians of the empire affected contempt for letters. An institution that could thus bring industry and intelligence into disrepute must have been a source of continued evil, especially when it is remembered that its supplies had to come from selling conquered peoples, or from defenseless individuals cruelly kidnapped and thrust into miserable subjection. In Cicero's famous speech, *Pro Cluentio*, we have an instance of a free man being sold into slavery through the treachery of his relatives. Nor was this exceptional. Seneca declares that travelers and other innocent persons had frequently been betrayed into bonds. And these practices, with the "institution" itself, go to make plain the dominant inhumanity of that old heathen world which the Church confronted on the death of Saint Paul. Yes; that is the word—"inhumanity"; for in pleasures, in business, in domestic relations, in war or peace, inhumanity ruled supreme.

Enter the Colosseum, and study the faces of 87,000 people who have gathered to witness a bloody spectacle. As you contemplate this vast audience, you will at once perceive the hard lines of the countenance, the worn, jaded look, the hungry, famished expression only to be appeased by sanguinary exhibitions. The nature of their recreations accords with their dull, soulless features. Gladiators—men and, occasionally, even women—fight before them to the death.

In a show provided by the great Julius 320 pairs of gladiators contended. Even Trajan devoted 5,000 such combatants to the popular desire for exciting contests. Augustus, in the paper attached to his will, reminds posterity that he had given to the public 8,000 gladiators, and had introduced to the arena of the amphitheatre 3,510 wild beasts. Titus, the high and noble, butchered thousands of Jews in the games at Berytus. Savage animals from the Soudan or Central Asia were on many occasions arrayed against each other. Frequently some despised criminal was bound and exposed to be lacerated by bear or bull, or a new Scævola in the person of some condemned malefactor was doomed to hold his hand over the fire till it was reduced to a cinder. And these, with other atrocities, made up the sum of a Roman holiday. There was no sympathy with suffering, no sense of the sacredness of life, no horror at the sight of so many fellow-beings maimed, torn, wounded, slain. The crowds of spectators were heartless and always thirsty for blood, and the women were about as brutal as the men. And alas! the inhumanity of the circus and the amphitheatre was but symptomatic of the inhumanity that reigned triumphant throughout the empire, that exposed helpless infancy, that slaughtered innocent

slaves on the violent and mysterious taking off of their master, that inflicted indescribable punishments on the transgressors of the law, that raged in domestic poisonings and assassinations, and that defrauded neighbors and outraged the innocence of girls and women.

Low ideas regarding the essential nature of man account for this disregard of the claims of pity and compassion. To the multitude he was not made in the image of God, was not endued with immortality, and was not dowered with sacred and inalienable rights. At the best he was only a higher type of animal—a thinking one, undoubtedly, but still an animal—and being nothing more could not be entitled to higher consideration. Why should the mob refrain from inflicting on the individual gross and coarse insults, causing him to writhe beneath exquisite tortures, if he should happen to be helpless in its grasp? Do not savage beasts prey on each other, and if they are starving do they not devour the weak? Why, then, should a creature, differing from them in degree rather than in kind, be exempt from a similar fate, when the majority craves enjoyment from the sight of his agonies? Such must ever be the ultimate logic of materialism, though the refinement derived from Christian culture may somewhat abate the rigor and brutality of its application in modern times.

Inhumanity, if not necessarily the cause of dissoluteness, is generally involved in its gratifications. Prodigals and profligates are usually heartless, even if the heartless are not always prodigals and profligates. In the empire they were apparently inseparable. Literature in the age of which we write was little less than a school of filth and debauchery. The stories of Petronius and of Apuleius, the satires of Persius and Juvenal, the lyrics of Horace, and the odes of Ovid were fatal to modesty and purity. Even the writings of Lucretius, who lived before this period—born 95 B. C.—but whose influence long survived him, dedicated his great poem to one of the most unscrupulous of men, and himself committed suicide—two facts which indicate the tendency of his philosophy. The terrible histories penned by Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dion Cassius added only to the general demoralization, for they are at best but the sad chronicles of human infirmity, iniquity, grossness, and bestiality. Then, as now, they only led the reader, in the words of Livy, “to pursue the decline of morals following the decay of laws—then their gradual sinking—then their headlong fall—and finally their entombment in these times, wherein we can neither bear our vices nor their remedies.” And from so gloomy a review what could be born but despair? Hope was dead. No one dared anticipate a revival

of virtue. Few, indeed, desired it. From poets and satirists the giddy throng wandered to the baths to gaze on obscene pictures, to listen to declaimers and rhetoricians, and to keep appointments with frail women. Or they retired to the theater where pantomimists, and actors of the most villainous character, exerted their wiles only to inflame passion and smother the last embers of expiring shame. Luxury and licentiousness invaded the noblest families. Divorce was frequent, and Roman matrons, according to Nero’s tutor, counted the years not by the consuls, but by the number of their discarded husbands. It is not necessary to believe all that has been written of the orgies of Vitellius, or the infamies of Messalina, nor even to credit the statement that Lollia Paulina wore a garment costing forty million sesterces, for an adequate estimate to be formed of the reckless wastefulness of the mistress of the world. Contemporaneous history is full of accounts of elegant marbles, of precious stones, of rich viands, of Setinian, Cæcuban, and Falernian wines, of robes worth a king’s ransom, of palaces such as Nero’s “Golden House,” more like towns than residences, and of the revels and festivities on the borders of illuminated lakes, with dainty booths turned into brothels and with women of the highest rank serving as prostitutes.

And over this mass of seething corruption, over this inhumanity rioting in indecency, reigned rulers fashioned in its own likeness, the Cæsars—Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, Nero, Galba, and others, whose tyrannies and cruelties justified the verse of Lucan, who in his “Pharsalia” represents a soldier returning from the dead with the glad news that adamantine chains were being forged to bind the emperor to the rocks of an infernal Caucasus. And yet on earth he was being worshiped as a divinity. At this point is touched the most singular and startling evidence of Roman degeneracy.

The religion of the empire was a composite system, made up of many deities, from many lands, and with many rituals. It was like the population, somewhat hybrid in nature, and differed from it not at all in morality. For political reasons all pagan cults were tolerated, and perhaps it is not too much to say that none of them were believed. At least, it will not be denied that incredulity was prevalent, especially among the patricians and the priests. They very generally treated as silly fables and idle myths the stories of gods and goddesses, and in private ridiculed the superstitions of the temples. And yet among these people developed the gravest and most blasphemous of absurdities—the apotheosis of the Cæsars after death, and sometimes even during life. The

origin of this profane custom is not clear. It may have grown out of the spirit of adulation which arbitrary power is apt to beget. At first it may have been devised as a means of over-awing distant tribes with the majesty of the conquering Emperor. Possibly it may have been an expedient fallen on to give unity and coherence to the diverse if not antagonizing cults of the Pantheon. It said to the subject nations: "You are at liberty to render homage to your local deities, but that we may be made one by our religion we must all find a common god in the emperor." Horace had addressed Augustus as Apollo, Mercury, or Mars, and pretended to believe that he must be one of them. Courtiers spoke of him significantly as "*our* god"—and doubtless he was all the god they cared to flatter. Domitian, in the very intoxication of impious pride, demanded to be addressed as the Supreme. Tacitus, however, is our authority for saying that "Nero was the first of the Cæsars to be officially recognized as a god before his death." The beginning of this monstrous wickedness is doubtless to be traced to the times of the immortal Julius, who even in his youth and while living in coarse delights was exalted to the Pontificate, and after his assassination was enthroned as a being entitled to divine honors. His successor was similarly magnified. Augustus was regarded as a *præsens Divus*, and on some public buildings his title, "Son of God," was inscribed. All this was bad enough, but when this homage was offered to wretches who had worn the purple, and who had disgraced humanity and the scepter, the black horror of it became apparent. Think of Caligula as a god, challenging in mockery Jupiter Capitolinus to fight; or conceive, if it is possible, of Claudius, steeped in atrocious sins against purity, being in any sense associated with supernatural intelligences; and, worse than all, what shall be said of a Nero, the murderer of his wife and his mother, the buffoon and coward, one of the most contemptible monarchs that ever reigned on earth, being lifted up to a throne in heaven? Imagination itself staggers before the enormity of the blasphemy. What lower depths of impiety could be needed to sink the empire in irretrievable disaster?

Nor are we to suppose that the citizens were permitted to take this offensive sacrilege otherwise than seriously. They were expected to bow before the statue of the emperor; if so commanded, to burn incense to it; and to regard with superstitious veneration the coin bearing his effigy. Failure in any of these respects entailed severe penalties, and sometimes death. Much has been written in praise of the pagan spirit of toleration, and much has been confidently affirmed that requires proof.

That the Romans countenanced various faiths I have already admitted. But it is to be observed, however diverse these may seem, they not only had affinity for each other, but were likewise one in principle. Idolatries of every kind have much in common, and are so nearly alike as to be able to abide together in comparative peace. But a religion that antagonized all altars, that repudiated the divinity of human beings, whether emperors or not, and that maintained a monotheism that involved the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, ancient heathenism had no disposition to encourage. Toleration indeed! Was it not intolerance that persecuted Socrates and that resulted in his death? When Protagoras expressed a doubt as to the existence of the gods, was he not exiled from Athens? Did not Mæcenas, the learned and the brilliant, declare to Augustus that whatever else he might tolerate he must not tolerate alien religions? Has not Cicero explained that no man may be allowed to worship any gods not officially recognized by law? And yet with these facts before them, there are some writers so infatuated with paganism that they never weary of extolling its alleged liberality. These modern devotees are self-deceived, or they are indifferent to the truth. Paganism was only tolerant of what was essentially in harmony with its own spirit. Beyond that it was fierce, dictatorial, oppressive. In the Roman empire, especially, it would tolerate, not only no other king than Cæsar, but no other rival god. Its ultimatum was: Burn incense to the ruler, or perish. It allowed no hesitancy; it admitted of no compromise; and it knew nothing of soul liberty, or of the rights of conscience. Inevitably, then, it followed that as soon as Christianity should come to sufficient prominence to be recognized, and should acquire sufficient influence to be felt in society, a serious conflict would arise. It, too, would be commanded to render divine honors to Cæsar. While the authorities might condone its failure to recognize their mythological deities, they would not for a moment permit it to ignore the majesty of the emperor. Will the new religion yield? The issue it cannot avoid. It must choose between Christ and Cæsar. The former is as imperative and exclusive as the latter. It must choose one or the other. It cannot choose both. Is it too much to say that the destiny of mankind depends on the decision?

The apostles were painfully conscious of the gravity of the situation. They discerned the impending battle, hardly more than commenced in their own day, and perceived that it would be waged through coming centuries. The elements of society we have glanced at in this chapter, they realized were intensely hos-

tile to Christianity, and must continue, however changeable might be their forms, to assail its teachings and undermine its influence. To them these unorganized elements seemed to come together, to coalesce, to shape themselves into a definite system, even into an organic force of government. What they called the "world" lost its fluid and nebulous character and became an empire, a kingdom, confronting that other kingdom—the kingdom of heaven. They speak of the "prince of this world," of warring against "the rulers of the darkness of this world," and contrast with him and them the "Captain of their salvation." The two kingdoms as they portray them are in a sense counterparts of each other, though differing fundamentally in moral and spiritual life. All the unrenewed are citizens of the one, and all the regenerate are members of the other. The fruits of the Spirit distinguish the heavenly kingdom; the works of the flesh are the products of the earthly. And over the latter reigns a usurper who claims the honor due exclusively to the Lord who rules over the former, and who to gain his end will even go as far as to profess Christianity himself. The singular and striking antithesis between the two empires is brought out with special clearness by Saint John. In the Apocalypse we find the Church presented under the form of a woman, and of a city, and the hostile world under similar imagery. The analogies between them are thus summed up by an English writer:

"These prophecies¹ present two broadly contrasted *women*, identified with two broadly contrasted *cities*, one really being in each case doubly represented—as a *woman* and a *city*. The harlot and Babylon are one; the bride and the heavenly Jerusalem are one. The two women are contrasted in every particular that is mentioned about them. The one is pure as purity itself, 'made ready' and fit for heaven's unsullied holiness; the other foul as corruption could make her, fit only for the fires of destruction. The one belongs to the Lamb, who loves her as the bridegroom loves the bride; the other is associated with a wild beast, and with the kings of the earth, who ultimately hate and destroy her. The one is clothed with fine linen, and in another place is said to be clothed with the sun and covered with a coronet of stars—that is, robed in divine righteousness, and resplendent with heavenly glory; the other is attired in scarlet and gold, in jewels and pearls, gorgeous indeed, but with earthly splendor only. The one is represented as a chaste virgin espoused to Christ; the other is mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. The one is persecuted, pressed hard

by the dragon, driven into the wilderness, and well nigh overwhelmed; the other is drunken with martyr blood, and seated on a beast which has received its power from the persecuting dragon. The one sojourns in solitude in the wilderness; the other reigns in the wilderness over peoples, and nations, and kindreds, and tongues. The one goes in with the Lamb to the marriage supper amid the glad hallelujahs; the other is stripped, insulted, torn, and destroyed by her guilty paramours. We lose sight of the bride amid the effulgence of heavenly glory and joy, and of the harlot amid the gloom and darkness of the smoke that 'rose up forever and ever.'¹

This admirable exposition enables the reader clearly to perceive the justness of the position we maintain, namely, that the apostles took all that they meant by the term "world," and in their thought fashioned it into a kingdom, as real, apparent, and coherent as the kingdom of heaven, against whose existence, expansion, and extension it arrayed all of its malevolent energies. The solidarity of the good, which requires neither organization nor officialism to effect, they realized was opposed by the natural and inevitable solidarity of the evil; and to this latter, to this accumulation and concentration of the world-spirit, to this operation and coöperation of its presumption and blasphemies, in its final and most terrific manifestation, was given the ominous and expressive name of Antichrist.

This term, as far as the New Testament is concerned, is exclusively Johannean,² although the idea it represents is not. The beloved disciple writes: "Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists." This, however, is a mere allusion, and it is to Saint Paul we are to look for a full length portrait of this adversary. To the Thessalonian Christians he forwarded the most complete description of that fateful power whose reign was to be with all the lying deceitfulness of Satan. These are his words: "Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be [the second advent], except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, . . . setting himself forth as God. . . . Now, ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work; only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and

¹ Revelation xii, xiii, xvii, xviii.

² Guinness, "The Approaching End of the Age," p. 143. ²I. John ii, 18, 22, iv, 3; II. John 7.

bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming; even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing."¹

Various commentators have assumed that the apostle in this passage has reference solely to an individual, and not to a system or succession of men. This view is known to the historian of exposition as the doctrine of a personal antichrist. They who advocate it teach that at a certain point in the progress of Christianity there is to appear a veritable "man of sin," an individual like the tyrant king, Antiochus Epiphanes, or like the insane emperor Caligula, who, being filled with demoniac impiety, would exalt himself against the true God, and would seat himself in the Temple, seeking to supersede Christ and his salvation by the substitution of himself and his superstitions. But this interpretation has not commanded the assent of the majority of earnest inquirers. That it was adhered to by many of the early Church is not to be denied, and can easily be accounted for. When Caligula (40 A. D.) ordered the Jews to erect his image in the Temple of Jerusalem in the form of Olympian Zeus, recalling the similar conduct of Antiochus, what more natural than for the horrified disciples to see in the blasphemy the supreme mark of antichrist? And when Nero persecuted the saints, and rose to such bad preëminence it was certainly excusable if the bewildered friends of the martyrs did identify the tyrant with Paul's "man of sin." The Sibylline Oracles gave color to this conception; and the belief current during the earlier centuries that Nero had fled beyond the Euphrates, from whence to return with armies for the purpose of completing his exterminating work, added largely to its popularity. But, notwithstanding the support thus given to the idea of a personal antichrist, it is not demanded by a sound exegesis of the text, and has not maintained its authority with very many eminent scholars. In the Book of Daniel and in the Apocalypse the singular, "king," is used of a succession of kings, or of a kingdom including a series of rulers. Why should it not be the same in the passage addressed to the Thessalonians? Moreover, the character of the "man of sin," and that of the "Beast" portrayed in Revelation, so fully correspond that we have no reason to doubt their identity. It is hardly conceivable that two so perfectly resembling each other could possibly arise. Both are of Satan; both usurp the prerogatives of the Almighty; both are inveterately opposed to Christ; and, at last, both shall go to perdition. Evidently here we have not two distinct

embodiments of evil, but only one; and, reading the prophecy of Paul in the light of the vision described by John, that embodiment cannot be restricted to one individual, but must be applied to a succession of individuals, or to a system, inseparable in thought from a multitude of individuals.

As I understand the apostle, he is contemplating the world-power, which stood out in the imagination of the primitive Church as an organized kingdom of darkness arrayed against the kingdom of light. He beholds it coming more distinctly into prominence as an enemy of the purity and grace of the Gospel. But what is to him most startling, is the blasphemous assumption of this world-power to be endued with the attributes and authority of God. This is the one astounding feature of the development that is of all others the most significant. The "man of sin" claims the worship due to the Almighty, pretends to speak in his name, and to act in his stead. And it is at this point, when the world, hiding its foulness under the cloak of religion, and professing to act on behalf of religion, assails or seeks to repress or govern spiritual and evangelical Christianity, that it becomes specifically the antichrist. According to Saint Paul, the period when this stage of iniquity shall be reached will be determined by two events — by the final apostasy of the Jews, and by their overthrow as a nation. He says that there must be first "a falling away." I believe he has reference to Israel, that was rapidly rejecting Christ altogether, and in denying him was repudiating Jehovah's covenant, and was exiling itself from fellowship and communion with God by its many abominations. The other event is described as "the removing out of the way of the one that restraineth." To get at the meaning of the writer it is well to remember that the religion of the Jews was recognized, that is, was licensed by the empire. Its right to exist and to be exercised was not challenged by the authorities. When Christianity appeared it was looked on merely as a sect of the Hebrew faith. Its disciples were regarded in Rome as Israelites, differing only from their co-religionists in perhaps greater austerity of life, or in some meaningless ceremonial customs. As long as this impression prevailed pagan hostility against the Christian Church was restrained. But when it became apparent that Christianity and Judaism were not identical, and that the latter had no right to the imperial toleration conceded to the former, then the envenomed world in its antichristian form asserted its supremacy. This removal of the restraining barrier was effected with the downfall of Jerusalem. For not only then did the rebellious race forfeit all its civil

¹ II. Thessalonians ii, 3-11 (Revised Version).

rights, but then it was made clear, as the Christians abandoned the city and would not participate in the revolt, that in faith they were widely and irreconcilably separated from their Jewish countrymen. With the destruction of that which hindered, appeared the deified form of their emperors, claiming obedience from their subjects in things sacred as well as in things secular; claiming it first as pagans, and then, unhappily, as professed Christians, and enforcing the same with manifold pains and penalties.

It ought to be clearly recognized that while antichrist began under paganism, its manifestation did not end there. What it represents is not necessarily heathenism, but a succession of men governed by a system, or a system perpetuated by a succession of men, which asserts the right of the world-spirit to reign supreme in religion, whether the religion be professedly heathen, or nominally Christian. Hence it is that an ecclesiastical order, and a communion for ages closely allied with various States of Europe, came to be identified with antichrist by those to whom their doctrines and assumptions were repugnant. This is not the place either to affirm or deny the justice of this opinion. As I am not studying prophecy, but writing history, and only the history of a definite period, I cannot discuss such questions as these. Whether Innocent III. had any warrant for declaring the Saracens to be antichrist, and whether Gregory IX. was justified in pronouncing Frederick II. to be the beast that rose from the sea, and whether Luther was within the bounds of truth when he arraigned the papacy as the Mother of Harlots, are not issues for me to meet. They lie beyond my province in these pages, as does the cognate inquiry whether Luther himself may not be the antichrist, as has been more than hinted in many influential quarters. It is enough for us to know that wherever any power rejects the authority of revelation and becomes a god to itself, insubordinately rejecting the rule of heaven from its own life; and wherever it alters, shapes, and molds religion to conform to its own arbitrary decrees; and wherever it employs worldly methods, and would make religion dependent on worldly patronage; wherever, in a word, rivalry and hostility arise to the supreme headship of Christ—there, whether in paganism or Christendom, in Romanism or Protestantism, in the Church or out, there is antichrist.

If this larger exposition of the apostle's language is to be taken as fairly unfolding what was foremost in his mind, then we must so far modify our explication of the "restraint to be removed" as possibly to include in it the transference of the seat of imperial government to the new city of Constantinople. When this

event occurred the field was left clear at Rome for hierarchical developments and changes, ending in the possible incarnation of the world-power in an influential section of the Church itself. On this subject Cardinal Manning has written lucidly, and deserves in this connection to be quoted. "The abandonment of Rome was the liberation of the pontiff. Whatsoever claims to obedience the emperors may have made, and whatsoever compliance the pontiff may have yielded, the whole previous relation, anomalous and annulled again and again by the vices and outrages of the emperors, was finally dissolved by a higher power. . . . And from the hour of this providential liberation, when by a Divine intervention the chains fell off from the hands of the successor of Saint Peter, as once before from his own, no sovereign has ever reigned in Rome except the Vicar of Christ.¹

Thus, then, according to his Eminence, the temporal power of the Church was attained through the withdrawal of Constantine and his government to the shores of the Bosphorus and of the Sea of Marmora. That which hindered this unhappy secular development being removed, the world-spirit was clothed with pontifical robes and was enthroned as supreme in the kingdom of Christ. But it was just as much the "man of sin" when it thus usurped authority under Christian forms as when it tyrannized in the name of all the deities of High Olympus. This the Cardinal did not perceive. Nevertheless, it is true. And it is further true that the prophetic imagery of Saint Paul has been translated into history, not only on the banks of the Tiber, nor solely in the Catholic Church, but everywhere, and in any communion, where the spiritual has been subordinated to the secular, and the headship of Christ has been presumptuously arrogated by prelates and presbyters, or by earthly potentates and parliaments.

Although the antichrist was not distinctly and finally evolved when the great apostle addressed the Thessalonians, nevertheless he seems to have been conscious of an ever-deepening shadow announcing its speedy appearance. He warns the brethren, telling them that the "mystery of lawlessness" was already working. All around him, evidently, were signs of an approaching outbreak of hostility against the Church. Remember that the epistle in which he writes these things was penned during the reign of Nero, and that, though he had not as yet stood before the imperial tribunal, he must have been familiar with reports of outrages, public and private, which were beginning to unsettle the allegiance of the vicious

¹ "Temporal Power of Vicar of Christ," P. xi, 1

and cruel Romans themselves. Meditating on the tragedies being enacted, and knowing that the chief instigator was being hailed as a god, it surely needed little, if any, inspiration to foresee that these enormities must precipitate the inevitable collision between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the world. Such moral and social chaos as prevailed at Rome could not, in the nature of things, pass without giving birth to some monstrous creation. That it was generating the "man of sin" was to the apostle most certain. And, unless I greatly err, when he refers to the "mystery of lawlessness" as already working, he has direct reference to Nero himself as its chief author and primary embodiment. He sees in him the prototype of the antichrist. Not only does the history of this dark form begin with the emperor, but he becomes the pattern of its most hideous features. He was seed and poison-flower in one. While its horrible and portentous shadow, he was also the beginning of its substance. This, in my opinion, is the explanation of the vague hint and guarded warning conveyed in the letter to the Thessalonians. The apostle could not have been more explicit without involving the brethren in serious calamities. That he was, however, clear enough to be understood, and that he was understood as I have interpreted him, is evident from the fact that the early Christians very generally identified antichrist with Nero. Someone with the influence of authority must have put this idea in motion, and I do not think I am wrong in attributing it to Saint Paul in the utterance we are studying. It is, however, manifest that, in the horror and bewilderment of the times the disciples expounded it too absolutely, and regarded its significance as exhausted in their own epoch. They can hardly be blamed for not seeing beyond the age in which they lived and suffered. It is only natural that they should have been partially blinded by the terror of their surroundings. Hence it was that to them the last of the Cæsars was the full-grown "man of sin" and not merely the embryo; was the "lawless one" in his completeness, and not the awful, living, acting prophecy of his immeasurable infamies. They lacked in discrimination. It was a fault, and yet an excusable one. They did not see as far as their teacher. They supposed that the ferment and working of the "mystery of lawlessness" was the same as the appearance of the "lawless one" clothed with "all power and signs and lying wonders." The student should be careful not to fall into their error. In Nero we have the shadow of the coming rival of the Holy One, "who appeareth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." This much and no more; but as this much opens a dark

page in the annals of the primitive Church, it is imperative, if we would understand her perilous position and perceive her providential preservation under the empire, that more than a cursory glance be bestowed on Nero's character and history.

No one could have been more unfortunate than he in his parents. He was in a very literal sense the child of lawlessness; for both his father and mother were moral anarchists. Domitius Ahenobarbus, who begot him, and the younger Agrippina, who bore him, were monsters of iniquity; and, as Domitius himself is reported as saying, what could be born of such a union but a hateful thing, perilous to the public safety! Strange is it to relate that he descended from the noble and virtuous Germanicus and the elder Agrippina, through whom he inherited the blood of Augustus. This noble couple offered a singular commentary on the doctrine of heredity; for their offspring, the first Nero, Drusus, and Gaius, and their daughters, Julia Livia, Drusilla, and the mother of Nero, were despicable and diabolical. By rights they ought to have been princes in character as well as in race; but, instead, they were as low and base as the meanest thief and assassin in the empire. Evidently contemptible children can proceed from honorable parents; and heredity, though admittedly a law, is perhaps of all laws the most eccentric and irregular in its operations.

There was little, if any, trace of the grandparents in the grandson. He was a natural deformity, whose early surroundings were unfavorable to any desirable change. Three years after his birth at Antium (December 15, 37 A. D.), his corrupt and vicious sire ceased to burden the earth with his presence. He died, and a year previous to his demise his wife, Agrippina, had been banished by order of her brother, the emperor Caligula, the impious madman who caused sacrifices to himself, his wife, and his horse, to be offered, and who in his frenzy would have decapitated the whole nation if he could have had all his subjects' necks combined in one. This desperate idiot suspected his sister of conspiracy, and sent her to Pontia, while her child, bereft of all property, was intrusted to the tender mercies of an aunt, who in her turn handed him over to the care of a barber and a dancer. There is something exceedingly pitiable in the condition of a helpless lad surrendered to the government of two slaves. The education he received from them could not have been of the highest, and yet, considering his receptivity, must have been of the most enduring kind. This separation from his mother came to an end with the death of Caligula (41 A. D.) and the accession of Claudius, the uncle of Agrippina. Being



AGRIPPINA.

restored to her estates, she undertook herself to train her son, and acquired remarkable influence over him. All authorities concur in bearing witness to his physical beauty as a child, and his mother devoted herself to him with all the ferocious passion of a tigress for her cub. To call her feeling for him love is only to traduce that sacred emotion. It was rather a devouring flame, a wolf-like hunger, an inappeasable craving, a quenchless fire in which there was but little of genuine affection. Love does not lie, scheme, plunder, murder, and commit nameless crimes for the temporal advancement of a child; for love sees, even when such acts achieve their immediate object, that they only plunge the unhappy being who reaps their benefits in a black ocean of retribution, whose irresistible billows overwhelm and crush. Agrippina sacrificed all the virtues to promote the fortunes of Nero, and in doing so she exiled them from his own character, and exposed him to the fury of their avenger.

She made up her mind that he, her darling, should be emperor. To accomplish her purpose, she set herself to work with all the shamelessness of a Clytemnestra, who murdered her husband, Agamemnon, and committed adultery with his cousin, Ægysthus. The wife of her uncle, Messalina, whose name is still a by-word and a hissing, stood in her way, and it is no more than probable that she helped to make palpable the vices of the wretched woman who shared the imperial throne. Her part in the events which led to the ruin of Messalina has never been clearly ascertained, but that she was no idle spectator to what took place may be inferred from the fact that she was anxious to succeed her in the royal affections. Scarcely three months passed before the marriage she aspired to was accomplished. In 49 A. D. she wedded her uncle, Claudius, and was duly recognized as his consort in the government of the empire. Securely seated on the throne she began to employ all her arts to obtain for her son, Nero, the succession. She induced her husband to adopt him, to the political detriment of his son, Britannicus, the unfortunate child of Messalina; and she gained for him the hand of his daughter, Octavia; and yet to further her schemes ordered the execution of a rival, Lollia Paulina, drove Calpurnia from Rome, and the noble Silanus to commit suicide. Her wickedness prospered. She was honored with the title of Augusta, and exerted as much sovereign influence in the State as her sceptered lord. She appointed Seneca to be tutor and guardian of her boy, and had Afranius Burrhus, a soldier devoted to her interests—probably for personal reasons, as she was fiercely attractive and not a niggard in caresses—placed near his person. Whatever

could be safely done to humiliate Britannicus in the eyes of the people was unhesitatingly done. The lad was not only subject to slights in public, but he was watched and degraded in private. At last the wife plotted against the life of her husband. Claudius was too long reigning. The freedman, Pallas, was one of his staunchest supporters, and nothing could be accomplished against the master until the faithfulness of the servant was corrupted. The empress, therefore, wooed him to her arms by her wanton blandishments, and then compelled him to espouse the cause of her son. Having so good an ally, and having obtained poison from Locusta, with the aid of Halotus, the monarch's taster, and of Xenophon, his physician, she with her own hands gave the deadly drug, scientifically infused in a preparation of mushroom, to her unsuspecting husband.

"The king is dead; long live the king!" October 13, 54 A. D., was the ill-fated day that gave Nero to the throne of the world. With the news of Claudius' death Afranius Burrhus, the prætorian prefect, appeared before the guard in company with the aspirant for imperial dignities, and a series of lies and large donations did the rest. The Senate confirmed the choice of the soldiers, and only a few inquired for Britannicus, and those leaders who might possibly grow into his friends were put out of the way. Marcus, the brother of Silanus, and Narcissus, who had manifested sympathy for the neglected child of Messalina, were murdered by order of Agrippina, and the slaughter would have continued had not Seneca and Burrhus, the responsible supporters of the new reign, interposed. And the woman who inspired all these crimes, while her hands were yet wet with the blood of her many victims, was appointed to the high office of priestess at the altar of the deified emperor whom she had poisoned.

Born of lawless parents, exalted to the throne by lawless acts, and inaugurated amid lawless deeds, it is hardly surprising that Nero himself should be lawless. But it is difficult to realize the extent to which he carried lawlessness. In the words of Froude:

"Nero committed incest with his mother that he might realize the sensations of Œdipus, and murdered her that he might comprehend the situation of Orestes. Under Nero's fearful example the imperial court at Rome became a gilded brothel. Chastity was turned into a jest, vice was virtue, and fame lay in excess of infamy. The wisest sank to the level of the worst. Seneca composed a vindication of the assassination of Agrippina, accusing her of having conspired against her son. The Senate decreed a thanksgiving to the gods for Nero's deliverance from Agrippina's treachery. The

few honorable men, like Pætus Thræsea and Soranus, who refused to follow with the stream, were made away with; as if the emperor desired, in the tremendous language of Tacitus, *virtutem ipsam excindere*—to cut out virtue itself by the roots; and with a yet stranger appropriateness than even Tacitus could recognize, when Nero had set Rome on fire, he selected the Christian converts as scapegoats for his guilt."¹

But in his case, as in others, there seems to have been growth in crime. He was not infamous all at once. If the descent was rapid, it was due to the momentum imparted by the dizzy height he had reached. As a youth it is said he was amiable, and Seneca represents him as deploring that he had been taught to write when called on to sign a death warrant: The first five years of his reign were passed without serious outrage, and are designated by historians as the golden "*quinquennium Neronis*." Probably the credit for this comparatively halcyon period is due to the influence of Seneca, who had obtained considerable mastery over his royal pupil. But there are reasons for believing that he perceived the pent-up ferocity and indecent dissoluteness of his charge, and realized that it would be next to impossible for any human power to restrain them from ultimate outbreak. His apprehensions were only too speedily realized. Nero, who from the first shamefully neglected Octavia, his wife, was captivated by a Greek freed-woman, Acte, a beautiful and loyal soul. As long as she was mistress of his affections she held in check his cruel propensities, and to her honor be it recorded, that, though he discarded her, she remained faithful, and was the only one to care for his unfriended corpse. He abandoned her for a very different woman—Poppæa Sabina, wife of an intimate companion, wealthy, cultured, imperious, and whose ambition was boundless. His love for her only intensified the conflict that had already sprung up between himself and his mother, who determined still to govern him, and threatened him with the possible rivalry of Britannicus to the throne. Her course was ill-advised. To her astonishment the son she had taught so well, and for whom she had sinned so repeatedly, poisoned Britannicus before her eyes. That was his answer. The mother had led her offspring to taste blood, and now that he had tasted it the tiger in him was not easily appeased. In a little while she herself felt his fang. Poppæa goaded him on. A woman's hand had exalted him to a throne, and now a woman's hand strikes down the instrument of his greatness; and she who had shown no

mercy received none. And on a line with the appalling retribution that ever pursued the house of Cæsar, this same Poppæa, who had known no pity for a mother, was herself kicked to death when approaching motherhood by the imperial brute who had made her his wife.

We have no interest in perusing the narrative of his crimes. That he crushed out of life the line of Augustus and the descendants of the Claudii; that he defamed Octavia, and then ordered her execution; that he turned against his best friends, Burrhus and Seneca; and that he reveled in blood and wallowed in lust, are facts that need no amplification to enhance their horror. From all that is known of his conduct it is plain that his character was a strange admixture of evil without any trace of good. He was childish and petulant to the last, self-willed and arrogant. His vanity was as conspicuous as his viciousness. Destitute of a high order of reasoning ability, and devoid of conscience, he was ever mastered by his passions. He craved flattery and was easily misled by praise. Much has been written about his devotion to art, and his desire to be counted not only a patron in certain directions, but a performer as well. He was enamored with the nude. He worshiped the indecent. He had little care for art apart from the sensual. But he could play, he could sing, he could recite, and when he, the master of the world, condescended to appear before Greek audiences, very naturally he was awarded by that sagacious people all the prizes. He was a man with a few accomplishments and no graces, of some attainments but of no redeeming endowments. Haughty, suspicious, frivolous, contemptible, his name remains as a perpetual warning against power unchecked by constitutional rights, and against art uninfluenced by the pure ideals and lofty enthusiasm of morality and religion.

The year 64 A. D. proved to be a turning point in the career of Nero, and it became forever memorable in the history of the Church. On July 18th of that year the fire broke out that destroyed a large part of Rome, and in the glare of whose flames the kingdom of Christ was disclosed to public view as never before. Already had a large part of Pompeii been demolished by an earthquake, and the people were studying multiplied misfortunes as omens of approaching evil. When, therefore, the Circus Maximus, the Palatine, the Velia, the Aventine, and the Circus Flaminius, and the Via Lata were swept by the flames, and they raged along the Tiber and under the Servian wall, the citizens were horror-stricken, and saw in the ruin indubitable proof of the anger of the gods. Consternation prevailed. For some nine days in all the fire ravaged the city, leaving hardly

¹ "Divus Cæsar," "Short Studies," Third Series, p. 269 of American edition.

any trace of the Temple of the Moon, the Temple of Jupiter Stator, the modest palace of Numa, and the altar of the Vestal Virgins, sweeping before it many of the trophies taken in war, and consuming many of the public records. It must have seemed to the populace that the furies were bent on devastating Rome, dealing with it more pitilessly than invading Gauls. Nero's connection with this calamity is one of the open questions of history. It is hardly credible that he should have been the incendiary. What could he hope to gain from a wild act, that not only imperilled the very existence of his capital, but jeopardized the lives of his subjects? He must have known that many would perish in the smoke and heat of a general conflagration, as multitudes did, and that there could be no compensation for so reckless a holocaust. And yet, however unreasonable such infamy seems, there were not lacking citizens who more than insinuated his guilt. Had he not intimated a desire to see a grander Rome rise on the demolition of old Rome's narrow and tortuous streets? Did he not ascend the Tower of Mæcenas during the fire and expatiate on the beauty of the scene, and from the stage of his own theater, in appropriate costume, sing, "The Capture of Ilium"? Was he not comparatively indifferent to the spread of the flames, and were not some of his own slaves detected in the act of setting fire to various buildings? And did he not hasten to seize more land than he could well have taken, had it not been cleared of structures by the conflagration, for the purpose of rearing his Golden House? On such questionings and rumors as these the dreadful accusation rested in the public mind, and if it did not take definite shape it was very commonly believed. It was, so to speak, in the air, and must have come to the attention of Nero himself; or, otherwise, how explain his anxiety to discover a pretext for fixing the blame on other parties?

In searching for some helpless victim or victims who could be made to suffer for the dastardly crime, his mind was directed to the harmless community known as Christians. I have ventured to say, directed, for it is not likely he would have thought of so obscure a body, unless some one near his person had taken pains to suggest that its members were obnoxious to the public, and could be maltreated without exciting much sympathy. It has been suggested that Poppæa was favorable to the Jews; that Acte, the Greek enchantress of her husband, had been won over to Christianity; and that, in her desire to have her rival slain, the empress had prompted Nero to avert suspicion from himself by punishing the followers of the Nazarene. If they were exter-

minated, the fascinating mistress would be included in the butchery, and that, too, without rousing the indignation of the tyrant. She would simply perish in the carnage, with no one responsible save the emperor himself. But all this reads more like the plot of a romance than the simple narrative of history; as does the tradition that Flavius Josephus was in Rome at the time of the disaster, and through court intrigues made it his business to strike a blow against the hated Galilean by incriminating his disciples. But, though we are in the dark as to the real instrument, we may be sure that someone inveighed against the Church, and insiduously influenced Nero to charge her with a hideous villainy foreign to her nature; and of which she could not have been the perpetrator.

Tacitus is the authority most generally followed by students of this period. In his pages we have a vivid description of the tragic events which grew out of the burning of Rome. Referring to the fact that Nero was determined to transfer the guilt of that horror to others, the historian writes:

"For this purpose he punished with exquisite torture a race of men detested for their evil practices, by vulgar appellation commonly called Christians." Here in contemptuous terms he alludes to the origin of this sect, and then continues: "Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of profligate and abandoned wretches, who were induced to confess themselves guilty, and on evidence of such men a number of Christians were convicted, not, indeed, on clear evidence of their having set the city on fire, but rather on account of their alleged hatred of the whole human race. They were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burnt alive; and many, covered over with inflammable matter, were lighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night. For the convenience of seeing this tragic spectacle, the emperor lent his own gardens [where Saint Peter's now lifts its mighty dome]. He added the sports of the circus, and assisted in person, sometimes driving a curricle, and occasionally mixing with the rabble in his coachman's dress. At length the cruelty of these proceedings filled every heart with compassion. Humanity relented in favor of the Christians."¹

Can imagination paint a more fearful picture? The deep blue of an Italian sky above, serene, deep, and calm, reproves by its reposeful splen-

¹ Tacitus, "Annals," Book XV, xlv.

dor the wild orgies and passionate savagery of a heartless multitude. What a contrast! There blaze a thousand torches composed of writhing, shrieking human forms, clothed in shirts of tar, whose black, sickening smoke dreamily hangs over delightful gardens, and spreads itself out like a thin veil to hide the infamies of earth from the trembling stars in heaven. Hungry dogs howl and snarl in the neighborhood, and are let loose on helpless creatures covered with skins, while patricians and plebeians applaud and laugh as the blood, not of animals, but of fellow-beings, reddens the soil, and their lacerated flesh covers the ground. Women and children, as well as men, are devoted to torture, for the more tender the victim, the more sensitive to pain, and hence the greater amusement do they afford their tormentors. To see a man torn to pieces by famished brutes was a pleasure the average Roman prized; but to see the body of a woman, wet with blood, quivering in strange contortions, as the hounds bite and tear, was to his morbid æstheticism the most delightful of diversions. No favor, therefore, was shown to age or sex. All within reach who bore the hateful name of Christian were sought out, were driven along with blows and mockery, and were exposed to every insulting ignominy which might add to death the very pangs of hell. And chief among the persecutors, yea, *the* chief, stood Nero, the *pater patriæ*, with his once delicate features now bloated and coarse, and with his bloodshot, restless eyes, directing the butchery, and laughing more loudly than the rest when an unearthly, poignant wail gave evidence that some poor victim suffered more acutely than the rest. Is it strange that the early Church saw in the author of this pandemonium the very anti-christ; or that Paul, who had looked him in the face, and had read there the proof of his sensuality and savagery, should have recognized him as the true forerunner and prototype of the "man of sin"?

But if he was the living prophecy and shadow of that world-spirit, whose vigorous hatred of spiritual religion should lead to deadly persecutions, and to boiling oil, blazing fagots, racks, whips, and thumb-screws, as instruments for its suppression, he was likewise in the end the tragic example of its inevitable doom. For Nero to have prospered to the last, and to have gone into eternity quietly, as ordinary men, would have shaken the confidence of saint and sinner in the righteousness of the universe. If faith in a just God was to be preserved, this royal felon must be exposed even in this world, and in some measure receive the reward of his doings. The Church must have waited anxiously to see whether God had forgotten his

law and its thunders. Nor had she long to wait. In 65 A. D. the tyrant discovered, or thought he did, a conspiracy against his rule, and this led to numerous executions. But the death of such men as Calpurnius Piso, Rufus, Lucan, and Seneca only increased the enemies of Nero's government. Scarcely had three years passed away when dissatisfaction broke out anew. Early in 68 A. D., Julius Vindex, Sulpicius Galba, Poppæa's former husband, and Marcus Otho, all bearing sway in various parts of the empire, appeared in open revolt. So portentous was this uprising that the Senate and people of Rome, wearied with the waste-fulness and incapacity of Nero, slowly abandoned his cause. At the crisis of affairs, when he needed friends, he only found enemies, and when he should have acted with decision, he was the victim of uncertainty. Whom could he trust? He had always been selfishly bent on his own pleasure; who now would come to his relief? The murmurs of the populace reached him even in his Golden House, the building of which had involved him in many abominations, and which itself had witnessed as many. From the impending ruin he covertly escaped, and found a momentary refuge in a villa four miles from the city owned by the freedman, Phaon. He had reached the place and the hour (June 9th, 68 A. D.) of his death. No one displayed less heroism than he in presence of the inevitable. He secluded himself with only Sporus and Epaphroditus, two of his dependents, to comfort him. Knowing his peril he lost all dignity, talked incoherently of his artistic gifts and of their value to society, deplored their loss to the world, and suggested that he thought of killing himself artistically by ascending a funeral pyre and lighting it himself. These mumblings were suspended when the decree of the Senate reached him, that he should be scourged to death with rods, his head during the penalty being thrust into a fork. This threat seemed to rouse in him some sense of shame, and he called for two daggers, but had not sense of will to use either. But he cannot postpone fate. Already he hears the tramping of horse, and learns that a centurion has come to arrest him. With a cry of despair he strives to inflict the mortal blow, but hesitates, blunders, whimpers. Once more he essays the awful task, and this time with more effect, for Epaphroditus, in pity for the cowardly wretch, somewhat roughly aids him to drive the dagger home. With a few convulsive gasps he falls back motionless, his features horribly distorted, and his dead eyes staring wildly and bulging out from their sockets. The few spectators turn with sickening loathing from the revolting sight, gladly leaving to poor Acte, the frail but

devoted Greek, the sad duty of committing his abhorred remains to the vault of the Domitii on the Pincian Hill.

Thus was the black shadow of antichrist engulfed in the night of retributive perdition. But the substance survived in the *Pontifex Maximus* on the imperial throne, and in other forms as yet shrouded in the future, but always breathing the same spirit of intolerance, oppression, and cruelty. The Church had passed through the preliminary stage of her great historic conflict, and had emerged from the comparative obscurity of Judea into the broad arena of the empire. She had drawn to herself by her heroism and patient suffering the attention of mankind. Henceforth she must become more than ever prominent, or altogether cease to be. Her resuscitation after the exterminating endeavors of her adversary would seem to many a miracle, approximating in moral sig-

nificance to the resurrection of Christ. She herself would come to be amazed at the indestructibility of her life. The Neronian persecution taught her this on the threshold of her tumultuous career. It was a lesson needed to be learned. She saw the hand that had been raised against her smitten by Providence, and she herself, though wounded and sore, unconquered and unconquerable. The coming years were dark with manifold and repellent forms of evil, and among them, towering over them, and more forbidding than the rest, the awful and iniquitous antichrist. But the dishonored Nero and her own deliverance inspired the Church to believe that, however fierce the warfare awaiting her, in the end the "son of perdition," would go to perdition, and she be brought off victorious through the grace of him whose sacred presence should sanctify and shield her in all the centuries.

CHAPTER II.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

FAMILIAR as we are with the proud eminence of Jerusalem, we naturally approach the story of its humiliation and fall with mingled feelings of surprise and horror. Dean Stanley suggests that its ruin is an event of the same character as the overthrow of Babylon, Nineveh, or of Rome; but, judged by its relation to the world's history, and especially to the emancipation and progress of Christianity, I am persuaded it is immeasurably more solemn and significant. From the series of disasters that befell the capital of the Jewish nation we perceive that privilege is no barrier against catastrophe. "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell."¹ Apparently the higher the heaven the deeper the hell. Communities that are most conspicuously favored are in greater peril than others that have not attained any notable civilization, or any clear insight into divine truth. There are cities in China and India that have existed longer than any now flourishing in Europe or America, and it is not unlikely they will continue after London, New York, Paris, and Chicago have ceased to be centers of thought and activity. Their opportunities were never remarkable and their advantages were never distinguished. Consequently, their responsibilities were never very grave. Their guilt has been proportionately small, and they have not been liable to insurrections, upheavals, and calamities, which are fostered by a more advanced, complicated, and artificial condition of social life. Of all communities Jeru-

salem was the one most signally honored of Jehovah in the olden times. It was the seat of his spiritual government on earth; and there had been preserved the books of the law, and there had dwelt from immemorial antiquity the symbols of the sacred Presence. Concerning this place the Lord is represented as saying:

"I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."¹ To this hallowed spot came the prophets and teachers whose words have illuminated mankind, and along its streets and within the shadow of its Temple porch moved Christ and his apostles, whose wisdom and work have transformed society. Privileges so exceptional entailed obligations equally exalted, and dangers equally serious and imminent. As with separate individuals, so with organized companies of individuals. The human unit is often inclined to construe personal elevation into exemption from the law of duty. Being beyond others in possessions and in power, he may presume to be less bounden than others to administer his stewardship according to the will of God. Thus likewise have many cities erred, and thus erred Jerusalem. She was haughty in the extreme. Blessed exceedingly, she seemed to imagine that the favors she enjoyed were for herself, and for herself alone. The intoxication

¹ Matthew xi, 23.

¹ Zechariah i, 16, 17.

of pride blinded her eyes to her real dependence on the Almighty. She arrayed herself against his providences, disputed his decisions, and dared to set herself directly in the path of progress. God bore long with her, but when she stubbornly interposed her rancorous bigotry and rigid ritualism in the way of spiritual advancement, she pronounced her own doom. The Light of Life must be quenched or she must be crushed.

While it is true that wicked cities are overthrown by the direct judgment of the Almighty, it is not to be denied that generally they are the instruments of their own undoing. They become the unconscious executioners of the divine vengeance, and by the very acts that arouse retributive justice. It is not necessary to send panoplied hosts from heaven to chastise and punish the wrongdoer; for his own sins wield the scourge and the axe more implacably than ever the dreaded Venetian Council of Ten. Vicious men and vicious communities are their own destroyers. Through its own anarchic forces Roman liberty expired, and beneath the weight of its own iniquities Roman imperialism broke down. The invasions of Goths, Huns, Vandals, would have been impossible, or at most harmless, had not wasteful vices impoverished and weakened the empire, and shattered its unity. Jerusalem also was her own assassin. Before the armies of Vespasian and Titus encamped on the ridges of Scopus, or on the top of the Mount of Olives, she had pronounced sentence on herself, and had commenced her last act of desperate self-murder. Jerusalem did not go down in a fierce conflict between right and wrong, loyalty and treason, purity and impurity, faith and unbelief, honor and dishonor. No, it was wrong struggling with wrong, treason with treason, unbelief with unbelief. There was no honor, no purity; only chaotic turbulence of evils, biting, tearing, but alas! not annihilating, one another. In the earthquake and cyclone of fanaticism, bigotry, oppression, and sanguinary cruelty, provoked by long years of narrowness, exclusiveness and hollow pretentiousness, was swallowed up the grandeur of Jerusalem, and her career as the chosen city of God was forever ended.

This tremendous catastrophe, so revolutionary in its effect on the religious life of the world, and constituting, as it does, one of the supreme moments and turning points in human history, cannot be too frequently or too carefully examined. To understand its relation to what followed, an adequate view of the calamity itself is necessary. I can only regret that the limits of this volume do not permit ampler latitude for the complete reproduction of a scene so appallingly terrific and so sublimely

suggestive. The Master's pathetic description of the sad fate in store for Jerusalem is most graphic in portrayal, and what we now know of the fulfilment of the prophecy enables us to realize the fitness of the melancholy language: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."¹

Perhaps the real beginning of this tribulation may be traced to the year 40 A. D., when the reigning Cæsar — Caligula — decreed that his effigy should be placed in the Temple. Before this proposed act of desecration, the Jews had manifested uneasiness and restlessness under the Roman yoke. Revolutionary acts by Judas of Galilee, and revolutionary teachings by Matthias Ben Margaloth, and riots inspired by Zealots, or Sicarri, fostered dissatisfaction, and were ominous of more serious disturbances. But all of these outbreaks had been easily composed. While they occasioned anxiety, they were not regarded as grave enough to cause alarm. The authorities were sleeping on a mine, and the explosion was hastened if not consummated by the madness of the emperor. "His insane vanity," to employ the words of Dean Milman, "made him attempt to enforce from the whole empire those divine honors which his predecessors consented to receive from the willing adulation of their subjects." The Jews in Egypt and Palestine were horrified at the blasphemy, and sent deputies to remonstrate. According to Philo, who was one of the embassy from Alexandria, the emperor dealt with the suppliants in the most flippant and contemptuous manner. He chided them for not acknowledging his divinity, while they worshiped a deity whose name they dared not pronounce. When they humbly reminded him that they had "offered sacrifices *for* him," he insolently replied that they had failed "to sacrifice *to* him." And then while the court was convulsed with laughter he sharply inquired, "Why they refuse to eat pork?" With cynical banter he tormented his visitors, and then, as he abruptly dismissed them, was heard to remark: "Well, they are not very bad. They only seem to be a poor, foolish people who cannot believe I am a god." Evidently he regarded this inability as a sign of mental imbecility. For a moment he commiserated their infirmity. But the compassionate mood did not continue long. A Sidonian workman was ordered to make an immense statue of the emperor, and Petronius was commanded to erect it in the Temple at Jerusalem.

¹ Matthew xxiv, 19-21.

The tidings of the purposed profanation moved the people of the city to grief and indignation. Thousands of citizens sought the representative of government at Tiberias, and prostrating themselves they implored him to desist, avowing themselves prepared to be massacred and determined not to infringe their law. The prefect paused irresolute. For a few weeks the suspense continued. But it was unexpectedly brought to a close by the courageous blow of Cassius Chærea, who delivered the empire from its fiendish and crazy ruler. While the excitement was allayed, and while order outwardly was practically restored, the breach made by the Roman contempt of things most sacred to the Jew was never to be healed. Sullen discontent characterized the people. They had been insulted too ruthlessly ever to forget or to forgive. Some seven years passed without serious disorder. The peace, however, was temporarily broken by Ventidius Cumanus, who, in 49 A. D., permitted his soldiers to invade the Antonia and the Temple cloisters during the Passover. A riot ensued. From 10,000 to 20,000 were killed, most of them being trodden to death in the unavoidable confusion and crush. Soon after this sad event there were rumors in circulation of approaching Messiahs, and conflicts became more frequent between priests and citizens. The Sicarii, Assassins, became more prominent, secret meetings were multiplied, and a patriot party slowly emerged from the gloom and increasing anarchy.

At this most critical juncture, when the utmost care was necessary to preserve order, and when wisdom and humanity were needed, Nero appointed a procurator like unto himself, Gessius Florus, and the smoldering fires were very rapidly fanned into an uncontrollable conflagration. This injudicious appointment occurred in 65 A. D., the season of strange signs and omens. It was reported that during the Passover of that year a mysterious light had shown in the holiest of all for three hours near the midnight darkness. Later on, witnesses declared that the magnificent gates of brass, which required a score of men to open, rolled back silently on their hinges; while at the pentecostal festival the priests had been startled by the sound as of departing deities. These narratives, however legendary, at least go to prove that the hearts of the children of men were full of apprehension, and were "failing them for fear." And the weird figure that appeared and reappeared during these fateful times, uttering its pathetic wail—"Woe to the city! woe to the Temple! A voice from the East! A voice from the West! A voice from the four winds! A voice against Jerusalem and the Temple! A voice against bridegroom and bride! A voice against all the people!"—was only a striking individ-

ual expression of the grim forebodings that haunted the inhabitants of the doomed city. If the story of this melancholy fanatic is to be regarded as fictitious, it yet goes to show how deep and general were the misgivings and dread of the population that found embodiment in so gloomy a myth. On the other hand, if the account is to be accepted as substantially true, then history furnishes us another instance in which one man gathers up in his personal consciousness the horrors and calamities of an epoch, as Ezekiel seems to have done, and gives to them in his own sad life both shape and speech. As it is the distinction of representative men that the genius of their age, or, if the term is preferred—the *zeitgeist*—is concentrated in them and reigns in them, so in this grim, specter-like prophet there was ever present the siege of Jerusalem, with its butcheries, famine, and incendiarism, and in his tragic end, crushed to death by a stone from a Roman catapult as he uttered the pathetic cry, "Woe, woe to me also!" the final crash and desolation were not inadequately portrayed.

Shakespeare writes, in Richard II.:

"The bay trees in our country are all wither'd,
The meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;
The pale-fac'd moon looks bloody on the earth,
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;
Rich men look sad, and ruffians dance and leap."

And signs as portentous as these filled the Jewish mind with inquietude and dismay, for

"By a divine instinct, men's minds mistrust
Ensuing danger; as, by proof, we see
The water swell before a boist'rous storm."

Nor did the storm long delay its coming. Gessius Florus seemed to be cursed with the faculty of misrule. From the moment he assumed command in Palestine he evinced a settled determination to stir up strife, and to enrich himself through the very disorders he had fomented. He surrounded himself with legionaries consisting largely of Syrians from Cæsarea, and Samaritans from Sebaste, nationalities peculiarly obnoxious to the Jews, and in the conflicts which followed there appeared to be reproduced on a larger scale scenes of race animosity enacted in the days of Nehemiah. The mischievous governor did not hesitate to excite the hatred of their traditional enemies against them, and the unhappy descendants of Abraham found themselves plundered and insulted, and with no possibility of redress. It was in vain that they appealed for protection to Cestius Gallus, the ruler of Syria. His visit to Jerusalem, 66 A. D., and his judicial inquiry, resulted in no relief, but only roused the malignant anger of Florus. He lost no time after the departure of Gallus in taking his revenge. With a large body of troops he approached the

city demanding seventeen talents in the name of the emperor. This requisition was turbulently resisted, and the procurator pushed forward and occupied the Herodian palace. He was in a position to control a portion of the city and inflict damage on many of its citizens. He was not inclined to mercy. His soldiers were allowed to pillage where they could, and in the tumult over 3,000 persons perished. The massacre was so pitiless that Queen Berenice, at the time residing in the Asmonean palace, came barefoot to intercede. Her tears and prayers availed not. Florus was obdurate. He ruthlessly pursued his advantage until he was unexpectedly checked. The patriot party, driven to desperation, barred his way through the old city to the tower of Antonia. Slowly he fell back before the furious courage of the people, and, having incited the citizens to overt acts of rebellion, he returned to Cæsarea. While some efforts were made toward reconciliation, their futility soon became apparent. Eleazar, son of Ananias, raised the standard of revolt, and around him gathered the Zealots, or Sicarii. Allegiance to Rome was renounced. Sacrifices offered for the emperor came to an end, and further tribute to the treasury of the imperial government was openly refused. There was now no path of compromise possible. Hence young Eleazar and his friends moved forward to obtain entire control of the city. A moderate or temporizing body of citizens sought to frustrate their purpose, possibly because they saw the hopelessness of the movement, and possibly because of local dissensions. The high priest was chief of the important faction who seemed to desire peace at any price. He did his best to stem the tide of rebellion. Impossible! The floods swept over and away all barriers. He himself was overwhelmed. The insurgents assailed the loyalists with tremendous energy and ferocity. They were irresistible. Everywhere the friends of submission to Rome were discomfited. The high priest and his brother sought refuge from the tempest in an aqueduct, where they were found and ruthlessly murdered. Herod's palace was captured and the garrison put to the sword. Even the trained soldiers of Cestius could not withstand the fury of the rebels. That commander, learning from spies the true condition of things in Jerusalem, advanced with a large force from Scopus to support the allies of his government. The walls of the city rose before him and his army, and he directed an immediate assault. But his men were beaten at every point, and after several futile attempts he was obliged to withdraw. The insurgents were elated. The retreat of the eagles roused the courage and enthusiasm of Judah's lion. A pursuit was ordered. Through the gates

swarmed the heroic patriots, and, to the amazement of the civilized world, having overtaken the enemy, they engaged him in a pitched battle, and inflicted on the Romans a defeat at once decisive and humiliating.

This battle was fought in the autumn of 66 A. D. Revolt was victorious all along the line. The Jewish State had declared and, for the time being, had maintained its freedom and independence. It had reasserted its autonomy, and, notwithstanding domestic foes, had succeeded in beating back the power that challenged its rights of sovereignty. The civil war had begun. Conciliation was impossible. Only the sword could now settle the long-pending dispute between Rome and Jerusalem, and by its decision determine the spiritual, and even the social, future of mankind.

Nero placed the sword in the hand of Vespasian. That consummate soldier was in disgrace because he had not applauded at the right time when his royal master was performing, or had inconsiderately nodded in somnolent weariness when he was particularly brilliant in some artistic exhibition—or thought himself so. The command offered was consequently a surprise. It was not refused; and accompanied by his son, Titus, Vespasian, March, 67 A. D., put himself at the head of the legions and marched from Antioch on the doomed city.

But by this time the whole of Palestine was in revolt. At Jerusalem an autonomous government had been created. The chief magistrates were the younger Hanan and Joseph Ben Gorion. A council composed of representative nobles aided them. The outlying regions were arranged into military districts, Gamala and Galilee being assigned to Flavius Josephus, to whose "Jewish Wars" and "Autobiography" all subsequent historians have been indebted for most of the material used by them in accounts of this sanguinary period. Therefore, Vespasian found himself practically opposed by the entire country, and not merely by its capital.

Siege follows siege. To reach Jerusalem the invaders have to wade through the blood of slain and mutilated thousands. Gadara falls, and indiscriminate massacre follows. For forty-six days Josephus defends Jotapata at a loss of nearly a thousand men each day, and when at last the stronghold succumbs through betrayal, the flames devour what catapults and balistæ had failed to destroy. The awful list of the dead continues to increase. At Askelon 10,000 are killed, at Japha 27,000, at Joppa 8,400, at Taricheæ 6,000, at Giscala a similar number, while from Gamala only two women escape, and this leaves uncounted the multitudes of Jews tortured, scourged, and sent to mines or amphitheatres to expiate their heroism in a

lingering or horrible death. Victory become monotonous. Warfare changes its character. It is no longer the grim rivalry of hostile but noble powers. Its soldiers are butchers and its deeds are only paralleled in the shambles. Judea is converted by the Romans into a human abattoir, and everywhere the smell of blood and of putrefying bodies taints the air. And yet, this is only the beginning of horrors.

A pause occurred occasioned by the death of Nero (68 A. D.), an event that involved the empire itself in factional strife. Vindex, Galba, Vitellius, and Otho, like phantoms, appeared and faded away, and the air resounded with prætorian shouts of insolence and trembled with the moans of murdered emperors. During these agitations Vespasian suspended his operations against Jerusalem and withdrew to Alexandria, where he could observe the movements of hostile parties, and be prepared to assert his own pretensions to the throne. The propitious hour arrived. It sounded with the elevation of Aulus Vitellius, who had been intimate with Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero, and had shared their infamies. When he was proclaimed emperor by a wild, licentious, and brutal soldiery, it seemed that all hope of reform was at an end. He was known for his luxurious tastes, and his extreme extravagance, and for his lack of moral fiber. So weak and despicable was he that when enemies confronted him in arms he slunk abashed into some low hiding place, and as Tacitus says, "Had not others remembered he had been an emperor, he would have forgotten it himself." As he was driven down the *Germaniæ Scala*, sinking beneath violent blows and opprobrious epithets, and crying out reproachfully: "And yet I was once your emperor," Vespasian was invested with the purple. He differed radically in character from his easy and voluptuous predecessor. In manners he was simple, frugal, blunt. Tacitus condemns him for his parsimonious and grasping avarice, a charge not sustained by Suetonius. He has been described as superstitious. While harsh and obdurate, he seems to have had no heart for actual persecution, and is reported to have answered, when the remarks of an enemy were repeated to him: "I will not kill a dog that barks at me." His death was as unpretentious as his life. When nearing his end, he uttered ironically: "Methinks I am becoming a god," and then added somewhat grimly, "An emperor should die standing." Such a ruler would hardly be the one to give his enemies rest, or brook antagonism to his authority. Almost immediately after Vespasian had entered Rome (70 A. D.) and had received the homage of the Senate, he forwarded orders to his son Titus at once to invest and reduce Jerusalem.

The two years that had elapsed since the interruption of the war had witnessed many strange and terrible scenes in the wretched city. Its condition had steadily been growing more and more intolerable. The population was divided under the rival leadership of John of Giscala and of Simon Bar-Giora. Fights had been of frequent occurrence in the streets, and at one time 30,000 Idumeans were secretly introduced into the city for the purpose of massacring the inhabitants who were supposed to be hostile to the schemes of Giscala. Josephus says: "The Idumeans fell upon the people as a flock of profane animals and cut their throats." A carnival of anarchy prevailed. The administration of two years previous had been violently overturned, and most of its members executed or assassinated. Headship was gone altogether, or was furnished only by the Zealots, a headship intoxicated with blood, wild, frantic, and delirious. Everywhere outrages were perpetrated. The air was contaminated by the decaying bodies of the unburied dead, and harvests were ungathered and were rotting in the fields, and over the entire land hung an atmosphere of malaria and death. Moreover the metropolis was overcrowded. Multitudes had flocked thither for protection, and small armies had been gathered from outlying districts for partisan purposes. Pilgrims had also journeyed to Jerusalem from various parts of the world for the commemoration of the Passover. Josephus estimates the number of those who perished during the siege at 1,100,000; and from these figures an impression may be formed of the vast population that must have been filled with consternation at the approach of Titus and his legions.

The military force at the disposal of the emperor's son and general was, according to some writers 30,000, according to others 80,000. But whatever its size events proved that it was equal to the awful task assigned to it. The army was arranged in three divisions, the first resting on Scopus, north of the city; the second in the rear, and the third on the summit of the Mount of Olives. Lines of circumvallation were drawn around the city, which prevented provisions from entering and deserters from escaping. Many who sought to flee from the impending collapse of the Jewish State fell into the hands of the enemy and were scourged and crucified, or were sold into slavery. Meanwhile famine spread rapidly within the walls. Wholesome food speedily vanished, and the people, who had ever been scrupulous in their diet, were glad to feed on unclean things and even on human flesh. Mothers devoured the bodies of their babes, and famished wretches struggled for uncooked morsels which dogs would disdain to eat. The streets were soon

littered with the dead, and the breath of pestilence decimated the ranks of the defenders. Everywhere in the city were fierce despair, frantic courage, reckless furiousness, curses, blasphemy, and unreason. No one was able to think. Rival leaders, united by a common peril, inspired their soldiers to indescribable heroism, and however John of Giscala and Simon Bar-Giora lacked wisdom, they certainly were not cowards. In the darkness and chaotic convulsions of this cruel period, they flamed forth, incoherent, indeed, in counsel, but mighty and terrible in battle.

But their impetuous daring was in vain, and the delirium of their followers useless; and as a warning and presage of the inevitable disaster awaiting the entire community, on July 17, 70 A. D., for the first time in 500 years, the daily sacrifice ceased. There were no animals to offer and no priests to serve at the altar. Could the starving and war-harassed citizens have been able to reflect on the significance of what was occurring, they would have seen in this cessation of sacrifice the handwriting on the wall announcing the final and total abrogation of the Mosaic economy, with all its covenants, ceremonies, and exalted privileges. And as Cyrus was girded, unknown to himself, by God to execute the divine decree against Babylon, so Titus was the appointed instrument through whom should be brought to an end an order of things no longer useful, and which, like a floating wreck at sea, imperiled the safety of a nobler voyager.

Titus directed his operations against Jerusalem from the north. After destroying the timber and fences so as to have a clear space for manœuvring, an attack was made on a weak place in the outer wall near the tomb of John Hyrcanus. The desperate valor of the besieged made the Romans pay dearly for their success. After a prolonged struggle the wall was gained, but every foot of ground on the other side was contested. There were tortuous and narrow lanes in which the Jews fought to great advantage, but they were compelled at last to retreat before the superior discipline of the invaders. The second wall shared the fate of the first, and the hour had arrived for a general assault. It is generally believed that Titus gave orders that the Temple buildings were not to be injured. His precautions, however, were disregarded.

Early in August the army moved impetuously forward, and soon occupied the outer court of the Temple. On the tenth of that month the Jews made a sortie in the hope of regaining what they had lost. They were repulsed. As they retreated the slaughter was fearful, and in the excitement a Roman soldier tossed a firebrand into a building annexed to

the sacred house, and in a few moments the splendid structure was in flames. From the fire some of the treasure and several of the vessels of the sanctuary were saved, but the House of the Lord was gutted, blackened, and to all intents and purposes utterly destroyed. The fighting was not ended. The upper part of the city still held out, and there John and Simon maintained their post with splendid generalship and courage. They would give heed to no terms of capitulation that did not secure to them their freedom and the lives of their wives and children. September 7th, 70 A. D., witnessed the close of the protracted conflict. The assault was ultimately successful. The defenseless and ruined city was handed over to the legionaries. It was pastime to them to lacerate, scourge, torture, to abuse women and children, to mock and insult defeated men. They rioted in massacre and fire, and, like an army of incarnate devils loosed from hell, they revelled in savagery and regarded no punishment too severe to inflict on the people who had bravely defended their homes and national aspirations. Josephus informs us that the demolition of the city was so thorough that it was not easy to believe it had ever been inhabited. It was, indeed, depopulated and left desolate. Many of the citizens were crucified; many were sold into slavery; many were doomed to the Egyptian mines; and some, like the famous captains, John and Simon, were reserved to grace the triumph of the victor at Rome. But even in humiliation and shame hope was not altogether extinguished. As thunders reverberate after the lightning, and as echoes of the thunder follow thunder, so a few fanatical souls, clinging to the idea of a renewed Jewish government, awakened recollections of the heroic defense of Jerusalem by occasional outbreaks, culminating in the uprising of Bar-Cocheba (132 A. D.), who attempted to rebuild the Temple and restore the nation. His revolt resulted in the loss of over half a million of people, and proved a disastrous failure. It only added to the burdens and sufferings of the devoted patriots. The usual barbarities were perpetrated. Then Hadrian, to remove, if possible, the occasion of such outbreaks, demolished all that was left of Jerusalem, drove a plough through the soil where God's house had stood, and to render the obliteration complete founded a new city on the site of the old, bearing the heathenish name of *Ælia Capitolina*, thus implying that Jupiter had conquered Jehovah. Then, even the echoes of the thunder died into silence, and the great city, the "joy of the whole earth," had ceased to be a factor in the world's progress. Its history was ended, its vocation finished, and its glory departed.

The night of devastation recalls the tender

and reproachful words of Jesus; and little imagination is needed to picture the return of his Holy Shade to a locality he had loved so well, and, as he wanders up and down the silent and forsaken streets, to fancy that his sweet, impassioned voice murmurs the requiem as of old: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I gather thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."¹

Happy the civilization, the organization, the philosophy, the creed that knows when its work is done, and is willing gracefully to be embalmed with the Pharaohs in the Pyramids of the ages. Sometimes communities, institutions, and even men, war against destiny. They insist on seeming to live, when, in fact, like one of the striking characters in fiction, they have been "for a very long time dead." Despotic governments, both secular and ecclesiastical, never appear to realize when they have fallen into imbecility and contempt. Dogmas go on reaffirming themselves when they have ceased to be subjects of intelligent inquiry, and superstitious reenact themselves when they have lost all hold on conscience and belief. Potentates and hierarchies go through the farce of repeating pretentious formulas which are no longer credible under the sun, apparently oblivious—perhaps willingly so—to the immense distance that separates modernism from medievalism. They are warned by a benignant Providence against the mistakes they are committing. The new light struggles for entry through the old shutters; and the new spirit claims admittance, as the ambassador of progress, to the audience chamber of the decrepit past, seeking to enthrone itself in the earnest present. Knowledge clamors for recognition in the domains of Turkey, and liberty and the right of man are seeking a quiet home beneath the wintry skies of Russia. The arts and sciences are unwilling to be excluded from China; and everywhere now, as in bygone ages, opportunity offers itself to those who are willing to embrace its advantages. England has prospered and maintained her foremost rank among the nations of the world by the hospitality she has shown to advanced thought and advanced enterprise. While conservative in many things, she has evinced a remarkable degree of pliability in others, and a facile power of adaptation to new developments and conditions. America also welcomes the light, accommodates herself to change, and generously accepts the conclusions of the new era.

¹ Matthew xxiii, 37, 38.

These countries, therefore, are in no immediate danger of serious convulsions, or of calamitous upheavals. They are continually "revolutionizing themselves by reform," and are not under the necessity of trying "to reform themselves by revolution."

But it is very different with despotic governments, and with hard unyielding institutions. They are in constant peril of violent disruption. Their usefulness is past. Their mission is ended. Earth is wearied with them. They have outlasted their time. They are skeletons insisting on governing living flesh and blood. Providence graciously makes this plain to them. Eloquently it proclaims them cumberers of the ground. It explains what they ought to do, and how to do it. But it will not continue forever to plead. The crisis and the crash must come. The furies will be loosed in a little while, and all that restricts and hinders the growing hopes and aims of humanity will be mercilessly swept away as chaff before the cyclone.

Here we lay bare the secret of Jerusalem's disappearance from history. God had shown exceptional favor; and when the period arrived for the redemption of the world—meaning by the phrase not merely the redemption of the individual, but of society as well—he proposed to begin with her, delivering her from her dead formalism, her consuming vanity, her domestic and civic iniquities, and her religious pretenses and shams. She would not believe that her vocation was gone, and that a new and higher stage of spiritual progress had been reached. In her pride she refused to see the unfitness of herself and of the instruments at her command for the molding of the race. She would rather compress mankind to her narrowness than enlarge herself to its inevitable expansiveness. Christ came to her first, offered her the primacy of the coming age, but she would not. Leadership of the future required that she should break with the past. This she would not consent to do. She closed her eyes to the signs of the times, raged in her heart against her truest friend, and then in a paroxysm of cruel bigotry doomed Jesus to the cross.

But still God bore with her. He gave Jerusalem further opportunity—opportunity to deliberate, and to come into harmony with his gracious purposes. He dealt with her as in some degree excusable for rejecting the testimony of a prophet, who was lowly born, and who gathered around him no imposing array of force and wealth. But after the resurrection of Christ his measures became more decisive and severe. The Master himself had said: "If they [the Jews] believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one



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VESPASIAN.

rose from the dead"; and his solemn prediction was only too surely fulfilled. They would not be persuaded. Though before their eyes were wrought the marvels of Pentecost; though they witnessed the wonders accomplished through the name of the risen Christ; though they heard of the success attending the Gospel in other lands, they would not believe. In their midst was planted the first Christian community, and they were able to study its programme and observe its activities, and thus see in working order the ideal kingdom Christ had preached and which he had invited them to adopt. Jerusalem was incorrigible. She would not admit that she had been superseded in the world's religious training. Her ancient dignity she would not surrender, and she would exterminate all who dared to aspire to be her successors. Hence the tumults and persecutions recorded in the Book of Acts, and hence the martyrdom of Saint James, our Lord's brother (63 A. D.), as given in Josephus and Hegesippus. This apostle was one of the saintliest of men. He had been a Nazarite from his youth, and was honored and venerated for his strict, abstemious, and upright life. As his father, Joseph, was called "a just man," so he likewise earned the same high praise and was termed by friends and foes alike "the Just." According to Hegesippus, this was the apostle "who is wont to go alone into the sanctuary, and is found prostrate in prayer, so that his knees have grown hard and worn like a camel's, because he is ever kneeling and worshipping God, and asking forgiveness for the people." Tradition has it that he was even allowed, "like the high priest, to wear on his forehead the *petalon*, the plate of gold on which is inscribed Holiness to the Lord." His martyrdom occurred during the official service of Hanan, the younger, who was himself high priest, and the son of priestly Annas of Gospel fame, and who came to a miserable end in the calamities which engulfed Jerusalem. Milman has shown that this successor to his father evidently was directing a persecution against the Christians of Jerusalem, and that Saint James fell a victim to his exterminating policy.¹ Of the particulars concerning his death we have no exact information. The account given by Josephus is not very full, and that which is furnished by Hegesippus is not very reliable. Still, as the latter is picturesque and doubtless preserves to us the spirit of the scene, if not the exact circumstances of the tragedy, it may be quoted here, as it has been by nearly every historian who has written on this period. I do not give the entire section, but only this extract:

"When many, therefore, even of the rulers

were believing, there was an alarm amongst the Jews, and scribes, and Pharisees, saying: 'The whole people is in danger of falling into the expectation of Jesus as the Christ.' They came, therefore, to James and said, 'We beseech thee, restrain the people, for it has gone astray after Jesus, as though he were the Christ; we beseech thee to persuade all that come to the passover concerning Jesus, for to thee we all give heed, for we and the whole nation bear witness to thee that thou art just and receivest not the person of men. Do thou, therefore, persuade the multitude not to be deceived concerning Jesus, for the whole people and all men give heed to thee. Stand, therefore, on the pinnacle of the Temple, that thou mayest be visible from above, and that all thy words may be well heard by all the people, for on account of the passover all the tribes, with the Gentiles also, have come together.' The aforesaid scribes and Pharisees, therefore, placed James on the pinnacle of the Temple, and cried to him and said: 'O Just one, to whom we all ought to give heed, inasmuch as the people is gone astray after Jesus who is crucified, tell us what is the gate of Jesus?' And he answered with a loud voice, 'Why ask ye me concerning Jesus, the Son of Man? He sits in heaven on the right hand of the Mighty Power, and he is also about to come in the clouds of heaven.' And many being convinced and glorifying Jesus on the testimony of James, and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David'; then, again, the same scribes and Pharisees said amongst themselves, 'We have done ill in furnishing so great a testimony to Jesus, let us go and cast him down, that they may be struck with fear, and so not believe on him.' And they cried, saying, 'Oh! oh! the Just one, too, has gone astray.' And they fulfilled the prophecy written in Isaiah, 'Let us take away the Just one, for he is troublesome to us, therefore shall they eat the fruit of their deeds.' They went up then and threw down the Just one, and said, 'Let us stone James, the Just,' and they began to stone him. For he had not been killed by the fall, but turning round knelt and said, 'I beseech thee, Lord God, and Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' But whilst they were thus stoning him, one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the sons of Rechabim, who are mentioned by the prophet Jeremiah, cried, 'Stop, what do ye? The Just one prays for you!' and one of them, one of the fullers, took the club with which he used to press the clothes, and struck it on the head of the Just one. And so he bore witness, and they buried him on the place by the Temple, and the pillar still remains on the spot of the Temple. He has been a true witness both to Jews and Gentiles that Jesus is the Christ. And immediately"—

¹ "History of Christianity," Vol. I, p. 441.

that is, only a few years later — "Vespasian besieged them."¹

Significant words! They mark the climax of guilt and the end of forbearance. The venerable chronicler evidently sees a connection between the martyrdom of James and the success of the Roman arms. Jerusalem in destroying the Just one had finally adjudged itself unworthy of eternal life, and had disclosed its utter disqualification to serve God and humanity; and, therefore, as the past mission was ended, and the new one it could not discharge, while presumptuously determined to prevent others from assuming its glorious responsibilities, the city was abandoned to its enemies.

The bondage of Jerusalem meant the emancipation of Christianity. As the walls, palaces, and Temple of the former succumbed to the flame, the spiritual magnitude, and especially the universality, of the latter stood out in the light. As the material crumbled into ashes, the immaterial became more clear and radiant. Up to this time the shadow of Judaism had rested on the Church. The period covered by the Acts of the Apostles makes very plain that the followers of Christ had not entirely broken with Mosaism, and that some of them considered the new economy only as a school or sect of the new. Believers do not forswear their circumcision, and it becomes a question whether Gentile converts ought not to be circumcised as well as baptized. Saint James, though he was in favor of liberty for the Gentile converts, was himself a strict observer of Temple rites and services to the close of his life. But the true breadth and scope of Christianity was from the first apprehended and openly proclaimed by Saint Paul. Saint Peter was not as radical as his brother apostle on this point, while Saint James was more conservative than Saint Peter.

In the epistles we have frequent references to Judaizing teachers. They were intent on imposing a yoke on the brethren of other nationalities. Moreover, from the use of the synagogues in the earlier stages of Christian dissemination, and from the observance of vows, even by Saint Paul himself, I am led to the conclusion that up to the destruction of Jerusalem churches were not distinctively outside organizations, but were rather communities, with their own peculiar spiritual life, beliefs, and practices, within the pale of Judaism. The relation between them may, perhaps, be sufficiently illustrated by a brief reference to the Lollards, the Quietists, and the Wesleyan Holy Club. These bodies existed originally as groups or associations inside the ecclesiastical fellowship to which they respectively belonged. The Lollards at the first never contemplated

severance from the Church of Rome, nor the Holy Club from the Church of England. While I do not claim that the analogy is perfect, yet it affords a proximate idea of the position of primitive churches in relation to Judaism. They had not repudiated all connection with the old faith; they sought self-development rather within than without the Jewish fold, and were more or less conscious of restrictions and hindrances consequent on an influence from which they hardly knew how to deliver themselves. What would have been the issue had Jerusalem and the Temple been preserved can only be conjectured; but the result of their ruin was almost immediately apparent. The churches emerged from the shadow of legalism, and from the narrowing power of local circumstances and local traditions. As the fires of sacrifice were extinguished, as there were no longer holy places or holy houses, as the priesthood was annihilated by death, and as the chosen race was evidently cast off, at least for the time being, and its privileges annulled, the logic of history confirmed what our Savior had taught: "The hour cometh, and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."¹ Affiliation with the synagogue now necessarily ceased. The Pagan world began to perceive that Christianity was not a sect of an old cult, but a new religion altogether, while Christianity itself began to comprehend more fully the universality of its spirit, its ideas and mission. This was a tremendous gain. The Church as a whole gained in moral grandeur, and, disengaged from entangling alliances, was free to enter on her career of expansion and conquest.

It may be of interest to the reader to know what became of the Church planted in Jerusalem. Eusebius chronicles the marvel "of a certain oracle given to her leaders by revelation," whereby they were warned to escape, as Lot from Sodom, from the guilty and wretched city. How Christ's followers were able to effect their deliverance is one of the secrets of history. Unquestionably they fled across the Jordan to the little Perea town of Pella. An opportunity for flight may have occurred during the suspension of hostilities, when Vespasian withdrew to watch his opponents from Alexandria. But, whatever the occasion, the disciples abandoned the spot stained with the blood of their Lord and his faithful witnesses. In their quiet retreat they continued unmolested; and when Hadrian reared his *Ælia Capitolina* their successors were permitted to return, which would not have been allowed had they not renounced everything of a Jewish character.

¹ Eusebius, "Ecclesiastical History," Vol. II, p. 23.

¹ John iv. 23.

In 137 A. D. this returned Church in Capito-
lina elected as its chief pastor one Marcus, by
race and training an uncircumcised Gentile.
But creeds die hard. While Christianity as a
whole had emancipated itself from the tram-
mels of the synagogue, and the Jerusalem
Church had so enlarged and liberalized itself
as to be admitted to a community where no
Jew was tolerated, still here and there the
germs and bacteria of Judaism yet survived.
There had evidently been a division among
those who made up the company that mi-
grated to Pella. We have seen that some re-
turned to Hadrian's city, built on the site of
ancient Jerusalem, but a handful remained be-
hind. These dissidents were called "Ebion-
ites," a name probably suggestive of poverty
and not of a leader. They regarded Jesus as a
man only, magnified asceticism, and held, as
far as possible, to the Mosaic law. They were
intensely Jewish in their antipathies, in their
practices and expectations. Other centers of
activity were similarly infected. Whereunto
these living microbes of a dead faith may grow
it is not for the writer of these pages to predict.
That they contain the potencies and form of
evils that may befall the Christian system can
hardly be denied. Strange will it be if the
Church shall again restore the authority of
legalism, and shall come once more in bond-
age to ceremonialism and priestcraft. That it
may be so is manifestly probable, these germs
existing, and if subsequent history show these
forebodings to have been fulfilled, the student
of its thrilling pages need not be surprised.

At this point we part from the Jewish race.
Throughout this volume the career of the elect
people, the calling of Israel, the Captivity, the
deliverance, the mission, the failures, and the
triumphs of the chosen nation, have been the
most prominent of themes.

But now these children of Abraham sink into
obscurity. They are no longer foremost. The
scepter has passed from their hands. They are
still in the world, but when compared with
what they have been, henceforth they are as
though they were not. We shall not meet
them again in the course of this history. Their
way and ours lie in different directions. But
before we lose sight of them ought we not to
recognize in some degree what they have been
to the world, and what they have accomplished
for its enlightenment and progress? It is
hardly fair to overlook the grandeur of this
race and the greatness of its works. If the sun
did go down in blood, nevertheless it was a
sun, and at its meridian clothed hill and vale
with light. Let us turn from the sunset to
the shining, from the gloomy scene of disaster
and guilt to the brightness of holy achieve-
ments. What does mankind owe to the Jew—

to the Jew under God, but nevertheless to the
Jew?

To him the ages are indebted for a literature
unsurpassed in the loftiness of its ideals, the
purity of its ethics, and the depth and beauty
of its spirituality. If other collections of writ-
ings may fairly rank with it on the score of in-
tellectual brilliancy, still none can compare
with it in moral and religious power. It
stands by itself, unique, alone, supreme. To
the Jew belongs the honor of having given a
volume, which, out of all the triumphs of de-
vout genius, has been selected as the Bible of
humanity. The wisest men turn to its pages
for instruction, the weakest for strength, the
poorest for affluence, the saddest for comfort.
Its heroes have thrilled the heart of the suffer-
ing and oppressed with courageous resolve to
resist usurpation, and have reproduced them-
selves in Huguenot, Covenanter, and Puritan.
Its psalms and prayers have voiced the reli-
gious feelings and aspirations of uncounted
generations, and thus far the soul has found
no sublimer speech in which to articulate its
adoration and dependence. And its prom-
ises of a coming age of universal felicity, when
children shall play in safety and not work in
agony in the streets of the city, and when all
men shall know the Lord, and be like the
Lord, have gladdened, and cheered, and in-
spired the toiling masses patiently to endure
and hopefully to wait. Such in part is the rich
heritage the Jew has transmitted to posterity.

This, however, is not all. We learn from his
own literature, and from the concurrent testi-
mony of history, that to him may be traced
the rise and establishment of monotheism, the
union of morality with religion, the preserva-
tion and exaltation of the family, the origin of
kindly interest in the welfare of the slave and
the stranger, and the beginning of that move-
ment by which God came to be recognized as
the Creator of the State, and not, as in Pagan
creeds, the State regarded as the creator of
God. These conceptions embodied in doc-
trines and institutions, and wrought into prac-
tical forms in the struggle and development of
national life, have been of value incalculable to
the leading peoples of earth. They have led
to a very general and generous recognition of
human brotherhood, to a wide-spread and in-
telligent appreciation of the sanctity of the
home, to the growth of an immense number of
philanthropies, and to an ever-deepening con-
viction that righteousness is the grandest foun-
dation and the surest defense of the common-
wealth. If religious feeling, domestic purity
and felicity, neighborly kindness, national se-
curity, and sagacious government are of any
value to the world, then, till the end of time,
must mankind continue debtor to the Jew.

And though, "the beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places," and "the mighty are fallen," and though "on the mountains of Gilboa there be neither dew, nor rain, nor the offering of fields," still, "O Jerusalem, if we forget thee, well may our right hand forget its cunning," and if we remember not what thou hast been to all kindreds and tribes, well may "our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth"!

As we close the pages of a history that has filled the earth with its echoes, and render our tribute of gratitude to the poets and prophets,

its saints and its sages, let us likewise be thankful that the calamities which overwhelmed the famous city did not deprive us of her contributions to human progress, and that they turned out in the end to be blessings to the world at large. For the first Jerusalem which, with all its glory yet "gendered to bondage," had to be effaced and obliterated that the second Jerusalem, the Church of Christ, "which is from above, and is free and the mother of us all," might be enlarged and become as well the true Temple, both of God and humanity.

CHAPTER III.

THE APOSTLE OF LOVE.

"**B**EHOLD thy mother!" Such were the last words addressed by the dying Christ to his cousin and disciple, John. He had just contemplated with filial tenderness the maternal grief of Mary, and in this way drew attention to her defenseless position, and to her need of a protector. Before this, evidently, Joseph, her husband, had been gathered to his fathers. She was distressed and lonely. Some bond of union may have been broken between her and her other children. The nature of her son James the Just, may have been too stern and cold to have responded adequately to her sorrows. Alas! that it should be so, that parents and their offspring should sometimes be farther apart in aims, tastes, and sympathies than those of different lineage and estate. But so it is. Often the most enduring friendships are found outside the family circle.

What causes operated to produce dissensions or alienations in the domestic relations of Mary's household cannot now be ascertained, but if the tradition is to be credited which dates the conversion of James to the period of the Resurrection, the reason for apparent separation in feeling can easily be surmised. Up to the occurrence of that stupendous miracle, with all of his appreciation of his brother's blamelessness, he was not prepared to acknowledge him as the Messiah. He would naturally conclude that his mother's subscription to the assumptions of Jesus grew out of her partiality for her son. But, with all of a man's pride, he doubtless judged himself incapable of self-deception; and from this difference of view there might readily follow coolness and distrust. All this, however, is pure conjecture. We know nothing of the real facts, we only suspect. One thing, and one thing only, is absolutely certain. It is that, for some good and sufficient reason, our Lord regarded John as the person best qualified and entitled to have charge of his widowed mother. This is cer-

tainly a noble tribute to the eminent worth of the "beloved disciple." The sacredness and dignity of the trust gives some idea of the Master's estimate of the man.

The narrative to which we have referred¹ states that John took her to his home. His home was in Jerusalem, and there he watched over her, and there she quietly fell asleep in her son, Jesus, as Jesus, her son, in his infancy had often fallen asleep in her arms. Of her last days we have no reliable information. Providence has veiled in obscurity the closing scenes of her life, and merely the legend has descended to us that she died quietly and was buried near to Gethsemane. But, though we know so little of Mary's declining years, we are not left in doubt regarding the career of her protector, in whom we cannot fail to feel a high degree of interest on account of the exceptional confidence our Lord reposed in him.

He who was the youngest of the apostles, and who was destined to be the oldest and the last, was the son of Zebedee and Salome. His mother was sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and she was evidently devoted to her nephew, as after his death she was one who brought precious spices to the sepulcher. Zebedee, while belonging to the fisherman class from which our Lord chose several of his immediate followers, unlike others engaged in his hazardous calling, was not in impoverished circumstances. He owned his boats and nets, employed helpers, and his son was possessed of property in Jerusalem. It has been suggested that the residence of John in the capital was due to the business carried on by the family. In the city was the chief market for the goods the toilers of the sea had to sell, and probably John acted as the agent. This is not at all unlikely, and being assumed, it explains, in part

¹ John xix, 25-27.

at least, his prompt attention to the preaching of the Baptist. What more certain than that he would be among the first to learn of the excitement and enthusiasm caused by the appearance and doctrine of the Harbinger? The ministry of such a man would inevitably be the talk of the streets, and would appeal intensely to the religious portion of the community. Among the crowds that thronged the neighborhood of the Jordan it is, therefore, not surprising if the youthful John mingled and listened with teachable spirit to the thrilling message. Nor is the common view unworthy of credence that he became one of the earliest disciples who received baptism at the hands of the new Elijah. At least, we find him on the banks of the Jordan when Jesus came to "fulfill all righteousness." He heard the great prophet hail his cousin as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Hence, it is only reasonable to suppose that he had already taken sides with those who professed to believe that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand." Not until later, however, was he called to the apostolic function. Doubtless he had been meditating on what he had seen and heard in the Jordanic region, and had pondered deeply every incident in the life of Jesus which he could recall, and had arrived at the conclusion that he must, indeed, be the promised Messiah. He was, therefore, prepared to answer intelligently the summons to leave fishing boat, and net, and all earthly interests that he might follow the Blessed One. There was no hesitancy in his manner when the call came to him, and his whole career was marked by a serene confidence in his cousin, interrupted only for a moment on that terrible night when the powers of darkness seemed to triumph. But though he was prompt to accept a scholarship in the apostolic college, and though from the first he was one of the more favored circle, he was not as prominently active as Peter and James were during the Savior's earthly ministry. It may have been the result of his youth, or the outcome of a sensitive and shrinking nature; but, whatever the explanation, he was evidently retiring, and not until after the martyrdom of Saint Paul and Saint James did he stand out in bold relief, the chief figure and the great leader of the Christian Church.

Before the exodus of the disciples from Jerusalem to Pella, John had evidently departed from the country of his fathers. He could hardly have failed to discern the approaching calamities that were to obliterate Judaism; and, being the last of the apostles, he may have desired to give what remained to him of life where his authority and his influence would accomplish the most for the future of Christian-

ity. Paul was dead; James, the brother of John, had been murdered by Herod; James, his cousin, had been stoned to death or brutally mangled; Peter, likewise his old associate, was no more; a new generation had appeared, and controversial questions had arisen that demanded attention; and, with little surviving to attach him to his old home, the apostle, now past the meridian of life, withdrew to a community where the larger issues of the hour, on the decision of which depended in no small degree the religious development of coming years, might be met and intelligently settled. He removed to Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia, and his intimacy with that city continued to the close of his career.

But little now remains of all the pride and glory of that ancient mistress of the East, born, according to Justin, of the Amazons. A few ruins, near a Turkish village called Ajasaluck, encircled by imposing hills covered with luxuriant vegetation, and leading to a malaria-breeding marsh that was once a famous port for shipping, alone mark the spot where in John's time stood a magnificent emporium of trade, and a great center of human activity and ambition. Likewise has disappeared what was formerly the chief feature of the city—the Temple of Diana. This immense structure had taken over two centuries to rear, and marble, precious woods, and enormous masses of gold had been generously used in its elaborate ornamentation. Its bas reliefs were executed by Scopas, and its altar by Praxiteles. The worship of Diana, or Artemis (now spelt Anaitis), was introduced into the peninsula of Asia Minor by Cyrus. The goddess was the Asiatic representative of fruitfulness, and was regarded as the protectress of the municipality that honored her. It was claimed that her image had fallen from heaven. She was crowned with a mural coronet to represent her defense of cities; her body was covered with a breastplate on which were the signs of the zodiac, denoting her care of the seasons; over her girdle appeared a multitude of breasts, symbolizing her as the source of nourishment; and the other portions of her form were decorated with skins of various animals, to show that she watched over the interests of all creatures. The adoration wherewith she was honored was a degrading mixture of heathen rites and social dissolutions. Drawn together by the commercial importance of Ephesus, even more than by its religious cult, Greeks and Asiatics, with no inconsiderable colony of Jews, had settled there and imparted to the community a cosmopolitan and bizarre-like character. Every shade of opinion and all kinds of subtle speculations and somber superstitions were represented by the strange, motley population. The morality

of the people was extremely low, one of their own choice philosophers, Heraclitus by name, teaching that it was allowable for truth to employ falsehood in the interest of its own vindication. Some idea of the turbulent temper of the inhabitants is furnished by Paul's ministry to Ephesus, and the tumult provoked by the inroads of the Gospel. The letter addressed to the Ephesian Christians discloses to view some of the vices which imperiled the purity and consistency of those who had avowed themselves to be the Lord's. And John's messages to the Seven Churches of Asia throws considerable light on the actual state of Christianity in the important district of which Ephesus may be regarded as the influential center. Smyrna held fast to the doctrine of the cross, and believers there were divinely prospered. Pergamos, capital of a small province, was in the main faithful to the truth, but was troubled by some members who had gone over to the Nicolaitans, an ancient Antinomian sect. But, though disturbed by heresy, the Church had been honored by one faithful martyr, Antipas, who probably had fallen a witness to Nero's sanguinary madness. Thyatira had been led away from its steadfastness by the errors of some female, who is described as Jezebel, who claimed to be a prophetess and had encouraged lewdness and idolatry. Sardis, the chief city of the ancient kingdom of Lydia, while preserving the outward forms of Christianity, was already gone over to unreality and sham, and was possessed only of a few names uncorrupted by the general defection. Philadelphia was in a much better condition, only she was not free from the Judaizing perverters; while poor Laodicea had yielded to the enervating influences of worldliness, and was neither cold nor hot. From the condition of these churches round about Ephesus we may form a proximately fair conception of the peculiarities, good and bad, of Christianity as John found it in that city when he first began to make it his abode.

Oriental thought, as well as oriental habits and Alexandrian speculations, had not only domesticated themselves in Ephesus, but had tainted the opinions and conduct of believers. "The ravening wolves," foreseen by Saint Paul, had entered into the sheepfold. Misguided, not to say wicked, men had prostituted the words of the Gospel, and had hidden heresy by clothing it with a Christian nomenclature—a trick not disdained by some modern teachers, who employ orthodox terminology when they are inculcating errors long since condemned. One name stands out conspicuously in John's time as representative of this pernicious tendency. It is that of Cerinthus. This man was a Jewish Christian, and, if not a Gnostic himself, was one of the first to disseminate

views that contained more, even, than the germ of Gnosticism. He believed in making a distinction between God and the Demiurgus, the latter being in his judgment the actual creator of all things. His sympathies were likewise with that Docetism which proclaimed a phantasmagorical gospel, teaching that Jesus was a mere man, on whom the "Christ" descended when he was baptized, and departed from him when he was nailed to the cross. This unwarranted conception may be regarded as the first step in the historical development of the mythical theory of evangelistic stories, which attained its final form in the work of Strauss, and which has been the source of no small amount of perplexity and alarm to the friends of truth. John evidently perceived the bearing of such speculations, and resolutely antagonized them. Tradition declares that he felt so keenly on the subject that he hastened away from the door of a public bath he was about to enter when he heard that Cerinthus was within, exclaiming: "Let us fly, that the thermæ fall not on our heads, since the enemy of truth is therein."

But it is not necessary to depict the apostle in these colors of superstition that his hostility to current heresies may be accentuated. The best evidence of his attitude toward the errors and errorists of his age is furnished by the Fourth Gospel, by the epistles which bear his name, and by the mystical Apocalypse, from which sources we may likewise gather an idea of the motives that governed him, of the mission he sought to fulfill, and of the method he employed. In the famous Muratorian fragment we have an account of the origin of the first of these documents. The elders and bishops are said to have approached Saint John, and urged him to present his testimony in writing. Their argument may have been substantially as set forth by Robert Browning in the words:

"There is left on earth
No one alive who knew (consider this),—
Saw with his eyes and handled with his hands
That which was from the first, the Word of Life;
How will it be when none more saith, 'I saw'?"

But, whatever the line of persuasion, the apostle consented. He and his companions fasted, and afterward when saturated with inspired truth he penned the sublime preface: "In the beginning was the Word." His other writings were called forth by various circumstances, all of them designed to counteract corruption in doctrine and deed, the Apocalypse being possibly the result of personal contact with the horrors of the Neronian persecution, and put into shape when he was made a companion in tribulation for the Word of God "in the isle which is called Patmos."

The date of this exile has been the subject of

heated controversy. Epiphanius places it in the time of Claudius, while Theophylact, and several modern writers of eminence, assign it to the reign of Nero. But Irenæus, Jerome, Sulpicius Severus, Orosius, and conservative critics of our own day, like Dean Alford, and historians like Professor Ramsay, believe that the banishment occurred in the days of Domitian, who ascended the throne 81 A. D. During the wise administration of Vespasian, and afterward of his son, Titus, the churches had comparative rest from oppressive surveillance; but when Domitian grasped the reins of power persecution broke forth again. He was the first of the emperors to sentence Christians to exile; and if we are to interpret John's own account of his being in Patmos as it seems to read, it strengthens the inference that it was under his sway that the apostle was condemned to the solitude of the island in the Ægean Sea. After comparing notes with leading scholars, and weighing all the available evidence for and against, I can no more believe that John wrote the Apocalypse in the reign of Nero than I can credit the suggestion of some critics that it was penned by an Ephesian Presbyter named John, who, from all I can gather, is a fictitious personage invented for a purpose. No; it was prepared subsequent to the accession of the brutal and craven-spirited Domitian, whose career was rendered peculiarly infamous by the dominancy of his wife, Domitia, who has been described as his evil genius personified. The spot to which Saint John was banished, and where this sacred book was written, is known as one of the Sporades, and is a rugged mass of rock some eighteen miles in circumference, with savage promontories, and totally inadequate to support a large population. It served only as a stopping place for vessels, and is rarely alluded to in ancient literature. Pliny and Strabo refer to it; but it was altogether too sterile and too uninteresting to attract serious attention. Its obscurity suddenly ended when the wonderful visions of Saint John came to be read by the churches. Then the desolate retreat in that part of the Ægean which is called the Icarian Sea was converted into another Sinai, another Hermon, and another Mount of Olives as it shall be when the feet of the returning Lord shall stand there, and since then, and down through all the succeeding centuries, when meditating on the achievements of Christ's followers, devout souls have loved to recall

"The precepts sage they wrote to many a land,
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by
heaven's command."

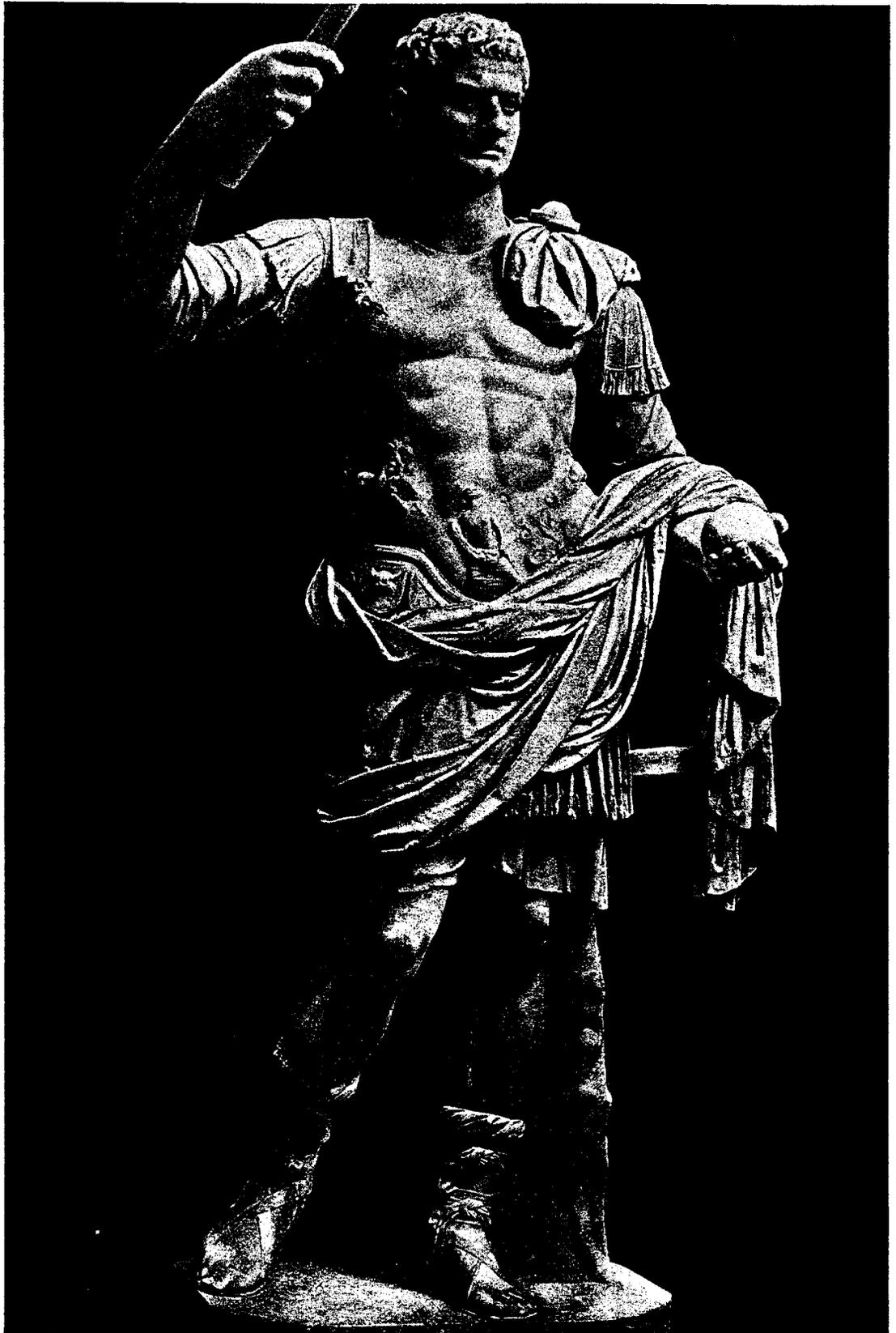
The sketch we have given of the salient features of John's career, and the suggestion we

have ventured to make regarding his relation to the future of Christianity, prepare us for the more important study of his character and mission. These two are more closely allied than is commonly realized. Men generally *do* simply what they *are*. And when "what they are" can be determined, with almost scientific accuracy it can be decided "what they will do," not in details, but in the main course of their action. God's servants are chosen to special service, and the nature of the service can in some measure be understood from the endowments and the qualifications of the servants. Therefore, intimacy with the last of the apostles will prove a useful, if not a necessary, preliminary to an adequate conception of his particular ministry: Perhaps in no better way can this intimacy be commenced than by a passage from the writings of the eloquent Chrysostom, descriptive of the great evangelist:

"The Son of Thunder, the loved of Christ, the pillar of the churches, who leaned on Jesus' bosom, makes his entrance. He plays no drama, he covers his head with no mask. Yet he wears array of inimitable beauty. For he comes having his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and his loins girt, not with fleece dyed in purple, or bedropped with gold, but woven through and through with, and composed of, the truth itself. He will now appear before us, not dramatically, for with him there is no theatrical effect or fiction, but with his head bared he tells the bare truth. All these things he will speak with absolute accuracy, being the friend of the King himself; aye, having the King speaking within him, and hearing all things from him which he heareth from the Father; as he saith, 'You have I called friends, for all things that I have heard from my Father, I have made known unto you.' Wherefore, as if we all at once saw one stooping down from yonder heaven, and promising to tell us truly of things there, we should all flock to listen to him, so let us now dispose ourselves. For it is from up there that this man speaks down to us. And the fisherman is not carried away by the whirling current of his own exuberant verbosity; but all that he utters is with the steadfast accuracy of truth, and as if he stood upon a rock he budges not. All time is his witness. Seest thou the boldness, and the great authority of his words! How he utters nothing by way of doubtful conjecture, but all demonstratively, as if passing sentence! Very lofty is this apostle, and full of dogmas, and he lingers over them more than over other things."¹

In this picture there is no trace of effeminacy and weakness such as Raphael has imparted to

¹ Chrysostom, in "Johann.," Homily III, Tom. VIII.



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DOMITIAN.

the face of the apostle. It is the portrait of a man eminently sincere, and scrupulously honest. He was no sentimentalist, no vapid dreamer, to whom truth and error were of equal value, and to whom liberalism was the only grace worth cultivating. Evidently he was too genuine himself to be charmed by the ideals of perfection that have been eulogized by shallow souls, in which amiable weakness is identified with love and superabundant emotionalism with saintliness. John was made of nobler stuff; and from various lights thrown on his character in the Scriptures we find in him a tenderness not incompatible with sternness, and a sympathy not inconsistent with uncompromising devotion to justice. Undoubtedly he was impressible and sensitive, endued with something of the poet's genius; but endued as well with something like the poet's irascibility and intolerance.

A steady intellectual and spiritual growth is observable in this man from the beginning to the end of his career. When chosen by Christ to the apostolate he was unlettered and untrained. But, though not cultured, he was eminently susceptible to culture. His nature was plastic and receptive, and yet of a firm and sinewy texture, like some species of wood, pliable to the knife of the carver, and not splintering at each stroke after the manner of the highly perfumed, but porous, sandalwood. The Lord did not call inferior minds to the responsibilities of leadership in his kingdom. While his immediate followers were not educated, they were capable of being educated, and were not of those unfortunates who are "ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth." In the Master's company John made remarkable progress. Every now and then he betrayed his ignorance of the new spirit that had come into the world, revealed his own narrowness of horizon, was guilty of forwardness and intemperateness, and yet in all of his mistakes disclosed the enthusiasm of the scholar anxious to comprehend the divine science he was being taught. When ambition stirred him, and the Savior rebuked the apostles for their unseemly strife as to who amongst them should be greatest, he saw the sweet significance of the lesson imparted, of which the little child served as text and theme.¹ On another occasion he came to Jesus saying: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us."² Undoubtedly we have here zeal for the dignity of his Lord, mixed probably with some degree of sectarian exclusiveness. His speech recalls the bigotry, not confined, unhappily, to any one school of faith, which challenges the right of men and women

to do good unless duly authorized in a prescribed way and by certain officials. This spirit was condemned by the great Teacher even as he reproached John and his brother James for their desire to bring down consuming fire on the peasants of En Gannim for their churlish inhospitality.¹ They pleaded the example of Elijah for what they proposed, and it has been quaintly said that it was not surprising for these "Sons of Thunder" to try to "flash lightning." But not in this way was the new empire to extend its boundaries. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save." Not by violence, not by coercion, not even by terror are the children of sin to be won from darkness and despair. Jesus is slowly revealing the only true method to his servants in these events before he names it, is working out the definition of a word before he communicates it. Nor does the explanation approach completeness until he answers Salome, the mother of James and John, who desires for her sons that they be exalted respectively to the right and left of his kingly throne. Again, the solemn "Ye know not." How little we realize our limitations. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" Impetuously the brothers answer: "We are able."² By and by they came to understand more fully that Jesus was here referring to his sufferings, and ultimately they both realized that only by voluntary self-surrender and self-sacrifice is it possible to save humanity.

To this new spirit in history, the spirit "that suffers long and is kind," that "endureth all things and hopeth all things," the Christ and his followers gave the name "love." The term was not new, but the fullness of meaning was. What it signifies in the Christian economy had to be acted out before it could be defined. And as Saint John saw and shared in the practical unfolding of what it comprehends, he came to be conformed to its image. He assimilated its life, breathed its breath, and his entire character took on its majesty and grace. His writings glow with the light of love, not with the idle sentimentality that encourages evil by condoning it, but with that noble devotion described in one of his epistles: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."³ So completely was he subjugated by what he believed to be the very essence of the Almighty, that he found therein his own special calling, and the scope of his calling as the last of the apostles.

¹ Luke ix, 46-48.

² Mark ix, 33-40.

¹ Luke ix, 54-56.

² Matthew xx, 22.

³ I. John iii, 16.

The great leaders of the primitive Church, including Saint Paul, while having much in common, were not monotonous counterparts of each other. Their personalities were not alike, and they did not accentuate the same phase or aspect of the Christian life. It is not fair to say that they antagonized; they rather supplemented and completed one another. They all possessed in some degree what each possessed, but no one in the same degree. James was eminently authoritative; Peter, aggressive; Paul, argumentative; while John was always affectionate. Tradition influenced James, impulse governed Peter, logic impelled Paul; but John was dominated by love. Duty seemed always to be uppermost in the mind of James; faith appeared to be foremost in the thought of Paul; zeal evidently with Saint Peter was an ideal; but with John love was everything. It is not to be inferred that this grace of love was indifferent to the other apostles, for they all rendered homage to its beauty, and nowhere in literature is there a more glowing tribute to its worth than is found in Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. But in their writings, on the whole, other themes occupy a much larger place than this. With Saint John, however, it was different. He regarded love as supremely authoritative. To him it was the final argument, and the mightiest impulse to service. It was to him only another word for duty, even for zeal and faith. Love to him was the fulfillment of the law, the motive to enthusiastic endeavor, and the very spring of faith. All of his theology was condensed to the shorelessness and fathomlessness of this tiny word, and was articulated in the sublime summary:

"Beloved, let us love another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us and his love is perfected in us."¹

"He that shuts love out in turn shall be
Shut out from love, and on his threshold lie
Howling in utter darkness. Not for this
Was common clay made from the common earth,
Molded by God, and tempered with the tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man."²

In view, therefore, of Saint John's character and his teachings we are warranted in concluding that to him was reserved the sacred task of disclosing the place of love in the Christian

system. To him was given the privilege of showing the place of love in theology, in ethics, and in all the aims and aspirations of the Church. Not only did he teach that it comprehends the true doctrine of God, but he also attributed to it the origin of the atonement; and represented it as the very essence of the soul's regenerated life, and as the organizing principle of the Christian society. Others had, of course, approached this subject before him. Various and beautiful are the intimations and declarations touching love in the Bible, and particularly in apostolic literature. But it seems to have been left for the inspired genius of Saint John to combine all previous estimates of love, to supplement them with even a clear discernment of its nature and value, and to exalt it to its true throne in the economy of the universe and redemption.

All this appears very distinctly in his Gospel and other writings; not, however, merely in their more stately conceptions, but in their gentle and tender pictures of human joys and trials. It is our apostle who describes the wedding in Cana of Galilee, who reveals Jesus in familiar converse with the Samaritan woman, who pictures him in the domestic circle of Martha and Mary, sympathizing with them in sorrow, and who, if the text of the story may be credited, portrays him compassionately dealing with the outcast taken in her sin. There is just a touch of love in every scene that he paints, and he makes the impression on all who thoughtfully follow his narrative that he brings religion into intimate relation to the commonplace experiences of mankind. From his treatment of the theme we gain a wonderfully high idea of the grandeur of religion, and, beholding it in contact with the daily affairs of men and women, we are compelled to form even a loftier idea of humanity itself. No one will doubt that the age in which Saint John toiled and taught needed this very lesson. But it was not then fully comprehended, neither was it duly appreciated. The theology of love was centuries in advance of the times of the Cæsars. Weary, laborious, troublous years had to pass before the Church should be educated up to its level. She is not quite up to it yet. The Fourth Gospel anticipated these later days, and foreshadowed the blessed period, apparently soon about to dawn, when the religion of love should transform society, sanctify its ordinary joys and sweeten its every duty. It was the latest evangel that imparted to Christianity this unique and precious distinction—"the religion of love"—the full significance of which we are only now beginning to grasp. The nineteenth century is just waking up to understand the first. It has made a discovery. The Christianity long hidden in far-away seas

¹ I. John iv, 7-12.

² Alfred Tennyson.

of speculation, and veiled in mists of ancient tradition, has once more been brought to light. A grander work has been accomplished of late than was wrought by Columbus 400 years ago. He disclosed a continent to the wondering eyes of his contemporaries, but this generation has rediscovered a religion whose spirit is necessary to the peace and joy of every continent beneath the watchful stars. Hence, all around us are voices sounding sweet with the praises of love.

Now, we hear Monsell saying: "Love is of God; it is a divine gift; do not seek to crush it; seek to keep it steadfast; and seek to help others by love, and letting their love of you draw them upward and closer to God, the Fount of all love."

So likewise the words of Kingsley ring in our soul: "How Christ's death takes away thy sins thou wilt never know on earth—perhaps not in heaven. But why he died thou canst see at the first glance. He died because he was Love, Love itself, Love boundless, unchangeable; Love which inhabits eternity, and, therefore, could not be burdened or foiled by any sin or rebellion of man, but must love man still."

On this same theme F. W. Robertson also delights to dwell, at one time exclaiming: "Love is universal. It is interested in all that is human, not merely in the concerns of its own family, nation, sect, or circle of association. Humanity is the sphere of its operation." Christina Rossetti finds in it a plea for acceptance at a throne of grace:

"O thou who seest what I cannot see,
Thou who didst love us all so long ago,
O thou who knowest what I must not know,
Remember all my hope, remember me."

Henry Ward Beecher perceives in this hallowed grace a fullness impossible of complete realization in time: "Love in this world is like a seed taken from the tropics and planted where the winter comes too soon; and it cannot spread itself in flower clusters and wide-twining vines, so that the whole air is full of the perfume thereof. But there is to be another summer for it yet. Care for the root now, and God will care for the top by and by." And in harmony with this expectation Wordsworth sings:

"Life is energy of love,
Divine or human; exercised in pain,
In strife, in tribulation; and ordained,
If so approved and sanctified, to pass
Through shades and silent rest to endless joy."

Thus on every side is love magnified, and signs are multiplying, not only in word, but in deed as well, that the Synoptic period of Christianity is fast passing away, and the Johannean era, which thresholds the millennium, is hastening apace to fill the earth with its sacred and

immortal triumphs. And in this progress we read the proof that the last of the apostles was indeed consecrated by the Master to the vocation we have attributed to him in this chapter; and concerning which Frederick Maurice wrote convincingly in these terms: "Christ chose the apostles from no partial affection, but as witnesses of his truth and love to all mankind, and the one who was nearest to him and received most of his love into his heart, was the one whom he called to show forth most fully the love with which he loved the universe in giving himself for it!"

Tradition is rich with memorials of Saint John's closing years on earth. He lived to an advanced age, and passed to his reward as the first century was being supplanted by the second. From Patmos he returned to the Ionian capital, where most of his literary work was performed, and among tender and watchful friends quietly and gently, as became the apostle of love, he "fell asleep." His tomb at Ephesus long remained a sacred spot to the pious pilgrims, who spread reports of marvels wrought by the dust it treasured, forgetting, perhaps, the far more striking and authentic wonders accomplished by his living word.

The stories related of his declining years are all more or less suggestive of his character and mission. In perfect harmony with what he was and what he taught is the scene between him and the bishop regarding the young man who had departed from Christian fellowship to join a company of brigands. It seems that the apostle had specially commended him to the pastor's care, and returning to inquire for the youth, and hearing of his lapse from rectitude, he addressed the negligent shepherd in this manner: "Come, bishop, return me the deposit committed to thee by myself and Christ in the presence of the Church over which thou presidest. I demand the young man, the soul of a brother." When he was informed of the boy's dangerous and iniquitous course, he followed him to the mountains, penetrated in person the robber's camp, and brought back the wandering disciple. It is said that when he found him his plea was resistless, for he thus remonstrated: "Why dost thou fly, my son, from thine unarmed father? Have compassion on me; fear not. There is still hope for thee. I will pray to Christ for thee. Should it be necessary, I will suffer death for thee, as Christ did for us. I will give my life for thine." No wonder the boy was moved to contrition by this impassioned eloquence of love.

Less heroic, but none the less tender and characteristic, is the legend that tells how, when unable to preach, and when he could scarcely hold forth his arms, he would repeat to all who gathered round him: "Little chil-

dren, love one another." When one of the disciples at length asked: "Master, why dost thou always say the same things?" he answered: "Because it is a divine command; and if it be obeyed, it is enough;" or as another version gives it, "Because God is love."

Some persons in the early Church, at a time when asceticism was looked on as almost identical with sanctity, circulated stories of Saint John's mortifications and fastings which were hardly in keeping with some of his teachings. But, on the other side, we have an anecdote of an interview with a huntsman, which brings out the genial temper of God's aged servant. The hunter desired to see this venerable apostle and to converse with him; but to his surprise and horror he found him amusing himself with a tame bird. Observing the expression of his visitor's face, the old man inquired: "What is that thing which thou carriest in thy hand?" "A bow," replied the sportsman. "Why, then, is it unstrung?" "Because," answered the youth, "were I to keep it always strung it would lose its elasticity and become useless." "Even so, be not affronted at this my brief relaxation, which prevents my spirit from waxing faint." Love understands the limitations of our strength, and is the first to prescribe such recreations as can bring repose and rejuvenescence. The mind little given to religious thought, and occupied almost entirely with worldly vanities, may affect to be shocked at the occasional and innocent amusements of Christians; but love — love the most ardent and divine — perceives the weakness of the flesh, and rejoices in the harmless diversions by which it is met and overcome.

A curious statement was made by Polycrates, who was bishop of Ephesus near the close of the second century, regarding the assumption of Saint John of the *petalon*, or plate borne by the Jewish high priest on his forehead. The same thing, however, is affirmed by Epiphanius of Saint James the Just. It is hardly credible that both of these noble men adorned themselves in this curious manner, and there is absolutely nothing in the character of Saint John to warrant the supposition that he would betray such a weakness for Judaism in a Gentile

community. The legend must be discarded. It bears on its face the marks of an endeavor to obscure the simplicity of Christianity, which was only too successful at a later stage of its history. But while the story is untrustworthy, it at least shows the impression made by Saint John on his times. The inscription on the priestly mitre, "Holiness unto the Lord," his contemporaries realized was truly symbolic of his character and consecration. They may even have associated this inscription with him because of his lofty intelligence, worn as it had been by the priest on his brow to denote that God was to be honored with the head as well as with the heart, and as a sign that true holiness proceeds from enlightenment, and not from excited feeling. Thus understood, the story is only an additional tribute to love. For love is the key to all that the apostle was, and to all that he did. Love quickened and enlarged his mind, purified his nature, and conformed him to the image of Christ, and wrote, in fact, on his entire personality, if not in golden letters on his forehead, "Holiness unto the Lord."

And thus from his life we learn the transforming power of this divine grace. It can yet "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask to think." In it centers the hope of the world. It is the great painter, rendering each inch of common canvas gorgeous in imagery worth the ransom of a king. It is the great sculptor, breathing on stone and converting it into living form of beauty. It is the real miracle-worker, by whose potency water becomes wine, stones become bread, and things most worthless are transmuted into gold, and objects most hideous into shapes of imperishable loveliness.

"Love can make us like Saint Peter,
Love can make us like Saint Paul,
Love can make us like the blessed
Bosom Friend of all,
Great Saint John, though we are small.
Love which clings, and trusts, and worships,
Love which rises from a fall,
Love which teaches glad obedience,
Labors most of all,
Love makes great the great and small."¹

¹ Christina Rossetti.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADVANCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

SULPICIUS SEVERUS, a fourth century writer, quoting from the "Histories" by Tacitus—books now unhappily lost—gives an account of a council of war held during the siege of Jerusalem. In the debate it was urged that the Temple should be destroyed; for by that act the religion of the Jews and Christians would be effectually extirpated. From this report it is evident that officials of the empire did not discriminate between the faith of Moses and that of Christ. Neumann thinks that this confusion continued to the reign of Domitian, 81 A. D. Up to that time he holds that the Roman government considered the Christians to be merely a sect of the Jews. Hence, it compelled them to pay the poll-tax levied upon the Hebrew people; and he contends that the collection of the tax discovered to the authorities, not only their numbers, but the fact that they were entirely independent of other cults, and were organized into associations of their own, called churches.

Mommsen credits the story regarding the council of war, and insists that "the Jewish insurrection had too clearly brought to light the dangers involved in this formation of a national religious union on the one hand rigidly concentrated, on the other spreading over the whole East, and having ramifications even in the West."¹ According to this great authority, Titus and his generals looked on Christianity as an extension of Judaism, as only a missionary phase of the old system, which, if permitted to spread further and to organize itself into leagues, might result in general political disturbances similar to the revolt they were seeking to suppress at Jerusalem. It was not, then, unnatural for these soldiers to suppose that if the seat and source of this treasonable and anarchical creed were obliterated, all of its dependents and offshoots would in a little while become extinct. On this theory some among them advocated the demolition of the Temple; and one of this way of thinking may have been back of the hand that cast the blazing brand into the sacred house. The apprehension entertained by these Romans substantiates at least this much, that the spiritual movement inseparably allied with the name of Christ, whatever its specific character, had already made itself felt in various localities, and was advancing throughout the empire with rapid strides.

¹ Ramsay, "Church in the Roman Empire," chap. xii.

And its purpose to continue its march was accentuated by a word that came into vogue early in the second century. I refer to the word "Catholic," which first occurs in an epistle addressed by Ignatius to believers in Smyrna, 112 A. D.—"Wheresoever Jesus Christ is, there is the universal Church." This language apparently suggests something more than mere extension. It carries with it the primary idea of a unique distinction; the perpetual presence of the blessed Savior. Universality lies principally in adaptation to the diversified needs of humanity, and to the needs of diversified humanity. It is rather spiritual than physical; moral and devotional, rather than geographical. But in the course of a few years the secondary meaning of the term came to overshadow, in some degree, its original signification. Thus the Church at Smyrna, in the narrative of Polycarp's martyrdom (156 A. D.) directed to the Philomelium brethren, writes of "the holy and universal Church sojourning in every place"—laying stress on the territory covered. This tendency becomes more pronounced in the teachings of Augustine. Hence, the protest of Donatus and his followers in opposition to the ecclesiastical drift of his times: "Your Catholic Church is a geographical expression; it means the union of so many societies in so many provinces, or in so many nations; our Catholic Church is the union of all those who are Christians in deed as well as in word: it depends not upon intercommunion, but upon the observance of all the divine commands and sacraments."

But, in guarding against this partial interpretation, we in our day must not be blind to the great fact that from the commencement our Lord and his apostles contemplated the subjugation of mankind to the faith of the cross. This is evident from the language of the great commission, and from its interpretation as recorded in "The Acts." While the universal Church is that body which comprehends the entire or universal truth, it is likewise that body which seeks to impart the universal truth to universal humanity. This sublime duty is the necessary corollary to her sublime character. So she understood it, and from the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost she sent forth her missionary evangelists to preach the Gospel; and this, the earliest advance of Christianity, forms one of the most notable chapters in the history of mankind.

The new religion unquestionably spread with wonderful rapidity, especially during the closing part of the first century. In Asia Minor it speedily acquired immeasurable influence. Phrygia and the vast plains of Axylum soon acknowledged its power. "It existed among a placid peasantry on the gray slopes of the Batanean hills, in villages which were always scattered, and which, as the great highways of Roman commerce, gradually decayed into silent death. It existed in the thriving municipalities of Gaul, where rhetoric and philosophy flourished, where the civil law was studied and practiced by skilled jurists, and where the elaborate framework of the municipal institutions of the empire was strong enough to withstand the tempest of Teutonic invasion. It existed in the rude septs of Ireland, where Roman organization was practically unknown. It existed also in the busy commercial centers of Africa, where the competition of life was keen and the sense of individuality strong."¹ The letters of Pliny to Trajan show that before 112 A. D. it had swept over his province so victoriously that the pagan ritual had been interrupted, and the temples in no small degree forsaken. Business in one department had been seriously depressed by the new ideas. The sale of fodder for the animals necessary for sacrifices on heathen altars had materially declined; and such a loss was of itself sufficient to stir up a Roman proconsul's zeal in behalf of his unbelievable gods. He declared that people of every age, every rank, and also of both sexes, had in his province of Bithynia caught the contagion of this novel superstition. The number of converts was so vast that he could not proceed to exterminate the deluded creatures by slaughter.

The "excellent Pliny," therefore, seeks instruction from the most "noble Trajan." They are both polite toward each other in their correspondence, and plan measures of repression, which, after causing alarm and suffering, fail in accomplishing their object. Ignatius testifies, while these officials are letter-writing, that Christianity is "believed in every tongue."

Scarcely forty years after this Justin Martyr states that "there is not one single race of men, whether barbarians or Greeks, or whatever they may be called—nomads, or vagrants, or herdsmen living in tents—among whom prayers and giving of thanks are not offered through the Name of the crucified Jesus." So likewise Irenæus (185 A. D.) refers to the Church as "dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth"; and declares that "the path of those who are of the Church circumscribes the whole world." Tertullian is

¹ Hatch, "Organization of Early Christian Churches," p. 12.

even more enthusiastic. He inquires of Scapula: "What will you do with so many thousands of human beings, such multitudes of men and women, of every sex, and every age, and every rank, when they give themselves up to you?" In another place he exclaims: "Behold whole nations emerging from the whirlpool of human error to God, the Creator, to God the Christ—Christ, who has now taken the whole world with the faith of his Gospel." Then we have the famous passage, often quoted: "We are a people of yesterday, and we have filled everything of yours—cities, islands, fortresses, towns, councils, your very camps, tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum. We have left you nothing but your temples. We can count your armies, and our numbers in a single province will be greater." This apologist does not hesitate to draw attention to the services rendered by Christian soldiers when the emperor, Marcus Aurelius, was at war with the Marcomanni (174 A. D.), and acknowledged by Aurelius in a letter to the senate. When imprisoned in a defile and suffering for water, Christians in the army prayed for deliverance, and according to the story a thunderstorm broke over them, under cover of which the Marcomanni were successfully assailed. These men were afterward named the "Thundering Legion." But it is not likely that attention would have been called to them had they been few and unimportant. If, however, as Mommsen remarks, "the camp and the court were always centers of Christianizing influences," then the legend becomes another witness to the vast multiplication of converts before the close of the second century. And we are not, therefore, surprised to hear Origen (250 A. D.) triumphantly inform Celsus: "In all Greece, and in all barbarous races within our world, there are tens of thousands who have left their national laws and customary gods for the law of Moses and the Word of Jesus Christ; though to adhere to that law is to incur the hatred of idolaters, and to have embraced that Word is to incur the risk of death as well. And considering how, in a few years and with no great store of teachers, in spite of the attacks which have cost us life and property, the preaching of that Word has found its way into every part of the world, so that Greeks and barbarians, wise and unwise, adhere to the religion of Jesus—doubtless it is a work greater than any work of man."

These accounts are probably more or less rhetorical. As accurate statistics were not possible, the writers may have been carried away to some extent by their devout imaginations and the exigencies of controversy. But Dr. Philip Schaff thinks, after making all necessary allowances, that there must have been half a million of believers in the empire on the close

of the first century, and 12,000,000 — a tenth of the whole population — at the beginning of the fourth. This he admits is not the highest estimate given.¹ I am inclined to believe it too conservative. The millions of graves in the Catacombs at Rome, only one of the great burying places of the early Christians, and sheltering the dead of only about 200 years, taken in connection with the confident assurances of the writers I have quoted, call for a much larger figure than Doctor Schaff is disposed to allow. But whether 12,000,000 or more, unquestionably Origen is warranted in regarding this extraordinary increase as "a work greater than any work of man."²

In following this advance of Christianity it ought not to be overlooked that Pliny and other witnesses concede that "every rank" — the highest, therefore, as well as the lowest — had submitted, in these early days, to the authority of Jesus. It is a mistake to suppose that only the illiterate, the depraved, the impoverished and enslaved, welcomed the Gospel of salvation in these crucial times. This is an error that ought to be corrected. Paul's statement concerning "the called" may be carried just a trifle too far. Even he does not say, "not *any* wise men after the flesh, not *any* mighty, not *any* noble," but only "not *many*,"³ which is altogether a very different and a less radical statement.

Ramsay writes: "This point is one of peculiar importance in studying the effect produced by the Christian religion on the Roman world." And he adds: "It spread at first among the educated more rapidly than among the uneducated; nowhere had it a stronger hold (as Mommsen observes) than in the household and at the court of the emperors. Where Roman organization and Greek thought have gone, there Paul, by preference, goes."⁴ Even the Apostle of the Gentiles does not tarry at the centers of illiteracy, but appeals to the cultivated classes of Athens, and to the intelligent congregations gathered in the synagogues. His missionary journeys prove that he was not indifferent to the success of the Gospel among the more refined and influential circles of society. On reading the closing chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, the impression is received that he and his companions are sending greetings to individuals of prominence, if not of distinction. Erastus, the treasurer of Corinth, a man unquestionably of some social as well as of official importance, joins him in his loving salutations. And the mention of the city where he dwelt reminds us that Crispus,

the chief ruler of the synagogue there, another dignitary, had embraced the Gospel. It is probable, likewise, that Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, as well as Timotheus, belonged to leading families in the community where they were born, or where they then resided. The apostle, when addressing the Philippians, forwards affectionate greetings from the saints in Rome, especially, or "chiefly," from those of "Cæsar's household." This expression, "*Domus Cæsaris*," covers every variety of personage employed in the emperor's immediate service, whether high or low, weak or powerful.

It is well known that some individuals of servile station in the families of the great were educated and influential. That the believers mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans were of more than ordinary rank is made evident from the occurrence of their names on places of burial devoted to imperial freedmen and slaves on the Appian Way. The merit of this discovery is due to Bishop Lightfoot, who investigated these tributes to the dead, and made out the following names: Amplias, Urbanus, Stachys, Apelles, Tryphæna, Tryphosa, Rufus, Hermes, Hermas, Philologus, Julius, etc.¹ Should it be contended that these persons may have occupied very lowly positions, still it is significant that so many under the very shadow of the throne should have yielded to the sovereignty of Christ. Even if they were only slaves, who can compute their influence on their masters and mistresses?

About the year 57 A. D. Pomponia Græcina, wife of that Aulus Plautius who was called "Conqueror of Britain," was accused of sympathy with the "foreign superstition." That she was a Christian woman is inferred, not merely from the vague language of Tacitus,² but from a monument to a certain Pomponius Græcinus in the ancient crypt of Lucina near the Catacomb of Callistus, showing that this noble family at an early date had accepted the Gospel. Was she converted through the faithful teaching and example of some enlightened servant? A question this, not to be answered on this side of the judgment day, but one of those inquiries, nevertheless, that open wide fields for reflection. To me it is not probable that any other kind of domestic but one of marked intelligence and of high standing could have ever interested a lady of such exalted rank as Pomponia in the religion of our Lord.

Another and a more striking illustration of the progress of Christianity during the first century among the exclusive and the noble of the land, is presented in the sad but triumphant history of Flavius Clemens and his wife, Flavia Domitilla. They were both cousins to the

¹ "Christian Church," Vol. I, p. 197.

² Lorimer, "Argument for Christianity."

³ I. Corinthians i, 26.

⁴ "Church in the Roman Empire," p. 57.

¹ Compare Romans xvi.

² "Annals," xiii, 32.

reigning emperor, Domitian. Flavius had been consul, and his children were in the line of probable succession to the throne. But when the persecution which exiled Saint John to Patmos raged in the empire, he and his wife were condemned on a charge of atheism or sacrilege. He was put to death. She was banished. Acilius Glabrio, another consul, was among the sufferers of this trying period; and many others, almost as prominent, fell victims to the fury of pagan hostility and intolerance. Eusebius refers to Domitilla as a Christian, and her memory preserved on a monument on the Ardeatine Way, confirms his statement.

Thus, the *superstitio nova ac malefica* had infested an entire branch of the Flavian family; and after this we are not surprised to hear of senators being degraded from their exalted rank on account of their loyalty to Christ. Rodolfo Lanciani, from personal investigation of Roman antiquities, has furnished new and interesting proof of this movement of the Gospel among the leaders of society. He says: "I may also cite the names of several Cornelii, Cæcili, and Æmilii, the flower of Roman nobility, grouped near the graves of Saint Cæcilia and Pope Cornelius, of Liberalis, a *consul suffectus*, and a martyr, whose remains were buried in the Via Salaria; of Jallia Clementina, a relative of Jallius Bassus, consul before 161 A. D.; of Catia Clementina, daughter or relative of Catius, consul 230 A. D., not to speak of personages of equestrian rank, whose names have been collected by hundreds." He quotes also Lampridius, who, when describing the religious sentiments of the emperor, Alexander Severus (222-235 A. D.), writes in the following terms: "He was determined to raise a temple to Christ, and enlisted him among the gods; a project attributed also to Hadrian. There is no doubt that Hadrian ordered temples to be erected in every city to an unknown god, and because they have no statue we still call them the temples of Hadrian. He is said to have prepared them for Christ; but to have been deterred from carrying his plan into execution by the consideration that the temples of the old gods would become deserted, and the whole population turn Christian—*omnes christianos futuros*."¹ It is known that Julia Mammæa, the mother of Severus, was well affected toward the Christians; and these instances of imperial favor seem to have been prophetic of the inevitable triumph of the cross.

But in addition to these evidences, the high level of thought and of literary excellence maintained in the "Apologies" of the second century fully corroborates the position that Christianity had succeeded in penetrating

some of the foremost patrician families. The writings of Quadratus, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Minucius Felix, Claudius Apollinaris, Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch, forbid the supposition that only ignorant and obscure people composed the membership of Christian churches. While undoubtedly the large majority were poor and of modest stations of life, still not a few among them compared in wealth and social standing with Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea of Gospel fame. Some of them, indeed, were so near the throne that Ignatius (112 A. D.) feared lest they should use their influence to procure for him imperial protection and thus rob him of the martyr's crown. Thus, then, while it held good in these formative days, that "not many rich, not many noble were called"—not many in comparison with the total number of the Lord's followers—nevertheless, the roll of these prosperous, titled, and educated converts was sufficiently long to relieve Christianity from the suspicion of class prejudice, and evermore to enhance the difficulty of accounting for its success apart from the direct interposition of the Almighty.

But expansion, as well as extension, is a prominent feature of the advance we are studying. It is encouraging to learn from Dionysius of Alexandria that "the house of the emperor Valerian (257 A. D.) was full of worshippers, and was a very Church of God"; but, then, we are equally interested to know whether Christianity itself had evinced any signs of self-development and progress. Did it, in the course of 300 years unfold graces, qualities, powers, not distinctly observable at the first, as well as infold races and classes not originally embraced in its fellowship? Did it grow as well as spread? Evidently the Christian army overran the enemy's country; but did it increase in discipline, efficiency, and soldierly virtues in proportion to the territory it conquered? Was its onward movement matched by an inward and upward movement? Was it, in some degree, pliable and elastic, or was it hard and unyielding? Did it become greater, as well as larger? These questions, differing in phraseology, cover in reality the same line of inquiry. Were there internal and structural changes in the Christian organization, modifications possibly of its essential and native elements, just as all changes in the human organism from infancy to manhood are only variations in the action of its necessary properties and forces, keeping pace with its enlargement? The answer of history is in the affirmative. History, that deals not with theories, preferences, or hypotheses concerning what ought to have been, or must have been, but records only what has been, is very positive in the testimony it

¹ "Pagan and Christian Rome," pp. 10-30.

bears to the progressiveness as well as the aggressiveness of primitive Christianity. The marks of this form of advance are not lacking in the annals of apostolic activity preserved in the New Testament, though Weizsäcker¹ is, perhaps, a trifle extravagant in alleging that they are found in the fact that our Lord's followers were at the first merely called "disciples," then "Christians," afterward "brethren," and finally "saints." But the various phases of the period covered by the sacred narrative have already been sufficiently delineated, and it only remains to trace the outworking of what appears to have been begun when Paul determined "to turn unto the Gentiles."

After passing the meridian of the first century, the Christian community gradually withdrew from even seeming affiliation with the Jewish synagogue. The synagogue "was the local center of the religious and social life of the Jews, as the Temple at Jerusalem was the center of their national life. It was a school as well as a church, and the nursery and guardian of all that is peculiar in this peculiar people."² The name was applied, not exclusively to a building, but to an institution as well. And in both meanings of the term the synagogue existed in nearly all the great cities of the empire, and at Alexandria the ethnarch was regarded as its head. Naturally enough, the ambassadors of Christ at the outset of their mission sought in these numerous edifices an audience, and as long as they were tolerated continued there to preach the Gospel of the Son of God. Whether they ever held the weekly commemoration of the Resurrection there is open to doubt; and it is not at all likely that they observed the Lord's Supper there. But as the mode of worship was simple, consisting of prayer, song, reading and exposition, and as any Hebrew of age could lead in the services and address the people, there was no good reason why Christians and Christian teachers should not join in the exercises and avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded to proclaim "the great salvation."

That at this time the followers of our Lord formed societies among themselves is manifest from the inscriptions of the several Pastoral Epistles, and from special directions given regarding the first day of the week and its observances. But that they were much more than rudimentary organizations does not appear; and that they were wholly independent of the influence and the protection of the synagogue cannot be proved. The ghost of Judaism haunted the church for a brief season, even after the fall of Jerusalem; and probably the utilization of the synagogue was largely responsible for the

persistence and insistency of the apparition. Moreover, this utilization gave to the early Christian communities a semi-legal recognition, without which, or some other ground of lawful standing, it would have been exceedingly difficult for them to have held any meetings at all. But the hour arrived in the latter part of the first century when this compromising and misleading connection came to an end, and churches were seen to be distinct and separate from any other existing religious institution.

Baldwin Brown, referring to the gathering of Christ's followers in the upper chamber after the Ascension, writes: "All is simple and domestic, yet we have here the beginnings of what became in time the most wide-reaching and highly organized of human systems. An elaborate hierarchy, a complicated theology, were to arise out of the informal conclave and the memorial meal, and in like manner out of the homely meeting place would be developed the costly and beautiful forms of the Christian temple."¹ But the first step in this departure—a departure not entitled to be regarded as always a real advance—required the countenance, if not the assistance, of some legal provision. The people of the past were very like the people of the present in many respects; but in none more than in the tendency to enter into associations for all kinds of purposes. In the Roman empire there were trade guilds, dramatic societies, literary and dining clubs, and clubs for almost every conceivable object. The rulers of the land were often suspicious of these combinations, and sought to repress them; but as a general thing they were in the long run too strong for the Cæsars. "Trajan refused to permit an organization of one hundred and fifty firemen in Nicomedia, or to allow a few poor people to improve their fare by dining in company, on the express ground that such organizations involved political danger."² For the same reason he doubtless forbade the *sodalitates* of the Christians in Asia Minor. "While Rome was a republic, all citizens had the right of forming associations at will, but as soon as the empire began, it distrusted such associations, and Julius restricted them within the narrowest limits, for the Roman government now considered the Roman people as a danger to be guarded against."³ Hence, various restraining edicts were issued, especially against what were called *collegia* and *sodalitates*; but exceptions were made in favor of the *collegia funeraticia*. These were benefit societies designed to secure to their members a respectable funeral and a proper place of burial.

¹ "From Schola to Cathedral," p. 9.

² Ramsay, "Church in the Roman Empire."

³ Ramsay, "Church in the Roman Empire," pp. 358,

¹ "Apostolic Age."

² Schaff, p. 456.

"These clubs or colleges collected their subscriptions in a treasure chest, and out of it provided for the obsequies of deceased members. Funeral ceremonies did not cease when the body or the ashes was laid in the sepulcher. It was the custom to celebrate on the occasion a feast, and to repeat that feast year by year on the birthday of the dead, and on other stated days. For the holding of these feasts, as well as for other meetings, special buildings were erected, named *scholæ*, and when the societies received gifts from rich members or patrons, the benefaction frequently took the shape of a new lodge room, or of a ground for a new cemetery, with a building for meetings."¹ Under the laws permitting and regulating such societies as these, Christian communities were organized, and in this way acquired a kind of *legal status*, which, if it was not sufficient to guard them always from persecution, at least enabled them in times of respite from proscription to prosecute their work with greater efficiency.

While the churches in reality differed radically from the benefit clubs with which they were classified, to the ordinary observer they were not dissimilar. They had kindred names for their officers and for their meetings. In both cases their members contributed to or received from a common fund, and sometimes even shared in a common feast. The Christianity of these early communities had its *esoteric*, as well as its *exoteric* side, and *exoterically* Christians were warranted in taking advantage of the protection afforded by the Roman law. Moreover, their registration as *collegia funeraticia* carried with it the right to hold property. This property originally was undoubtedly confined to cemeteries and *scholæ*. De' Rossi holds that from the beginning there was no hindrance to ownership of land for burial. Gallienus, according to Eusebius, did not confiscate the Christian burial places. It is reported of Alexander Severus that he permitted a Christian congregation to occupy an inviting parcel of ground rather than a tavern-keeper. Wise monarch! The edict of Milan (313 A. D.) restored to the Church certain possessions. This appears to have been the first authoritative recognition of her right as a Christian body, and not as a mere benefit club, to have and to hold various estates. Subsequently (321 A. D.) Constantine permitted her to receive bequests for endowments. Of her resources in the private fortunes of her members nothing need be said. She required no standing in the courts to enable her to influence the wealth of her adherents. This was placed at her disposal in one way or another by the

¹ Baldwin Brown, p. 17.

terms of the Christian covenant. But it certainly added to her independence when, in addition to the contributions of the people, the title to her meeting houses, basilicæ, refuges, schools, and cemeteries could legally be vested in herself, or her representatives. Her absolute and final separation from the synagogue was the real commencement of this independence. It likewise contributed to her dignity by rendering clearer her true character. And it facilitated her labors and ultimate triumph by relieving her from all misleading complications and also from misapprehensions regarding her message and mission.

This realization of ecclesiastical autonomy brought with it a change to a more compact and centralized form of government. As I have briefly pointed out, the Churches of Christ during the first period of their history were not very elaborately or very thoroughly organized. They seem to have been democracies of the simplest type; all members, whether men or women, sharing in the responsibility of administration, presided over by officers popularly chosen, sometimes termed *presbuteroi* and again called *episkopoi*, elders and overseers. But there was hardly any discernible difference between them and the class we now describe as laymen. Laymen were not hindered from preaching; they brought their own gifts to the altar and were free to commune there; they voted in cases of discipline, sometimes administered ordinances, and were admitted to general councils. Tertullian expounds the accepted principle that ruled in the direction of Church affairs, when he says that in an emergency a layman may celebrate the eucharist as well as a bishop. "That which has constituted the difference between the governing body and the ordinary members is the authority of the Church"; and "where three Christians are, though they be laymen, there is a church." And Jerome indicates how the departure from the primitive method of governing began. He says that on account of divisions and heresies it was necessary to elect one of the elders or presbyters to preside over the rest; and the office tended toward permanency in its possessor. Gradually the functions of this office multiplied. He who bore it had to receive the offerings for the poor, and in times of persecution, when the congregation could not meet to vote, he had to care for their just distribution; and in negotiations with representatives of the State he had to act on behalf of the flock. With the increase of duties came an increase of dignity, which finally led to the idea of an authority superior to that vested in ordinary presbyters. This arrangement, in its earlier stages, was in many respects desirable, and was not destructive of the New Testament idea of

Church polity. It gave strength and coherence to the Christian community, improved its discipline, and fitted it to withstand the assaults of envenomed antagonists. Later on, however, this advance was pushed so far as to become a positive retrogression. On this point Professor Ramsay has written with so much clearness and intelligence in his Mansfield Lectures, that I venture once more to quote from his pages:

"The first Christians . . . were not organized in a strict fashion, but were looser communities, in which personal influence counted for much and official station for little; and that the strict discipline of the Catholic Church was gradually framed to counteract the disintegrating tendency, in a political and a religious view alike, of the provincial character, organized the whole Church in a strict hierarchy of territorial character, parallel to the civil organization, and enabled the Church to hold together the Roman empire more firmly than the worship of the emperors could ever do. Politically the Church was originally a protest against the over-centralization and against the usurpation by the imperial government of the rights of the individual citizen. It ended by being more centralized than the empire itself; and the Christian empire destroyed all the municipal freedom and self-government that had existed under the earlier empire."¹ Very few students will call in question the accuracy of this account. The process described went forward throughout the second and third centuries, and was immensely accelerated by the events which marked the dawning of the fourth. But the climax was not reached even then. Only at a period later than this historical survey contemplates can the complete workings of this ecclesiastical transformation be traced, and the Catholic Church be seen "sitting like a queen upon her throne, with her feet upon the neck of kings, and using the majority of her sublime consolations, and the prestige of her long traditions, and the wealth of her splendid charities, to enslave rather than to free the world."²

This movement in the direction of ecclesiastical dictatorship was not permitted to proceed without protest. The most vigorous opposition to it developed where it was finally to have its chief seat, in Rome itself. Not until the middle of the second century did episcopacy enthroned itself in the capital of the empire, and not until the appearance of Victor, called "the first Latin bishop,"³ did its imperious tendencies stand distinctly revealed. He acted in a high-handed manner in excommunicating the Quartodeciman churches, and he assumed a

degree of authority that contemporary bishops were unwilling to acknowledge. But among those who discerned the drift of things, and sought to interpose a check, Hippolytus was one of the earliest, and was the most prominent. He was a voluminous writer and a most courageous man. The controversy he waged was continued by others after his death in the Sardinian mines, to which place he was doomed in the consulship of Severus and Quintianus (235 A. D.). It was revived and carried on by Novatian, who steadfastly opposed the election of Cornelius to the episcopate (251 A. D.). This eminent presbyter demanded the restoration of ancient discipline. He saw that the approximation of the Church to the ideas of government then prevailing in the secular world opened the way for all forms of abuses. Morality, he claimed, had declined. Professors of religion, who in times of persecution had lapsed, refusing to be confessors, were being received back into fellowship; and the real distinction between the Church and the world was being effaced. Against these crying evils he raised his voice. Many sympathized with him, and on account of their strict views they were named "*Cathari*"—puritans. The opinions they maintained so ardently were condemned by the Synod of Antioch (252 A. D.); nevertheless, they were destined to outlive ecclesiastical censure. It will hardly be doubted at this late day that these dissidents were of great advantage to ancient Christianity. They served as a barrier in the way of a manifest trend toward unmitigated worldliness. In them was preserved and perpetuated the apostolic tradition regarding the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. They were in reality the leaven which, after many centuries, should leaven the whole lump; and which, after much fermentation, should even help to purify the autocratic ecclesiasticism which in its inception they assailed so determinately. Puritanism had before it a long and honorable history subsequent to the period of its early struggles; and, however extravagant some of its endeavors may seem to the reflective mind, its rise in the third century was a positive gain to society, conserving as it did the true idea of religion, and securing to future generations its transmission. I think, therefore, I may be allowed to regard this schism as an advance, at a time when the onward movement in Church organization was being pushed to the extreme of hierarchical centralization.

Notable progress in the intellectual life of Christianity is distinctly observable from the accession of Hadrian. In the year 124 A. D. he issued a rescript to Minucius Fundanus, proconsul of Asia, forbidding other than strictly legal proceedings in all efforts to sup-

¹ "Church in the Roman Empire," p. 445.

² Hatch, "Bampton Lectures," 23.

³ Plummer, "Church of the Early Fathers," p. 92.

press the new and growing heresy. According to Melito, orders of a similar character were sent to all, or nearly all, of the provinces. This pause in the fury of Paganism afforded all parties an opportunity for calm reflection. Then began to appear the apologetic literature, which, apart from its evidential value, revealed to the world the quality of mind that upheld the standard of faith. It was seen that strong men—men of thought and culture—were shaping the destinies of the ostracised Church. And this was made equally manifest in the more reasonable attitude then being assumed by its members toward the commonwealth. Previous to the reign of Hadrian, Christians, as a rule, objected to personal service in the armies of the State, and declined to plead before its tribunals, and refrained from seeking its honors and offices. This policy at the beginning was doubtless justified by peculiar circumstances; but its perpetuity would have proven disastrous. Happily it was abandoned, although writers like Tertullian and Origen continued to uphold it in theory when it was no longer practicable, on the ground that soldiers and government officials could not avoid countenancing heathen rites. The conservatism they advocated was impossible if the children of God were to live in society, and redeem it from its monstrous curses. Our Savior himself had prayed the Father that his disciples might be kept from the evil in the world, not that they should be taken out of the world. When, therefore, in the second century his followers discerned the great principle that the secular should be regarded as the sphere of the spiritual, they had risen to the just interpretation of his divine thought, and evinced a fresh and encouraging degree of intellectual activity. The importance and dignity of this change of front have been admirably set forth by the Rev. Dr. Döllinger in these strong sentences:

"All the incidents of public and social life, both civil and popular, were thoroughly interpenetrated by heathen customs, and colored by the prevalent worship; its symbols met the Christian at every step, and he was often entangled in religious acts before he recollected himself or could draw back. If he really wished to keep pure from all contact with it, he had almost to confine himself within the four walls of his house. But Christians felt that they were the salt of the earth, the city set upon a hill, that they must let the light of their faith and life shine before the Gentiles, and that everyone in his own sphere was called upon to care for the enlargement of the Church. And this constrained them to mix with the heathen, however great the danger to their souls in the midst of so many corrup-

tions."¹ And in doing this they placed the faith they professed in a clearer and truer light before men. In this way they vindicated it from the suspicion of narrowness and exclusiveness, and from the graver imputation of superstition and intolerant ignorance.

Another sign of intellectual advancement appeared in the development and definition of doctrine, which engaged the attention of the Church more and more from the dawning of the second century. Until the completion of the New Testament Canon a few years earlier, the material for a theological system was not available. While oral traditions and various statements in writing were in circulation, there needed the stamp of finality on the alleged revelation of truth before it could be sifted, analyzed, and its specific teachings classified. Reference has already been made to the conflict between the Jewish and Gentile types of Christianity, whose respective representatives are supposed to have been Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The legend which relates how both of these apostles met their death at Rome, where likewise it is assumed they were buried, is interpreted by Baur as expressing the finally consummated reconciliation of these primitive Christian parties. But the fact of their existence, however their differences may be minimized, witnesses to the growth of religious thought. Indeed, by some scholars even the Sermon on the Mount is regarded more as the granary where the imperishable seeds of doctrines are stored, than as a wide-spreading harvest field where ultimate forms salute and cheer the eye. Of this matchless discourse Baur has said: "It is the pure feeling of the need of salvation, still undeveloped, but containing within it the antithesis of sin and grace, and as such necessarily involving the reality of salvation." Following the line of the Master's instructions, an orderly progress from this point is traceable. He is constantly rising to higher levels of truth, until he is deterred from further advance by the limitations of his hearers. But even then he gives the promise of another Teacher who shall come and carry them yet onward in the knowledge and discernment of things divine. We see the effects of his gracious ministry in New Testament literature; but they do not cease with its completion. The Holy Spirit was to abide forever with the Church, if not for the purpose of supernaturally imparting additional revelations, assuredly for the purpose of illuminating what had already been disclosed, and that through his quickening influence the human mind might unfold and expand all that had been originally communicated by divine inspiration.

¹ "First Age of the Church," p. 377.

While it is clear that this work of development was immensely accelerated by the peace secured to the Church through the reputed conversion of Constantine, there are signs of its progress in the two preceding centuries. The definition of the Homoousian dogma at the œcumenical council of Nicæa, marks the completion of a stage in the history of doctrine. But leading up to this culmination we have the materialistic realism of Tertullian's idea of God; also the transcendentalism of Clement of Alexandria in which nearly all personal distinction between Father and Son is swallowed up; then the monarchism of Sabellius, so dangerous and subtle; and the Christology of Origen, in which the two views of unity and difference in the Godhead are so emphasized as in reality to lead to the struggle between Arianism and Athanasianism. Other questions had likewise been suggested during this earlier period of intellectual activity. The idealism of Gnosticism, which, like the fantastic syncretism of Philo, sublimated the facts of the Gospels until all reality was gone, had to be debated and discarded. Christianity was converted by this school into a theosophy. "It ceased to be a doctrine and became a Platonic poem. It ceased to be a rule of life and became a system of the universe." On the other hand, Montanism had to be checked also, as it swung to the opposite extreme of literalism, advocating rigorous penitential mortifications, wild ecstatic prophetic states, and an intense chiliastic belief, which in the nature of things arrested everything like historical development. In suppressing these and kindred errors, in fixing observances such as Easter, and in perfecting discipline, formularies of doctrine began to take shape. Perhaps the very earliest approach to a creed form we have in the words of Irenæus in his polemic against "Heresies," about 180 A. D. He argues that the spiritual disciple has "a complete faith in one God Almighty, of whom are all things; and in that Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom are all things, and his dispensations by which the Son of God became man; also a firm trust in the Spirit of God, who hath sent forth the dispensations of the Father and the Son, dwelling with each successive race of men, as the Father willed."

If the reader would gain a further conception of the mental intensity and brilliancy of this era, it is only necessary to recall some of the leaders of thought and the controversies in which they engaged. There was Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, one of the first to advocate a millennium after the manner of our modern Adventists; and there was Quadratus, who dealt with the religion he defended as a moral and philosophical system. Then there arose

Basilides at Alexandria, who defended dogmas of emanation and dualism. He taught that "mind," the highest Æon, dwelt in the man Jesus from his baptism to conduct the lost from Archon's fateful sway. Agrippa Castor opposed him, and much learning and more speculation delighted the Christians of the East. There appeared also a series of abstruse and mystical teachers, Valentine, Heracleon, Ptolemæus, and Marcus, who came dangerously near Cabalism and kindred superstitions. Then Tatian drew attention to himself as a remarkable rhetorician. He assailed matter as the source of all mischief, and put in shape a document, still of value, called "Diatessaron." Marcion likewise erred and became the occasion of rancorous discussion. He held that the Pauline element was the only true evangelical portion of the Christian documents. Other very singular opinions he maintained; and he and his followers disturbed the mental peace of every religious community where they were tolerated. Nor should there be overlooked in this survey the author of the "Shepherd," named Hermas; neither should Justin Martyr and Hegeppus be forgotten. And time would fail to tell of Theodotus, excommunicated by Victor of Rome; of Praxeas, who contended against Montanism; of Sabellius, who discerned a shadow of the Trinity in the sun's three properties of substance, shape, and light; of Origen, the chief writer among his contemporaries, and the spiritual sire of Gregory Thaumaturgus; of Cyprian, one of the strongest men the Church has produced; and a multitude of others who were prominent in their own day, but whose services are now forgotten. This array of thinkers and writers, more or less illustrious, dispels forever the notion that the two hundred years and more from the death of Saint John to the conversion of Constantine formed a period of intellectual torpor so far as Christianity was concerned. All such representations are wide of the mark. Throughout these centuries we behold burning anxiety to understand the will of God, earnest and prolonged reasoning on abstruse themes, and logical acumen of the first order. Everywhere is heard the clash of polemics, and the sounds, often harsh and strident, of argument and wrangling. But through the strife of thought and language there is gradually reached a clearer apprehension of the meaning of sacred truth; and from the protracted agony there emerges a more coherent and consistent statement of Christian doctrine. Slow of growth, and needing for development from the original seed the stress and storm of debate, nevertheless, the value of the well-defined plant and flower of doctrine more than compensates for what was sacrificed of ease and peace.

In these several respects, then, did Christianity advance, especially from the time when it was deprived of apostolic oversight to the hour when it began to be favored by imperial protection. And if "history is philosophy teaching by example," then may it not be that this remarkable progress discloses a law while chronicling a fact? Why should such progress be regarded as incapable of repetition? If there is a development of Christianity in the early centuries, why should there not be development ever afterward? Who will dare set the limit and say: "Thus far and no farther"? Judged by the movement we have described, Christianity can never be true to itself and remain stagnant and stationary. It must ever be extending and expanding; must ever be unfolding itself in larger thoughts, and ever be fulfilling itself in grander deeds; must always be becoming what it really is, and must always be what it is evermore becoming. A gradual revelation, such as Bible history from its first scenes to its last records, may well be taken as justifying the belief in gradual interpretation and application. Why should the principle hold good from Moses to Christ, and from Christ to Constantine, and then all at once and forever cease? Such a cessation would be as anomalous as the suspension of the law of growth in any department of nature, and is wholly incredible. The philosophical mind will not entertain such an exception to the uniformity that prevails in the spiritual, any more than it will harbor the notion that henceforward the physical will be governed differently from what it has been ever since it existed.

From this fundamental position, therefore, it follows, if Christianity advanced in the past,

it will inevitably advance in the present. And if this is so, there should be no excited alarm felt at necessary changes and adjustments of exposition to increasing light, and of methods to new conditions. The intelligence of the nineteenth century ought surely to be equal to the intelligence of the second or third, when the religion of our Lord was in a transition state, and when its adherents continued to uphold it, notwithstanding its variations and struggling self-development. Religion is not a phenomenon whose total import has been exhausted by a few great theologians, and whose eternal dimensions have been immutably fixed by creed and catechism. It is the symbol of God—that is, of the Infinite—and, like the symbolism enshrined in the magnitudes of the universe, it must be capable of yielding fresh and increasing knowledge of his nature and purposes. In one sense Christianity is ever the same; the same in its spirit and in its elements; but in another it is always changing; and in fullness and in operation the Christianity of to-morrow will not be as the Christianity of to-day. The advance of the cross cannot be arrested. It must onward; it must upward. By an indestructible principle, inherent in itself, it must be evolving its inexhaustible potentialities, and must be enlarging the sphere of its influence. This some conservative disciples may deplore; this some unreasoning believers may deny; and this some confirmed skeptics may construe into a sign of its merely human origin. But however men may doubt, decry or denounce, the advance of Christianity can no more be stayed than the mighty sweep of the perpetually revolving solar system through the shoreless splendors of the sidereal heavens.

CHAPTER V.

THE MINISTRY OF CHARITY.

THE concentration of property in the hands of the affluent few and the insatiable greed of the impoverished many precipitated the fall of the Roman republic. "Often," said Cato the censor, addressing his fellow-citizens, "often have ye heard me complain how our commonwealth is laboring under two different vices, avarice and luxury, these two that have been the bane of all great empires." And Tiberius Gracchus, reviewing the evils of the times, which in the end subverted ancient liberty, is represented by his biographers as saying: "The wild beasts of Italy have their lairs and dens; but the men who fight and die for Italy have nothing else save light and air, as they stray, houseless and homeless, with their wives and children. Your

generals do but mock their soldiers, in bidding them combat for their temples and their graves; for in such a multitude, not one has either the altar or the sepulcher of his fathers left him to defend. They go to war and perish, while others live at ease and in the midst of luxuries; and though they bear the name of lords of the world, there is not a handful of earth for them to call their own." And, referring to the moral and physical deterioration of the population resulting from the unequal distribution of wealth, he continued: "A warlike people has been reduced under our very eyes to poverty and desolation; and in their place has risen up a crowd of slaves, useless in war, and at all times faithless." The pernicious condition of things which he and a few

other heroic souls condemned, exciting and almost justifying revolutionary discontent, rendered inevitable the dissolution of the then existing social order. For whenever the resources of a nation are controlled by a relatively small number of individuals and they who do most of the work receive least of the rewards, the enormously rich will evade every obligation and claim every privilege, while the hopelessly poor will be deprived of their privileges, and be crushed by the weight of their obligations; and the consequences of such unrighteous extremes must prove disastrous to all classes of the community, and to the peace, dignity, and well-being of the community itself.

It was perceived by Caius Lælius, friend of the younger Africanus, that the monopoly of wealth in the republic was gradually effacing the middle and lower orders of citizens, and that a remedy must be found. The problem, however, was too dense for his sagacity, and his misdirected efforts toward its solution only succeeded in earning for him the mocking sobriquet of "Sapiens." Nobler characters were destined to enter the lists against the oppression of the people—the Gracchi. The mother of these illustrious sons, daughter of Scipio Africanus, and the widow of his defender, Sempronius Gracchus, was prouder of her hopes than of her memories, and molded the souls of her boys to heroism as nature molded their bodies to manhood. They were her richest jewels; and when both were dead—slain in discharging their solemn duty—she honored them and honored herself by the pathetically beautiful saying: "I can never be called unhappy, for it is I who gave birth to the Gracchi!" Tiberius, the elder of the two, when elected Tribune at the age of twenty-eight or twenty-nine, grappled manfully with the question of the hour, and laid an Agrarian law before the tribes. This measure limited the amount of land to be held as property by any individual citizen, provided for the surrender of domains that had in reality been usurped by the government, and arranged for compensation to be paid as an equivalent of buildings and other improvements on estates taken from the affluent. These proposals aroused the hostility of the rich. Their author suffered from their operation as much as any man in Rome. But this consideration did not appease the indignation of the outraged aristocracy. Some generous spirits of his own favored gens sympathized with Tiberius, but the majority of the upper classes was uncompromisingly against him. The Senate embarrassed him by refusing the means necessary to carry out the law; and, worst of all, the people themselves were so clamorous for their share of the spoils, and

so unreasonably impatient, and so greedy for fields and dwellings as to obstruct its execution. Moreover, the poor of the city and the poor of the country came into collision, and it became necessary to eject the latter from the lands they held to satisfy the demands of the former. Difficulties multiplied and enemies increased, and the few who had been personally benefited by the enactment of Agrarian statutes were so occupied and delighted with their new possessions that they paid no attention to the misfortunes of their benefactor, and abandoned him to defeat and assassination.

But the efforts to ameliorate the social and personal condition of the population, after the lapse of a few years, were revived by Caius Gracchus, the brother of Tiberius, and were prosecuted with more enthusiasm, if not with greater fidelity. To break up the *latifundia*, estates of many square miles, was, however, next to impossible. They reappeared in the empire. Early in the Christian era half the province of Africa was owned by six individuals. And Pliny testified at a subsequent date that such estates had proved the ruin of Italy. They certainly withstood the assaults of the Gracchi. But Caius, at least, succeeded in furnishing employment to thousands on public works, and in stimulating many to experiment in the direction of frugality and industry. The real evil, however, had gone so far that he could not check it; and he was led to counteract suffering and wretchedness by fresh enactments, which perhaps were unavoidable but which entailed new miseries on the republic, and were destined to prove a destructive bane to the empire. From the days of Coriolanus down it had been necessary in seasons of scarcity to distribute grain among the inhabitants of Rome. But now it was decreed that the government at all times should furnish the city with corn at a fixed and moderate price, thus opening the way for the donations of food by the authorities, which in the empire developed into a widespread and ruinous measure of relief. It tended to paralyze energy, to obliterate self-respect, and to pauperize the greater part of the population. And thus steps that were honestly taken to improve the condition of the people became, through the absence of a spirit Christianity was divinely commissioned to supply, means to trample the masses down deeper and deeper in the mire of social hopelessness. As the reforms of the Gracchi sank below the horizon, it was seen that beneath the canopy of night the republic was a tempest-torn and seething ocean; and from the failure and devastation the student of history learns that mechanical and soulless systems of equalization however perfect they may seem on paper, can never succeed in curing ills that have



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AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.

their source in the selfish passions and warring interests of mankind.

Marked economical improvement appeared with the establishment of the empire. With the cessation of the civil wars trade revived. The provinces were restored to peace. Through confiscation and from other causes some great estates had been partitioned, and immense properties had changed hands. The sea had been cleared of pirates, and the highways of communication by land had been repaired and extended. Public confidence had been restored by the admirable administration of justice, and by the vigor with which the frontiers were guarded against the barbarians. But that there were still much poverty, suffering, and discontent need hardly be stated. However glowing the pictures painted of the blessings following the elevation of the Cæsars, the deep shadows of want and neglect cannot be obliterated. The will of Augustus "engraved on the bronze pillars at the mausoleum in Rome," is not reassuring as to the prosperity of the masses during his reign. According to Lanciani, who gives an account of its contents, his liberalities were surprising. "Sometimes they took the form of free distribution of corn, oil, or wine; sometimes of an allowance of money. He asserts that he spent in gifts the sum of six hundred and twenty millions of sestertii—nearly twenty-six millions of dollars. Adding to this sum the cost of purchasing lands for his veterans in Italy (six hundred millions), of giving pecuniary rewards to his veterans (four hundred millions), of helping the public treasury (one hundred and fifty millions), and the army fund (one hundred and seventy millions), besides other grants and bounties, the amount of which is not known, we reach a total expenditure for the benefit of his people of ninety-one millions of dollars."¹ But wherefore the need of these immense benefactions, if indigence had practically disappeared, and the trend toward pauperism had been effectually checked? Does it not seem, from the excessive sums lavished by the emperor, that, however far the new *regime* surpassed the old in comfort and material prosperity, there was still left much to be desired? Nor was the advance, such as it was, long maintained. When Nero, in the middle of the first century, squandered a sum equalling one hundred millions of dollars on worthless dependents and sycophants, to say nothing of the increasingly extravagant expenditures of the State; when likewise, from his time the prætorians became more exacting in their demands; when Hadrian, at a comparatively early date in the second century, had to remit some thirty-five million arrears of trib-

ute; when traders, like the father of the emperor Pertinax, by dealing in lands; selling lots on credit at high rates of interest, amassed fortunes that enabled them to give ostentatious display of wealth in gladiatorial shows; and when large tracts of fertile land were withdrawn from agriculture to provide the rich with pleasure parks and gardens, it was manifest that the empire was rushing headlong toward bankruptcy. The burden of taxation had to be increased; and wars between rival candidates for the purple, and hostile demonstrations by barbarians, all tended toward the inevitable crisis. With multiplied acres taken out of cultivation, with capital devoted to luxury and not to production, with absentee landlords, and wealth more than ever accumulating in a few hands, with sharp lines of social distinction drawn between the rich and the poor, with borrowing at usurious interest to pay for municipal wastefulness, and with debased coinage and other fraudulent schemes, it was impossible to avoid the daily increase of abject pauperism and the final breakdown of national credit.

As these evils were growing and gaining ground, measures of relief were adopted by the authorities, and especially the old method of appeasing hunger by gratuitous distribution of corn. Julius Cæsar had reduced the number of recipients in his day from 320,000 persons to less than one-half, but under Augustus it arose again to 200,000, and later on it increased until, sometimes, it reached the enormous figure of 500,000 souls. Frequently salt, oil, and even lands, were given to the people, and, what is particularly worthy of note, in proportion as government bounty was enlarged the self-reliance of its dependents declined, and their demands became more clamorous and imperious. An explanation of this social phenomenon has been given by Lecky and is entitled to serious consideration, not merely because it prepares us to perceive the difference between State aid and the ministry of charity in the Church, but because it emphasizes a peril constantly to be dealt with in relieving the unfortunate. He writes:

"The Roman distribution of corn, being merely a political device, had no humanizing influence upon the people, while, being regulated simply by the indigence, and not at all by the infirmities or character of the recipient, it was a direct and overwhelming encouragement to idleness. With a provision of the necessities of life, and with an abundant supply of amusements, the poor Romans readily gave up honorable labor, all trades in the city languished, every interruption in the distribution of corn was followed by fearful sufferings, free gifts of land were often insufficient to divert

¹ "Pagan and Christian Rome," p. 175.

the citizens to honest labor, and the multiplication of children, which rendered the public relief inadequate, was checked by abortion, exposure, or infanticide."¹

It is not required of us in accepting this statement to conclude that the heathen world had never at times furnished examples of beneficent acts prompted by compassionate feelings. Even among the Greeks, Epaminondas, Cimón, and Bias were famous for kindly deeds, ransoming captives and dowering portionless girls. And among the Romans several patrician families were moved to send physicians, medicines, and comforts to the thousands who had been injured by the collapse of an amphitheatre at Fidenæ; and Titus was not indifferent to the sufferings of those who survived the calamities that overtook Herculaneum and Pompeii. Lecky notices that Augustus gave money and corn for the support of poor children, and describes it as "an isolated act of benevolence." But from Trajan's time such benefactions became more frequent, "in his reign 5,000 poor children being supported by the government in Rome alone"; and his successors, Hadrian and Antoninus, providing generously for many helpless and distressed men and women. Yet, notwithstanding these exceptions and others we refrain from citing, it is apparent that the remedies devised by the State and the bounty extended by individuals were deficient in some essential respects, were inadequate either in motive or method, or otherwise they would not have intensified the virulence of the disease they essayed to alleviate. Evidently society could not be saved from increasing poverty merely by government appropriations, or by enlarging the *sportulæ* bestowed by patricians on their needy clients, or by a few spasmodic gifts wrung from the reluctant heart of opulence by grave public misfortunes, any more than the same end could be compassed in the preceding era exclusively by limiting estates and distributing the acres of the proprietors among those who had never honestly earned the right to their possession.

When Christianity appeared she necessarily confronted this problem of growing pauperism, which the Roman world was never able to solve. The birth of her founder had, indeed, occurred when the empire under Augustus gave promise of restored prosperity, and when auspicious signs of social improvement gleamed on every hand. But, as we have seen, these bright prospects were soon overcast, and when the Church emerged from her obscurity, the distress of the people was deepening and rapidly tending to its lowest depth; and she was impelled by the life that stirred within her to

take up the task which the world-powers found altogether too vast for their sagacity and resources. The ministry of charity in the Church of the first three centuries is doubtless the most stimulating and instructive series of philanthropic endeavors ever chronicled by the historian; and if the example she then set had been adhered to, and the extremes into which she unconsciously fell had been avoided, the revival of the evils she fought to suppress would not now perplex and plague anew every great community in civilized lands.

It is one of the singular illusions of our day that primitive Christianity was more concerned about man's happiness in the hereafter than it was with his welfare this side of eternity. Hence, much has been gushingly written regarding modern religious progress. With great complacency its present interest in temporalities has been pointed out by certain reformers and clergymen, who refer to it as though the movement were due entirely to themselves, and were absolutely new under the sun. It must be conceded to these egotistic enthusiasts that a marked improvement has taken place of late in the attitude of Christian bodies toward the grave questions which agitate modern society. But it should be recognized that this is only a return to an original position, and is not by any means a novelty. How it came to pass that the followers of our Lord drifted from what may be termed the secular aspects of their mission, and for a season preached in such a way as to leave the impression that their exclusive business was to save men out of the world, and not to save them in it, and not to save the world with them, I will not attempt to recite. Only I resent the imputation that this was the governing ideal in the first ages of our blessed faith. Such was not the case. In the New Testament we read more about earth than about heaven, more about this life than the future one, more about time, with its duties and trials, than about eternity, with its delights and triumphs. This is written with a distinct recognition of the fact that our religion is primarily a redemption and afterward a reform; that it begins with faith in the unseen and so continues in works toward the seen. There is no desire to invalidate the essentially supernatural and spiritual side of Christianity, but only to protest against the assumption that it was not at the beginning equally practical and social. The success of its ministry in temporal things unquestionably depended on its spirituality, and on the everlasting felicity it proclaimed; but the reality of this temporal ministry cannot be overlooked or belittled without grievous injustice. This it is our duty to affirm, and if need be to reaffirm. The history of religion as revealed in the Bible is

¹ "History of European Morals," Vol. II, p. So.

intimately blended with national development and prosperity. Its rewards are mainly such as pertain to earth—wealth, renown, peace, security, and honor; and its punishments are of the same general kind—poverty, shame, strife, peril, and disgrace. So manifest is this in the Old Testament that some writers, like Warburton, fail to find there distinct intimations of immortality; while, in the New, it is now suspected that most of the passages in the "Apocalypse," which have heretofore been applied to the heavenly state, have primary reference to the saints in this world. But in addition to this, beginning with the Acts, we have in the Sacred Canon a record of recommendations, arrangements, movements, such as the appointment of deacons, the oversight of the poor, the laying by in store each Lord's day for the necessities of the saints, the respect due to civil authorities, the recognition of slaves as brethren, the injunctions regarding the sanctity of marriage and the exaltation of manual labor—all going to show that Christianity contemplated, from its earliest days, the regeneration of society as well as the regeneration of the individual. If this work is now engaging its attention as not before for several decades of years, we should be grateful, but we should understand that the disciples are simply going back to the original starting-point, and are not the authors of a new departure—all of which is abundantly corroborated by what is known of the prominence given to charity in the organization and service of the early Christian communities.

It occupied no subordinate place in the affairs of the "household of faith." Charity in the ancient Church was not a matter of secondary importance, receiving scant attention, or only monthly mention on the close of the great commemorative ordinance. It was not regarded as an incident or a diversion, but as one of the chief concerns of a Christian congregation. To have dealt with the subject superficially, fretfully, and hurriedly, as though it were an intruder and had no real claim for sympathetic consideration, would have been denounced by the primitive saints as disloyalty to Christ who had commended the poor to the care of his people. I have mentioned in a previous chapter certain benefit societies, particularly the *collegia funeraticia*, which yielded certain advantages to their members. Some writers have hastily classed these as eleemosynary, when in fact they were only a form of mutual provident associations, in which for definite dues paid specific returns were made. Their formation was principally prudential not philanthropical, and they were no more charitable in spirit and scope than are our modern life assurance companies.

But what such organizations in the empire did for a pecuniary equivalent, the Church did, and even more, for love of God and man. While she undoubtedly attached great importance to the salvation of souls, we need have no hesitancy in believing, on the testimony of her institutions and literature, that she sought with almost equal diligence to provide for the necessities of the body. Indeed, were we to judge from what we know of her elaborate arrangements for the care of the poor, we might easily drift into the erroneous impression that she was exclusively devoted to temporalities. In the Acts we have an account of the election of seven deacons, whose supreme business it was to look after the indigent; but we have not there a single word about choosing workers for "Inquiry Rooms," or for "Strangers," and "Outlook Committees," whose sole aim it should be to bring the negligent under the influence of the Gospel or explain to the troubled conscience the way of life. It is also to be noted that the pastor of the church in these formative times did not hand the benevolences of his charge over to the sole management of his deacons. To the official who served as chairman, and who was foremost in administration, there came to be applied the name of *episkopos*, *i. e.*, "overseer"; and it is supposed that as this name was given in Asia Minor and Syria to officers of heathen associations who superintended the finances, that it came to be bestowed on the elder of the church selected to be the leader, because to him was intrusted the offerings, and because he was mainly responsible for their fair and honest distribution. A "bishop," when the name became current among the saints, denoted one who was in a sense chief of almoners, having committed to him the indigent and wretched. Whatever other functions he may have exercised—and unquestionably they were varied and solemn—he was never relieved of the obligation to be first and foremost in furnishing assistance. It never occurred to him to plead that he was so busy preparing sermons or holding gospel meetings that he had no time for personal visitation of the suffering, or for faithful inquiry into the needs of the dependent. Such a statement would have shocked the entire brotherhood: for in those early days, as in the time of Jerome, "The glory of a bishop lay in relieving the poverty of the poor."

Likewise would the Christian community have been horrified if the oversight and succor of the unemployed, of widows, orphans, and destitute strangers had been undertaken reluctantly, and had been carried forward coldly and niggardly, as though the beneficiaries were imposters, having no claim on human sym-

pathy and generosity. Charity in the ancient Church was not administered in a perfunctory almshouse fashion. But, while care was taken to prevent fraud, everything was done to sanctify and exalt the service. The gifts of the congregation were brought to the altar, and were accepted by the bishop, who in turn invoked God's blessing on them. Then, when they were distributed, they were sent out from the altar, with the blessing still resting on them. In this manner the great truth was suggested that temporal ministrations should be religious in spirit; that sacrifices for the social welfare of the race are sacred in God's sight; and that, as the Fathers ever refer to these gifts as sacrifices, they rank in dignity next to the sublime oblation presented once for all on behalf of man's redemption from sin and death. So, likewise, the recipient was taught, on receiving his portion from the altar, that he was not forsaken by Providence, but that God was watching over him and providing for his necessities. It was not the brother he saw first of all when he ate and was filled, but the All Father, "from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift." He was not educated, therefore, to believe that he had a right to the possessions of his more prosperous brother, and that he might in a fit of desperation take him by the throat and demand from him his living; but he was trained to expect deliverance from the Almighty in seasons of extremity. The method pursued interposed the Church between the benefactor and the beneficiary, thus guarding the one from pride and the other from sycophancy, and bringing both to a realizing sense of their relation to the Supreme Being. And as Uhlhorn effectively puts it: "It was just at the altar where all the members of the Church, both rich and poor, know themselves to be one in the Lord, that the equalization of property between rich and poor by giving and receiving also took place in love."¹ Nor was there any compulsion used, unless it was the compulsion of love, to extract from the prosperous the means requisite to help the children of adversity. Tertullian writes: "Everyone deposits a moderate contribution monthly, if he chooses and if he can, for no one is forced, but each contributes voluntarily."² Thus also Justin Martyr testifies: "Those who are able and who desire to do so, give of their free will as much as they choose. What is collected is deposited with the president, and with it he supports the widows and orphans, and those who through sickness or any other cause are in want, assists prisoners and strangers, and provides for the needy in general." This generous freedom must have

gone far toward preventing the degradation of charity. What was bestowed was no forced loan, but was the spontaneous surrender of riches which love gladly set apart for the good of the race.

The pains taken to magnify this ministry proves conclusively how highly it was prized by the Church, and how thoroughly it occupied her thought and labors. In her supplications it was prominent. The rich were taught to pray for the poor, and the poor for the rich, on the assumption that prayer makes clearer reciprocal obligations. Moreover, all classes joined in petitions on behalf of the hungry, naked, and homeless ones. The most ancient forms of prayer extant are devoted largely to these objects; and thus this entire ministry was lifted up to the highest plane of piety, and was invested with moral and spiritual grandeur. And, as yet the more to accentuate this pre-eminent dignity, holy women were in the first ages of the Church consecrated to the work of philanthropy. That there were deaconesses in the congregations of the faithful, and that they were set apart to the service of charity is now generally conceded by ecclesiastical historians. It was impossible for bishops or laymen to visit the homes of women in distress without giving rise in heathen communities to possible slanders. Agencies, therefore, had to be engaged, whose movements were not liable to excite gross suspicions. Every precaution was taken to avoid misapprehension, but the offices of tender charity were not permitted to be suspended or impeded. The fact that women were enlisted in this cause, even on behalf of their own sex, at a time when public opinion was decidedly against their participation in activities outside the household, goes to show that the Church was so deeply impressed by its sacredness that she ignored conventionalities rather than suffer it to be narrowed or restrained. Although she respected in some degree the prejudices of society, she felt far more for the necessities of the human family. The latter must be met at any cost, short of character and reputation—that is, short of the very power necessary to success in religious labors. With her, fashion and custom counted for little, and philanthropy for everything. She quietly pushed aside from her path the senseless usages of the world, that love might pursue its mission; and in doing so she has taught once for all, not only that woman has as large a place in the service of goodness as man, but that the goodness which nurses the sick, succors the oppressed, and feeds and clothes the destitute is as precious in God's sight as temple-building and temple-treading.¹

¹ "Christian Charity in Ancient Church," p. 146.

² "Christian Charity in Ancient Church," p. 142.

¹ Isaiah i, 12 (Revised Version).

This general conclusion is further established by the vastness and variety of the benefactions which distinguished the ancient Church. Her liberality is almost incredible in these days of calculating benevolence, in which her successor has, for the most part, handed over to outside organizations and municipal boards what was directly committed to her by Christ. Unquestionably, the demands on the bounty of the faithful in the earlier times were more numerous and more imperative than in ours; but this only intensifies the contrast between the past and the present, and brings into clearer relief the magnificent generosity of the people who for three centuries confronted, as at last they confounded, the heathen world. Perhaps an estimate of its extent may not be without salutary influence on modern congregations that have of late years measurably departed from the original ideal of saintly service in the temporal things.

Dr. Alfred Plummer quotes a passage from Eusebius as showing that 1,500 widows and orphans were sustained by the Christians of Rome when Cornelius was the most prominent ecclesiastic of the city (250 A. D.).¹ At a later date the Church in Antioch supported 3,000 dependents. Cyprian collected an amount equal to £1,000 for the ransom of prisoners, at a period when persecution had crippled the resources of God's children. It is also to be remembered that this famous man, when he was converted (245 A. D.), sold his patrimony and gave the proceeds to the poor. This surrender of lands and money for the alleviation of suffering was not uncommon in the age following that of the apostles. But, whether carried to this extreme or not, everyone who owned or earned anything set aside a part for the benefit of the less fortunate. Giving, then, was general, withholding was exceptional. Nor could it be otherwise, if Christianity was to advance in the presence of its adversaries. The needs to be met were so numerous that only could they be honored by substantial unanimity in offerings. The new dispensation claimed to have a message for the poor, and naturally the poor thronged and crowded to hear its encouraging words. These neglected classes in the heathen world had not thrust themselves on the attention of religion; but religion had invited them to come and listen. Hence they came. They were looking for a "door of hope"; they were hungry for cheer and they were ready to give any teacher audience. And it was very far from the thought of the apostolic or sub-apostolic Church to pose as the friend of the needy, and then say with frigid and icy politeness to the starving: "Be filled,"

or to the naked: "Be clothed." In times more modern such pretense may have passed unrebuked, but it would not have been tolerated in the earlier centuries. Christian congregations in these latter days may claim to be especially interested in the destitute, as many do, and yet scarcely raise a finger in their behalf, and thus lose, as many have lost, their hold on the confidence of working people; for such unjustifiable and cheap professions would have proved fatal at the beginning. Then the lowly, the despised, the slave, the outcast, were welcomed to the cross; and they were not disappointed. They were dealt with as brethren and sisters and equals before the bar of God, and were lovingly taught and generously succored. It is not difficult to imagine how numerous must have been the objects of compassion in these circumstances. Multitudes pressed forward to accept the gospel of charity, and were won by it to the gospel of grace and goodness. Doubtless not a few availed themselves of the first without embracing the second. Imposters were frequent then as now. But the Christians of those times did not permit the falseness of some beneficiaries to steel their hearts against the true; and they never could have understood the pitiable casuistry of more recent years that excuses the withholding of aid from all on account of the trickery of some. Measured by the extent of the poverty in the Roman world, the bounty of the saints who fought the battle against heathenism was simply incomputable. For it should not be forgotten that while they did good to "the household of faith," they never failed to consider the privations of the masses who were yet aliens to its joys.

Tertullian wrote: "All men love their friends; Christians alone love their enemies."¹ "If we show kindness only to our own," says Cyprian, "we do no more than publicans and heathen. As Christians who would become perfect, we must overcome evil with good, love our enemies, as the Lord exhorts, and pray for our persecutors. Since we are born of God, we must show ourselves to be the children of our Father, who continually causes his sun to rise, and from time to time gives showers to nourish the seed, exhibiting all these kindnesses, not only to his people, but to aliens also." And the reason for this spirit of universal benevolence is comprehensively expressed in the eloquent remonstrance of Lactantius: "Why do ye select persons? He is to be esteemed by you as a man, whoever implores you, because he considers you a man." Likewise Dionysius, in an extract preserved by Eusebius, gives an affecting illustration of the self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice inspired by this exalted en-

¹ "Church of the Early Fathers," p. 102.

¹ Uhlhorn, "Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," p. 204.

thusiasm for humanity. Referring to the pestilence that ravaged Alexandria under Gallienus (265 A. D.), he writes: "Most of our brethren, in the fullness of their brotherly love, did not spare themselves. They mutually took care of each other, and as, instead of preserving themselves they attended on the sick, and willingly did their service for Christ's sake, they joyfully laid down their lives with them. Many died after having been by their exertions the means of restoring others. The best among the brethren, many presbyters, deacons, and distinguished laymen, ended their lives in this manner, so that their deaths, which were the result of piety and strong faith, seem not inferior to martyrdom. Many who took into their hands and laid upon their bosoms the bodies of Christian brothers, closed their mouths and eyes, and reverently interred them, soon followed them in death. It was quite different with the heathen. They thrust out those who were beginning to sicken, fled from those who were dearest, and cast the dying into the streets; they let the dead lie unburied in their desire to avoid infection, which nevertheless they could not escape."

While in such supreme moments the heroism of charity is manifested, nevertheless, its commonplace ministrations afford the true criterion of its extent. We return, therefore, to the review of its ordinary operations in the ancient Church. Care was taken that none of the brethren should become paupers. What is now called outdoor relief was common. The almoners visited the homes of the poor, and carried with them food and clothing, and occasionally money. Gifts of the latter were limited and rare, because money could more readily be abused than supplies of the necessities of life; and then it was required for special services in which other offerings would have proven useless. When men abandoned callings proscribed by Christian teachers, they were not permitted to suffer want. If they turned aside from the theatrical profession, if they ended all connection with gladiatorial exhibitions, as trainers, officers, or judges, and if they refused longer to buy and sell articles employed in pagan worship, they were not heartlessly left to starve. Had it been otherwise; had it been as it frequently has been since, that desperate characters, social ruffians, and fallen women, having been exhorted to repent, had found all avenues to honorable self-support closed against them, and no other alternative remaining but to return to sin or starve, Christianity would not have multiplied converts from the submerged classes. The churches in those early times were not exclusive; they were not aristocratic clubs—little groups of paltry, purse-proud individuals—seeking for social distinc-

tion through ecclesiastical affiliations. They were rather companies of honest, earnest souls, who were bound together by the determined purpose to rescue their fellow-beings, even the most vile, from sin and shame; and who to effect so noteworthy an end were willing to associate with the redeemed and aid them personally in every possible way. And as they generously provided for the unfortunate who came to them, they were always considerate of the unfortunate who were of their membership. Widows and orphans were looked on as a sacred and precious charge. The former, as far as possible, were set apart to philanthropic work, and in this way supported themselves. They were not encouraged to marry a second time, and probably in the latter portion of the second century they were collected into families by themselves for greater security. Fatherless and motherless children were conscientiously educated. The boys especially were taught trades and were furnished with tools; and the elevation of labor and the beginning of manual training schools may be traced to those early endeavors to equip the young for usefulness. The Church, at this period of her history, did not canonize pious laziness and mendicancy. She insisted that they who would not toil should not eat, and she withheld her bounty from the willfully idle and shiftless. In adopting orphans, therefore, she aimed to make them self-reliant, and upright, and frugal; and she tried so to guide the girls that they would wed only men with these virtues, and sought to develop the boys into just such men. Moreover, feeling that she was appointed of God to the loving oversight of the helpless, she extended her charities to the slave. There is no evidence that she openly antagonized slavery as an institution of the empire. But she proclaimed the unity of the race, and the natural brotherhood of mankind. She hence came to the protection of the oppressed. The bondman stood on a level with the free-man in the communion of the faithful. Much was done by the saints to mitigate his lot. They themselves were restrained from cruel exactions by anathemas against all who presumed on their strength to abuse the weak. It would seem, also, from a passage in the Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, where he exhorts slaves not to long for the Church to ransom them, that manumission was receiving considerable attention. But as yet it was not common. The slave was invested by his membership in the Christian society with all the attributes and dignities of manhood, and was eligible to any of its offices. Thus Callistus, who succeeded Zephyrinus as bishop of Rome (219 A. D.), was born in bondage. He triumphed over the disadvantages of birth and

fortune, and became chief prelate of a mighty city. His elevation was not exceptional, but it illustrates the fact that a new principle was working—love for humanity, wherever found and in whatever condition.

It was this that prompted the respect shown for the slave who was striving to be free in Christ Jesus. Likewise, it was this love that impelled to acts of hospitality, and to generous sacrifices on behalf of captives in the mines, and for the comfort of those noble men and women who were doomed to martyrdom. The stranger was welcome to a refuge in the household of his brother Christian. He was not thrust away, exposed to the perils of a vast heathen community. He was greeted with a kiss and served with solicitous zeal. And they who had been exiled to Sardinia and elsewhere on account of the faith were not forgotten in the ministrations of charity. Letters were written to them. They were reminded of the sympathy of their fellow-disciples; and they were assured that those dependent on them were not neglected or suffered to want. Thus their courage and their faith were sustained, and they were enabled, to the confusion of their foes, to "rejoice in tribulation."

If there is anything lacking in this picture of brotherly interest and compassion, it is supplied by the *Agapæ*, or feasts of love, as observed before Tertullian's defection to Montanism, and long after the earlier communistic rhapsody at Jerusalem had ceased to be imitated. The spreading of a common table where rich and poor met on terms of perfect equality, reminding the former that he was no higher than his brother, where also the slave and the stranger could sit down together, had in it a touch of delicate consideration for those whose social standing was humble, and whose pecuniary means were straitened. Here no distinctions of rank were discernable. Here, likewise, grew the idea of fraternity that voluntarily gave of its substance for the good of all, and that sought through temporal blessings the advancement of spiritual life. The insight Tertullian gives into the observance of this meal shows clearly that, while it contributed to earthly human needs, like the charity of which it was at once the expression and the celebration, it was made to further the immortal destiny of the soul. This is his description, and its reproduction here may fittingly conclude our examination of the manifoldness of philanthropy in primitive Christian assemblies: "As the motive of the feast is an honorable one, you may estimate accordingly the regulation of the rest of our conduct, how it corresponds with our religious duty, which allows of nothing mean, nothing superfluous. We do not sit down to table till prayer to God has been first

tasted; we eat as much as the hungry need, we drink no more than serves the modest. We appease our hunger as those who know that we must pray to God even during the night; we talk with the consciousness that the Lord hears us. After we have washed hands and the lamps are lighted, the summons to praise God goes forth to all, and he who is able to impart anything out of the Word of God, or from his own mind, does so. Herein lies the test as to how we have drunk. The whole meeting closes with prayer, and we do not separate to commit improprieties in the streets, but continue our practice of decency, because we are not coming from a drinking bout, but from an exercise of propriety and modesty."

That to the ministry of charity in the ancient Church much of her success was due in overcoming pagan antagonism is admitted by all who have taken pains to acquaint themselves with the facts. Contemporary heathen writers express their admiration of a grace that achieved so potently, and multiplied its offices so wonderfully. They acknowledged its power. It is not that they accused Christianity of seducing the adherents of the older creeds by bribes of money; but that they perceived the influence of its benevolence on the character and conduct of its recipients. The mendicant was relieved; but, at the same time, he was quickened, by the way in which he had been aided, to industry and diligence. But he not only received; for, as soon as he possessed anything, he bestowed. There was a ceaseless interchange of resources; the strong succoring the weak, the rich relieving the poor. And such were the spirit and method of this commerce that from it was evolved a new and noble type of manhood. While mutual dependence grew, individual independence attained remarkable proportions. The man was not lost in the society. He was not pauperized by the gratuity on which for the time being he subsisted. But, rather, the love that inspired and accompanied the bounty roused in him every latent and slumbering energy to render its continuance unnecessary. He was so fully instructed in the dignity of humanity, as God-begotten and Christ-redeemed, that he could not endure the thought of degradation to the level of a parasite. The brilliant triumphs of charity in morally transforming the multitudes it provided for were so dazzling, that, even long after its springs had become polluted and its fair image had been defaced by superstitions, their very memory stimulated the further advancement of Christianity. And, even after it had been so completely perverted as to be more of a curse than a blessing, the fame of its first victories was cherished, and the loss of the grace by which it had wrought so transcend-

ently lamented with tears. For there has always been a vision, more or less clear, of the truth that, if the Church should ever again be charitable with the charity of the early centuries, she could easily make herself mistress of the world. But as long as the modern tendency is followed, such a result is impossible. That tendency is toward machinery, red tape, corporations, and systems, all absolutely soulless. The demand is for wheels, for wheels within wheels, but with no "living creature" in the wheels. Admirable as such arrangements may be in producing inanimate things, they are cruelly fatal when they are copied in dealing with thinking, sentient, immortal beings. A man in poverty needs the touch of a *man's* hand, and the throb of a *man's* heart, and not the cold scrutiny of a functionary. In this ministration, as in others of a similar kind, the letter killeth; it is the spirit that quickeneth.

Among the patrician families of the empire, landscape gardening was carried to the extreme of absurd artificiality. No tree, shrub, or flower was allowed to grow naturally. Every plant was cut, hewn, twisted and forced into the most singular of semblances. In the Laurentine estate of Pliny the younger, and in the extensive grounds of Mæcenas, hedges, bushes, groves were shaped into architectural forms; vegetation was trimmed to assume geometrical figures, and foliage was so bent as to imitate letters, spelling the names of the owner and the artist. Everything was stiff, angular, and pedantic. If the thought of the *topiarius*, or head gardener, who conceived it all was pregnant, the image certainly was not picturesque. For what the landscape gained in regularity and precision, it lost in expression and loveliness. It might elicit the encomiums of a perverted taste, but could never command the enthusiasm of a poetic temperament. Such gardening resembled too closely the painted scenery of a theater for it to rouse and exalt the spiritual in man. Equally impotent is charity when it is subject to the pruning knife, and loses its simplicity and artlessness. When it is systematized out of all resemblance to its real self, and becomes a mere thing of rule and order, a mass of artificiality, in which skillfully appear the names of liberal donors rather than the heart of Christ, it may occasionally serve some practical end, but it never can refine, uplift, and renovate the nature with which it has to deal. But let it return to its original freedom and spontaneity, and be true to its own spirit, and its ministry will now be as fruitful in good as ever it was in the past. Alms grudgingly given, or alms hurriedly bestowed to escape importunity, and accompanied by no effort, and, what is worse, by no desire, to abate the ills that foster indigence,

are of no special advantage to individuals or communities. What is required in our day is something more than a pitiable dole, more even than Agrarian laws, and more than complicated organizations — HUMANITY, the humanity of the early Church, that first of all treated every man considerately, fairly, tenderly, humanely; and then in emergencies generously and bountifully, even to the point of personal self-sacrifice. This is what is needed. This is indispensable, and in proportion as the old ideal is newly realized will Christianity be successful in its gracious mission. Our duty at this crisis is expressed by a poet in lines of imperishable beauty:

"Feel for all as brother man!
Rest not in hope, want's icy chain to thaw
By casual boons and formal charities;
Learn to be just, just through impartial law.
Far as you may, enact and equalize,
And what ye cannot reach by statute draw
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice."¹

In the second century the obscuration of charity began; and, though the history of its total eclipse belongs to a period not embraced in the present narrative, its origin and primary stages, occurring as they do within its limits, call for special consideration. The writings of Origen and Cyprian reveal a tendency to magnify good works, and to invest them with some degree of saving efficacy. Cyprian went so far as to declare that, unless God "had opened to us a way of salvation through works of mercy, that we might by alms wash off the defilements of sin," baptism itself would have been of no avail. From this time onward almsgiving comes more and more to be regarded as an atonement. It is lauded as a means of deliverance from guilt; and is urged on believers, not so much as a generous expression of love for others, as an expiation for the spiritual benefit of self. The downward trend was rapid, and soon after the accession of Constantine the bottom of the incline was reached. Selfishness usurped the throne and assumed the name and the robes of charity. Henceforward a pitiable travesty of this divine grace was all that seemed left to the Church. Making allowance for many remarkable exceptions, the majority of professed Christians sacrificed their possessions merely in the interest of their own souls. They invested their money in heaven as worldly-minded citizens invested theirs in desirable lots in Rome. Profit, not philanthropy, was their motive, and none the less real because the payment was not expected until after death. The commercial spirit was fatal to the benevolent spirit. When the distribution of food and clothing was converted into a pious device by which a throne could be obtained in heaven,

¹ Wordsworth.

just as the donations of corn and wine had been used as a political expedient to secure a throne on earth, the humanizing influences that had proceeded from actual charity were felt no longer. Offerings increased in number. Orphanages were founded, hospitals were built, missions were commenced, magnificent churches were erected, and other works of devotion were projected, and yet the people were not advanced in godliness and industry. Decline in manhood was unhappily prevalent, and apparently the more abundant the gratuities, the lower the social degradation. The selfishness of reputed benefactors was speedily reproduced in the beneficiaries. If it was not argued out logically, it was acted on consistently, that the duty of the idle and indigent was simply to remain idle and indigent; otherwise, how could the rich obtain the rewards of endless felicity? To labor and thus to suppress poverty would be to deprive the affluent of their opportunity to earn a seat in the coming kingdom. Manifestly such a course would be inconsiderate and unfair. Moreover, what more reasonable than to conclude that if shiftlessness and dependence enabled the liberal to reach a higher station in heaven, there must be something meritorious in these tattered qualities, which, if duly cherished for the sake of the opulent, might even serve to increase the everlasting glory of their victims?

In some such way as this the early victories of charity were reversed by the substitution of a counterfeit. Christianity as an institution increased in wealth. She added acre to acre, house to house, even principality to principality, and outvied earthly monarchies in possessions and splendor; but her constituents became poorer and poorer. Her secular glory became her spiritual shame. Her vestments dazzled; her jeweled altars enchanted; her stately palaces, rich in costly paintings and marble, appealed to the imagination; but the besoiled, hungry, and half-naked worshippers were her constant and increasing reproach. She had gained much, she had lost more. Tinsel for gold, paste for diamonds, and marvelous creations in stone for more marvelous sway in souls of men—such was her wretched traffic, by which she purchased security at the cost of freedom, and regal authority at the cost of spiritual power.

Lord Salisbury, in his famous address delivered at Oxford (1894) before the British Association, called attention to a case of butterflies in the South Kensington Museum, whose wings when closed exactly resemble the leaves of the tree on which it lives. When extended the

wings are beautiful with brilliant colors. But when the butterfly is most glorious it is most exposed to peril. When it unfolds its conspicuous charms, the merops, a small bird that feeds on insects, is ready to assail its life. Safety lies in resting on a leaf, for the imitation is so complete that no one—bird or man—would suspect the tiny creature to be other than part of the foliage.

The apostles were constantly admonishing the saints not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their mind. By disobeying this injunction they might escape their foes, but they would then sacrifice those distinctive peculiarities which render them of service to mankind. If they made themselves like the society in which they dwelt, they might not be attacked, but they would surely conceal the real beauty of their character and mission. To open their wings, to fly, to reveal what they were, and to do what they were winged to accomplish, was at once to differentiate themselves from others, and to expect success from dissimilitude and not from resemblance. And, in the same manner, if the charities of the Church are to effect only good and not evil, they must not be conceived in the spirit of the world, nor be administered according to its methods. The poorhouse system, as carried out by various municipalities, religious societies should blush to copy. And they should be equally careful not to propose the substitution of communism for charity. Such a scheme strikes at benevolence itself. Communism would not be likely to succeed in abolishing social ills, and in the effort to establish it, as its ultimate basis is selfishness, charity would expire. Endeavors in this direction by Christian people always seem to be prompted by a desire to transfer the obligation of the Church toward the poor to the State. There is an element of heartlessness and cowardice in it. We may rest assured that these tactics of evasion will in the end prove as abortive as the unhappy reforms of the Gracchi. For no measure, however judicious it may appear to worldly wisdom, can put an end to poverty and its attendant miseries that fails to bring the helper and helped into personal relations of love and sympathy. Charity, to be in the highest and grandest sense successful, must to the end of time seek its prototype in the method of him who came to redeem mankind: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."¹

¹ II. Corinthians viii, 9.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEMORIALS OF FAITH.

THERE is perhaps no spot on earth more sadly fascinating than an ancient and crowded cemetery. Whether it be Bunhill fields in London, or old Grey Friars in Edinburgh, or the old Granary in Boston, the heart must grow tender as the feet wander among the humble or stately abodes of those who have been so long dead that no friend survives to recall their features or recount their deeds. The hands that once decorated with flowers these receptacles of death have themselves become dust; and the spots consecrated by affection in the distant past to perennial beauty have become tiny wildernesses of briars and weeds. Melancholy thoughts will rise in presence of the ruined mausoleum of an Augustus, or when contemplating the fallen tombstone, mossy with age, that marked the resting place of some village dignitary. Thus, then, do all things tend toward inevitable decay, and thus does envious oblivion war against our graves.

But, apart from mere sentimental reflections, each venerable necropolis arrests attention and solemnly impresses by the memorials it preserves of ideals and customs which were cherished by former generations. Epitaphs and mortuary symbols are commentaries on the progress of mankind. In them may be traced the history of religious beliefs, and in them may be read accounts of what other ages considered great and noble. An inscription may be as valuable to the student as a priestly code or creed; and a pyramid, cenotaph, or cinerary urn may throw as much light on extinct civilizations as the more direct testimony of papyrus and vellum. From the prehistoric cemeteries of the Viminal and Esquiline hills the antiquary has derived information, which enables him to identify the earliest settlers of Rome with the peoples of Etruria and Magna Græcia. Also from the rows of tombs which border the Via Appia, the Via Latina, the Salaria and Nomentana, he has learned much of the pursuits, hopes, ambitions, and habits which prevailed before the Christian era. Something of the religious spirit of those remote days may be gathered from epitaphs which yet survive. Thus, a young widow has carved on the monument to her beloved these startling sentences: "To the adorable, blessed soul of L. Sempromius Firmus. We knew, we loved each other from childhood; married, an impious hand separated us at once. Oh, *infernal gods*, do be kind and merciful to him, and let him appear to me in

the silent hours of the night." A mother has hewn on the face of a sarcophagus these affecting words: "Oh, miserable mother, who hast seen the most cruel end of thy children! *If God had been merciful*, thou hadst been buried by them." Somewhat revengeful the imprecations which also appear, as when one dead man is represented as crying from his resting place: "Whoever steals the nails from this structure, may he thrust them into his eyes;" and unhappily spiteful the entreaty on a gravestone in the Vigna Codini: "Lawyers and the evil-eyed keep away from my tomb."¹ On the marble coffin of Julia Prisca Secunda is inscribed the remarkable tribute: "She committed no fault, except to die."

Frederika Bremer, having examined the memorials to the dead along the famous Appian Way, extending over the Roman Campagna, declares that their manifold tributes "bear witness to the grief of the living for the dead, but never the hope of reunion." But while much of the past has been learned from these sources, were it possible to restore the thousands of ruined tombs which environ the "Eternal City," and fully decipher their almost illegible characters, it would be a comparatively easy task to revive the old Roman world in the essentials of its thought and activity.

In a similar manner and from similar material can the primitive Church, especially as a suffering and martyr-body, be reproduced and rehabilitated. Such material has been furnished by the Catacombs. To the Christian no other asylum of the dead equals in pathetic interest these ancient labyrinthine passages where the persecuted saints sought an altar and a grave. Jerome, writing about the middle of the fourth century, describes them as they were in his day, saying that he "was accustomed as a youth, when studying in Rome, to visit these dark and dreary spots on Sundays, in order to see the tombs of apostles and martyrs, and often to enter the crypts, which are dry, in the depths of the earth, where the walls on each side of the visitors are lined with bodies of the dead, and all is so dark as to seem almost to fulfill the prophecy, 'They go down alive into hell'; for the light being admitted at few intervals from above, and then not by a window, but a hole, renders the darkness horrible, and, in

¹Lanciani, "Pagan and Christian Rome," pp. 234-263; or Lanciani, "Ancient Rome," chap. iii, p. 67.

advancing cautiously, surrounded by dark night, the line of Virgil occurs to the mind:

*'Horror ubi animos simul ipsa silentia terrent.'*¹

Some uncertainty attaches to the origin of these gloomy galleries. It has been held, and with show of truth, that the excavations were first formed by quarrying the volcanic sandy rock for the purpose of supplying stone for the erection of buildings, and afterward increased in order to procure sand for cement. They are mentioned by various Latin authors, as Horace, Varro, Cicero, and Suetonius. It is supposed that originally the bodies of infants, whose parents were too poor to pay for their cremation, were interred there. In a part of these subterranean retreats the early Christians deposited their dead. This is hardly called in question. It is stated by some authorities that as the "Arenarii," or sand-diggers, belonged to the poorer orders of the people, it is not unlikely that Christianity made many converts among them, as it usually did among the needy, and that, in imitation of Christ's burial in a tomb, they would naturally prepare cave-like vaults for the reception of their dead. It is certain that the disciples of the first centuries departed from cremation, adopted inhumation, and expressed their view of death and the hope of the resurrection by giving to the localities where the remains of loved ones were committed to the earth the soft, sweet name of *cæmeteria*, "sleeping-places." It should be borne in mind, in this connection, that the term "catacomb" has no relation whatever to sepulture; for it simply denotes in the Greek, whence it was derived, a "hollow," and was given, on account of the configuration of the ground, to a particular locality in the neighborhood of Rome. In the course of time, as artificial "hollows" were used as burial places, these receptacles came to be known as *cæmeteria ad catacumbas*, or, for short, merely as *catacumbæ*. Not a few notable scholars challenge the opinion that these retreats were at the beginning quarries furnishing Rome with building material. On this point write Northcote and Brownlow: "It has always been agreed among men of learning who have had an opportunity of examining these excavations, that they were used exclusively by the Christians as places of burial and of holding religious assemblies. Modern research has now placed it beyond a doubt that they were also originally designed for this purpose, and for no other; and they were not deserted sand-pits (*arenariæ*) or quarries, adapted to Christian uses, but a

development, with important modifications, of a form of sepulcher not altogether unknown even among the heathen families of Rome, and in common use among the Jews, both in Rome and elsewhere."¹

I am not convinced that doubt has entirely ceased on this interesting subject, but it is not sufficiently important to call for a balancing of evidence in these pages. The one fact, concerning which there is practically no controversy, is all that appeals to the reader. The early Christians did choose these tortuous subterranean galleries for their dead, or fashioned them with their own hands from the start, that they might serve as enduring tombs. It is not, however, to be concluded that this preference for underground cemeteries was at the beginning due to fear.² The Roman government acknowledged the inviolability of grave and mausoleum. It did not war on the charnel house. Whether the deceased was good or bad, Pagan or Nazarene, his right to undisturbed repose was recognized. By the force of existing laws the cemeteries of the Church were sacred. For a time, therefore, the disciples interred above ground, and gave no signs of a sense of insecurity. But with the persecution of Domitian (95 A. D.), they withdrew as far as possible from publicity. Then they penetrated the bowels of the earth and in the thick darkness sought protection, haunted by the vague fear that even the last refuges allotted to the dead might be outraged by the lawlessness of the mob. It is more than likely that these dark chambers also afforded an occasional asylum to the living. When the authorities were proscribing the faithful, here they could find a temporary resting place, and often, along narrow ways unknown to government officials, an avenue of escape. But we are not to suppose that the existence of the Catacombs was altogether successfully concealed from the representatives of the State. We have accounts of descents made by officers of the law during the persecutions of Valerian and Diocletian on fugitives who had fled to these underground mazes. But while some of the Catacombs were unquestionably known to the authorities, it is probable that others were securely hidden, and that there were also roads winding in such confusion and leading to such depths as to be perilous to the uninitiated. Detectives would pause before venturing into this seemingly endless wilderness, and soldiers, accustomed to ply their vocation in the open air, would not be anxious to go very far in the inextricable tangle of ways in places heavy with the atmosphere of the charnel house. But what would prove, or might prove, destructive to the

¹ See Maitland, "Church in the Catacombs."

"All things are full of horror and affright
And dreadful even the silence of the night."

—Dryden's "Virgil," *Æneid* II, 755.

² See Lanciani, "Pagan and Christian Rome," chap. vii.



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FROM MARTYR'S TOMB.

stranger, would naturally be a means of safety to those who knew how to thread their path through the labyrinth, where to find springs of water and breathing holes, and the larger rooms where occasionally groups met for worship. In times of comparative rest the saints would frequent these retreats and become familiar with their secrets, and probably would hold religious services there; convene there, also, for counsel, and there arrange for missionary expeditions and other forms of Christian work; and when anew the savage cry: "To the lions!" broke on their ear, and carried momentary terror to the hearts of maid and mother, would withdraw deeper into the darkness and thus in measure avoid the tempest it was impossible to avert. In other words, Lord Lindsay's description, pathetic and impressive, must have had a counterpart in reality: "All this while there was living beneath the visible an invisible Rome—a population unheeded, unreckoned—thought of vaguely, vaguely spoken of, and with the familiarity and indifference that men feel who live on a volcano—yet a population strong-hearted, of quick impulses, nerved alike to suffer or to die, and in number, resolution, and physical force sufficient to have hurled their oppressors from the throne of the world, had they not deemed it their duty to kiss the rod, to love their enemies, to bless those that cursed them, and to submit, for their Redeemer's sake, to 'the powers that be.' Here in these 'dens and caves of the earth' they lived; here they died—a 'spectacle' in their life-time 'to men and angels,' and in their death a 'triumph' to mankind—a triumph of which the echoes still float around the walls of Rome, and over the desolate Campagna, while those that once thrilled the capital are silenced, and the walls that returned them have long since crumbled into dust."¹

Mommsen dwells with considerable emphasis on "the enormous space occupied by the burial vaults of Christian Rome, not surpassed even by the *cloacæ* or sewers of Republican Rome";² and various explorers have tried to fix with something like approximate exactness their dimensions. Padre Marchi estimates the total length of the galleries to be from 800 to 900 miles, and the population of the dead at 6,000,000 or 7,000,000.³ These figures are startling. They are larger, however, than Northcote thinks the circumstances warrant. Michele Stefano de' Rossi occupies a middle ground and calculates the aggregate length of the galleries at 587 geographical miles, with a little short of 2,000,000 of *loculi* for the re-

mains of the saints. But if we are to construe "*ingens multitudo*" (a vast multitude) of Tacitus as Rawlinson¹ would have us, and consequently, with the "Edinburgh Review,"² believe that in the age of Valerian the Christians were reckoned at one-half the population of Rome, then the weight of evidence is rather on the side of Marchi's estimate than on that of de' Rossi. While we are naturally interested in the vast extent of these subterranean burial grounds, we are really more directly concerned with their wonderful contents. Perhaps I ought to say, "with what they did contain"; for many of their treasures have been removed.

It was May 31, 1578, that a workman employed in the vineyard of Bartolomeo Sanchez discovered a Christian cemetery, rich in frescoes, sarcophagi, and inscriptions. Many leading men of the age, among them Cardinal Baronius, investigated the spot and were deeply impressed by what they saw—"the network of galleries crossing one another at various angles, the skylights, the wells, the symmetry of the *cubiculi* and *areosolia*, and the number of *loculi* with which the sides of the galleries were honeycombed."

It appears that, from the ninth century to the sixteenth, the very existence of the Catacombs had been lost sight of. Generations had swept across the sleeping places of the early saints little dreaming that they were treading on hallowed ground. Then came the day of discovery, which brought to light memorials of primitive Christianity, and laid the foundations of Christian archæology. But all of these memorials were not permitted to remain where originally found. With successive explorations the tombs and chapels have been largely despoiled. Museums, villas, churches, and monasteries have been adorned at the expense of the dead. Precious medallions, engraved stones, jewels, and other curios have been purloined from altar and grave, and are proudly exhibited in the Vatican and in other celebrated collections of antiquities. Moreover, in the course of this wholesale pillage, numerous frescoes have been ruined by the hands that were seeking to remove them, as in the case of some beautiful pictures that had ornamented the crypt of the Flavian family. Concerning the widespread destruction of these mortuary treasures, Lanciani inquires: "Who were responsible for this wholesale pillage?" And he answers: "The very men—Aringhi, Boldetti, Marangoni, Bottari—who devoted their lives, energies, and talents to the study of the Catacombs. . . Such was the spirit of the age. Whether an historical inscription came out of one cemetery or another did not

¹ "Christian Art," I, p. 4.

² "Contemporary Review," May, 1871.

³ "*Monumenti della Arti Christiane Primitivæ.*"

¹ "Historical Evidences," p. 218.

² "Review," No. 221, p. 106.

matter to them; the topographical importance of discoveries was not appreciated. Written or engrossed memorials were sought, not for the sake of the history of the place to which they belonged, but to ornament houses. . . . Tombstones were removed . . . to Saint Maria in Trastevere, and inserted in the floor of the nave. Benedict XIV. took away the best and placed them in the Vatican library." Therefore the Catacombs of to-day are only mutilated Catacombs, impoverished and disfigured; and though their testimony is still solemn and impressive, we ought to try to think of them as they were before they were ransacked and outraged by archæological vandals. It is also impossible to exactly compute how much has perished by the natural ravages of time, in addition to what has been deported from these subterranean vaults. Doubtless decay has wrought its share of ruin. We may, however, form a proximate idea of the extent to which the Catacombs have suffered by meditating on what Northcote has written regarding the loss of early Christian memorials in general: "Of Christian inscriptions in Rome during the first six centuries, de' Rossi has studied more than 15,000, the immense majority of which were taken from the Catacombs, and he tells us there is still an average yearly addition of about 500 derived from the same source. This number, vast as it is, is but a poor remnant of what once existed. From the collections made in the eighth and ninth centuries it appears that there were once at least 170 ancient Christian inscriptions in Rome, which had an historical or monumental character; written generally in meter, and to be seen at that time in the places which they were intended to illustrate. Of these only twenty-six remain, either whole or in parts. In the Roman topographies of the seventh century 140 sepulchers of famous martyrs and confessors are enumerated; we have recovered only twenty inscribed memorials to assist us in the identification of these. Only nine epitaphs have come to light belonging to the bishops of Rome during the same six centuries; and yet during that period there were certainly buried in the suburbs of the city upward of sixty. Thus, whatever facts we take as the basis of our calculation it would seem that scarcely a seventh part of the original wealth of the Roman Church in memorials of this kind has survived the wreck of ages; and de' Rossi gives it as his opinion that there were once more than 100,000 of them."¹

But, though the Catacombs have shared in this melancholy desolation, and have been stripped almost to bankruptcy of their possessions, still in their dilapidation they speak in

no uncertain terms of the beliefs, hopes, and trials of God's people. "The doctrine of the Resurrection is implied or expressed on almost every tombstone which has been discovered. The Christian is not dead—he 'rests' or 'sleeps'—he is not buried, but 'deposited' in his grave, and he is always 'at peace.' The survivors do not mourn his loss despairingly, but express trust, resignation or moderate grief."¹

These underground cemeteries are rich in symbols. The anchor, expressive of hope, is common. There also frequently occurs the dove, emblem of the soul freed from its earthly prison; the sheep, ever the pathetic sign of guilty man wandering in the deserts of sinful life; and the fish, typical of the Lord himself, as the letters which compose the word in the Greek are the initials of his descriptive title, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior." Then there are representations of a ship, alluding to the Church; also of the vine, the olive, the palm—emblems of truth, peace, and victory. Sometimes there is drawn the figure of a woman kneeling, referring again to the bride of Christ as suppliant. The cross appears, though not the crucifix, and occasionally the image of a loaf, doubtless recalling the miracle of the loaves, and possibly disclosing the great thought that Christ is the Bread of Life. Repeatedly the crown is made prominent on the walls of the galleries, and it may truly be said that throughout these dreary abodes of death an atmosphere of victory prevails. The favorite theme seems to have been Christ as the good shepherd. "We cannot go through any part of the Catacombs, or turn over any collection of ancient Christian monuments, without coming across it again and again. We know from Tertullian that it was often designed upon chalices. We find it ourselves painted in fresco upon the roof and walls of the sepulchral chambers; rudely scratched upon gravestones, or more carefully sculptured on sarcophagi; traced in gold upon glass, molded on lamps, engrossed on rings; and, in a word, represented on every species of Christian monument that has come down to us."² According to Lord Lindsay, "He [Christ] is represented as a youth in a shepherd's frock and sandals, carrying the lost sheep on his shoulders, or leaning on his staff (the symbol, according to Saint Augustine, of the Christian hierarchy), while the sheep feed around or look up at him. Sometimes he is represented seated in the midst of the flock, playing on a shepherd's pipe—in a few instances, in the oldest Catacombs, he is introduced in the character of Orpheus, surrounded by wild beasts enrapt by the melody of his

¹ "Epitaphs," p. 3.

¹ Rawlinson, "Historical Evidences," p. 220.

² See "Roma Sottterranea."

lyre—Orpheus being then supposed to have been a prophet or precursor of the Messiah.”¹

It surely need hardly be said that all these conceptions are thoroughly evangelical. They comprehend within their scope the entire scheme of Christian doctrine. Clearly, they indicate that to the Church in the Catacombs Christianity was more than a moral scheme or rule, and was essentially a redemption. They reveal Jesus likewise, not as another Buddha,

“All honored, wisest, best, most pitiful,
The teacher of Nirvana and the law;”

but as the sin-bearer, seeking the lost, imparting peace to the conscience, and bringing all believers through the glorious resurrection to endless victory. The baptistery of Saint Pontianus, far underground, with its deep pool, and method of supplying abundant water, in its turn bears testimony to the prevailing conviction that our Lord had risen from the dead, and that they who profess his name should be themselves already delivered from spiritual death. While the wreaths and crowns of roses “hanging from the bills of mystic doves” engraved on stones, and these and other flowers painted on the walls, with the birds that are depicted in the frescoes that adorn the Catacomb of Callixtus, and the custom of decorating martyr tombs with violets, amaranths, and evergreens, impart to the struggling faith the characteristics of brotherly sympathy and compassion, they equally point to a life beyond, where the soul, symbolized by the bird, shall be freed from its cage and given its blessed liberty in the Paradise of God. Pictures on Biblical themes also confirm the impression made by Christian epigraph and emblem. The fall is portrayed, and in the conventional treatment of the subject our Lord is introduced as condemning Adam and Eve, and offering for them a lamb. Then the leading events of sacred history are sketched—the offering of Cain and Abel, the flood and the ark, the sacrifice of Isaac, the passage of the Red Sea, the gift of the Law to Moses, the smiting of the rock, the ascent of Elijah, the sufferings of the Hebrew children in Babylon, and the varied experiences of Jonah, the latter theme being dwelt on as though the artists discerned a distinct resemblance between heathen Rome and ancient Nineveh. The various scenes in the life of Christ, from the nativity on through the most striking incidents of miracle and teaching until he stands before Pilate, are faithfully drawn by the pencil of believers. Evidently to the frequenters of the Catacombs these works were not mere representations of fictions. These men were not sentimentalists and dreamers. To them religion was a stern

reality. They lived hourly in expectation of death, and were not likely to indulge in idle flights of fancy. They wrote their confession of faith with chisel and hammer, and outlined their creed with brush and pencil. This was to them a very serious matter. They had no time for the invention of mythological stories for the purpose of conveying truth. They simply sought to perpetuate the truth of historical stories. Their symbols, inscriptions, and paintings were only a method of recording the things that were most surely believed among them. Hence, the Catacombs are to this day an illuminated commentary on the Gospels. Whosoever studies their testimony can hardly resist the conclusion that the evangelists taught no mere philosophy of naturalism; and that the early Church held clearly and distinctly to those central doctrines which are the logical outcome of the supernatural events which they described and to which they bore witness.

Eloquent as the Catacombs are on this theme they are even more so on another; one, too, that appeals to our admiration of the conscientious and heroic in human conduct. The word martyr, frequently occurs on their tombs, and, when absent, something in the inscription often shows that the deceased was the victim of persecution. Although the phials found in some of the burial places, and once supposed to contain the sediment of blood, may only have held the dregs of wine used in the feasts of love, they still afford proof that the worshipers were not permitted to convene in the light, and were driven by tyranny to celebrate their mysteries in concealment. Among the sepulchral remains which the Vatican has appropriated from the Catacombs is the following, brought to light in the cemetery of Callixtus, and illustrative of the entire martyr period. The language relates to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and to his harsh proceedings against the Church:

“IN CHRIST.

Alexander is not dead, but lives beyond the stars, and his body rests in this tomb. He lived under the Emperor Antoninus, who, foreseeing that great benefit would result from his services, returned evil for good. For, while on his knees and about to sacrifice to the true God, he was led away to execution. O sad times! in which sacred rites and prayers, even in caverns, afford no protection to us. What can be more wretched than such a life, and what than such a death? When they could not be buried by their friends and relations, at length they are resplendent in heaven. He has scarcely lived who has lived in Christian times.”¹

¹ “Christian Art.”

¹ Maitland, “Church in the Catacombs,” pp. 32, 33.

Maitland writes: "A number of circumstances in this inscription are worthy of notice; the beginning, in which the first two words (*Alexander mortuus*), after leading us to expect a lamentation, break out into an assurance of glory and immortality; the description of the temporal insecurity in which the believers of that time lived; the difficulty of procuring Christian burial for the martyrs; the certainty of their heavenly reward; and, lastly, the concluding sentence, forcibly recalling the words of Saint Paul, 'as dying, yet behold we live,' and again, 'I die daily.'" The picture is indeed vivid, not only in what it states, but in what it implies as well; the constant anxiety of the saints, the apprehension of betrayal by some informer, the uneasiness and suspicion created by spies, the alarm lest outrages against honor as well as against life should be inflicted on maids and matrons, and the awful suspense regarding the events of each returning day. As we read the inscription anew we behold the Christian, a proscribed man, subject to manifold indignities at the hand of heathen neighbors, liable at any moment to be torn from his family, having no right of appeal, confronting only the alternative of sacrifice to the effigy of the emperor or death; robbed, maltreated, scorned, misrepresented, scourged, and cast like carrion to the lions. Wonderful the fortitude and endurance of these saints of God who were "stoned," were "sawn asunder," were "tempted," and were "slain by the sword!" And what is equally amazing is their triumphant mood. It is manifest in the writing on Alexander's tomb, and is one of the most distinctive features of the martyr's history. The song which is recorded in the "Paracletis" of Basil may doubtless be taken as a sample of the exalted thoughts, the defiant temper, and the glorious expectations of the men and women who counted not their lives dear unto death. He represents the forty martyrs, who were exposed naked to the frost the night before they were to be burned, as singing: "Sharp is the winter, but sweet is paradise: painful is the frost, but sweet is the fruit that follows it. We wait for a little, and the Patriarch's bosom shall cherish us: after one night we shall lay hold on eternal life. Our feet shall feel the fire for a season, but we shall walk arm in arm with angels; our hands shall fall off here, that they may be lifted up forever to the praise of the Almighty." Similar, also, the magnificent address of Tertullian to his fellow-sufferers in the "days of darkness," in which he sets forth the superiority of God's children to dungeons and tortures, and discloses the secret of their inward peace.

"Let us," he says, "change the name of prison and call it a retreat. Although the

body be inclosed, although the flesh be detained, all places are open to spirit. Wander, then, in spirit, not proposing to yourself shaded woods or long porticoes, but the way which leads to God. As often as you walk thus in spirit, you will escape from prison. The limb feels nothing in the nerve, when the mind is in heaven. The mind carries with it the whole man, and removes it to wherever it wishes." That is, Joanna Baillie being the interpreter,

"I am so pleased to die and am so honored

In dying for the pure and holy truth.

That nature's instinct seems in me extinguished."

Sublime self-illusion! noble self-oblivion! lofty enthusiasm! No wonder that the memorials which perpetuate their triumphs are counted most precious, and are sacredly treasured by all who venerate the God-like in man.

There is much of a melancholy monotony in the tributes inscribed by admiring love on the martyrs' tombs. As for substance, they are practically the same. Difference as to date, as to age and sex, and then almost identical phraseology in describing the holy deed and its reward. It is not, therefore, necessary to multiply copies of epitaphs; for those we have referred to may be taken as samples of thousands we have not transcribed. But the great subject to which they relate, and which acquires a stronger hold on the devout imagination because it is so intimately allied to the history of the Catacombs, is of sufficient moment to call for further and more serious attention, and, indeed, cannot be slighted if one would faithfully reproduce the age in which Christianity attained its first development. It is not easy to explain why persecution should have been tolerated by the Almighty. The motives of men in destroying those who differ from them in religious belief are not hard to find. But why God should permit them to pursue their cruel way is not as apparent. That he leaves them to work out their malicious tyranny may be inferred from the fact that he did not restrain the men who "with wicked hands" crucified his Son. We may, however, at this point remember that his Son was delivered into their power by his "determinate counsel and foreknowledge." That is, in the wondrous passion there are two distinct agencies, the human and the divine. The Father does not check by his omnipotence the savage outbreak against his Son, because he ordained from the beginning that only through sufferings should he be made perfect, and only by suffering secure the justification of the ungodly.¹ May there not have been an application of this same principle to the early Church? May it not have been that the cross might be

¹ Hebrews ii, 10, v, 9; I. Peter iii, 18.

purged away, that her growth might not exhaust itself in leaves, and that her virtues might not become commonplace, that the oppressor was left to work for a season unhindered his barbarous hatred? By agony and stress of struggle all things good and beautiful have been wrought out in the natural world; and to-day, as in the past, war, tempest, the very "groaning of creation," are necessary to physical perpetuity and progress.

"Behold this vine!
I found it a wild tree, whose wanton strength
Had swol'n into irregular twigs
And bold excrescences,
And spent itself in leaves and little rings;
So in the flourish of its wantonness
Wasting the sap and strength
That should have given forth fruit;
But when I pruned the plant
Of useless leaves, and knotted as thou sees't,
Into those full clear clusters, to repay
The hand that wisely wounded it."¹

The Church, likewise, is a vine. When planted in the soil of the Roman world and exposed to the hot-house atmosphere of iniquity, was there no danger of unguided energies taking shape in erroneous speculations and unwarranted divisions? And if so, why not the sharp pruning knife? "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"; and his people have continually been chosen in the furnace of affliction, and have been taught to glorify God in the fires. It is not surprising, then, that he should have dealt with the Bride as with the Bridegroom, and for the same reason. As the Bridegroom was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and was by wicked hands taken and crucified and slain;² so the Bride was delivered by his eternal purpose to the bloody persecutor, not that she might be slain, but that all false ambition, lawless desire, and worldly lust might be slain in her.

May not persecution also have served as a fierce parable in God's providence, teaching that only through suffering could the Church attain unto perfection. That there is a struggle at the heart of progress cannot be denied, whether or not it conditions the survival of the fittest, and that its groaning becomes more articulate as we rise to the vast human world, finding its climax in the spiritual, is equally manifest. Whatever conflicts may have preceded man's appearance on this planet, we know that since his coming he has developed at terrible cost. Stains of blood redden not only the highway of religion, but the track of civilization. Masses of victims lie crushed beneath its wheels, and at the shrine of every improvement millions of lives are offered up in

sacrifice. To establish the empires of Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, and Cæsar, and to inaugurate the epoch which these names suggest, untold numbers of our race had to succumb to the conquering factions. Then, and ever since, cities burned, provinces wasted, fertile regions made over to desolation, and people surrendered to unutterable horrors of cruelty, have made the onward march of humanity sadder than a battlefield strewn with slaughter and infested with ravening wolves and jackals. Even in our own times the triumphs of civilization mean the withering of tribes before the vices of their leaders. While we claim to be living in an era of generousness, we encounter ranks or classes whose fingers are worn to the bone, whose hearts are strained to breaking by the fierceness of competition and the selfishness of commerce. The benign ministry of our mechanical and mercantile age has something savage in it, and writes its record on the faces of human millions who, too weak for strife, fall out of the ranks, stagger awhile painfully in the rear, and then drop down in heartbroken despair.

In every department of society we find the same contest. The battle extends to theories, systems, religions, and what is apparently inevitable, these theories, systems, and religions only influence the world by conquering in the battle. Ideas array themselves in antagonism as well as men, and there is no peace anywhere under the sun. Parties, sects, philosophies, creeds, seek to exterminate each other, and the air is agitated with the cries of hostile factions. From all this we are forced to believe that the Divine Being accomplishes his purposes, not only in the physical but in the moral world, by means of infinite travail, and by rendering the anguish of souls tributary to the ultimate peace of the universe. All things below the stars are groaningly full of expectation. We must accept these inarticulate moanings, these expressive wailings, as the signs of a progress in which tears shall be transmitted into joys, pangs into glories, death into life, the din of battle into the victorious triumph, and the wilderness of earth into the kingdom of God. Unless the Church realize this, not unnaturally she will abandon herself to ease and luxury, and, falling below her great mission, prove, at best, to be but a cumberer of the ground. When she has forgotten the lesson of persecution, when she has failed to realize the necessity for conflict even unto death, and has clothed herself in royal apparel and feasted delicately, she has speedily felt the sting of other scourges than those wielded by the officers of despotic government, and been compelled to pass through agonies as intense as those endured by martyrs in the Roman am-

¹ Southey.

² Acts ii, 23; Hebrews xii, 6-11.

phitheatre. But alas! at such times she has known something of the martyr's anguish without experiencing his sense of triumph, or attaining to the martyr's palm.

As she looks over the records of the Catacombs, the Church in our day should realize that she is under the same law which prevails

throughout the entire universe of God: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."¹

CHAPTER VII.

THE TIMES OF TERROR.

THE first terrific outbreak against the Christians beyond the borders of Palestine occurred, as we have seen, under the reign of Nero. We are not, however, to infer from this circumstance that all persecutions were of imperial instigation. They were frequently incited by the clamor of the people, the contentions of the philosophers, and the calumnies of the priests. Not only was the common rabble "exceedingly mad" against the new creed, but citizens of a better class, though neither affluent nor refined, were doggedly opposed to what they regarded as a detestable fanaticism, injurious alike to commerce and happiness. Sophists and rhetoricians, having very little faith left in their own gods, were intolerant, as is not unusual in such cases, toward those who had the temerity to affirm confidently what they had declared to be unbelievable. And, as for the priests, they were moved by self-interest and the prejudices of their vocation to oppose the progress of a religion whose aims and spirit were beyond their comprehension.

Public opinion was set against Christianity. The whole drift of thought and sentiment in pagan civilization ran entirely counter to its teachings and institutions. Its representatives were consequently mocked, maltreated, and defamed by the populace in the streets, just as the Salvation Army in our day has been shamefully abused by hooting and howling ruffians. So intense was the popular animosity that it was often impracticable to keep a regular government proscription within the limits of judicial action.

"There is extant a rescript of Hadrian addressed to the proconsul of Asia, in which he condemns a tumultuous rising against the Christians, which had taken place, and insists upon a regular judicial process for the future."¹ The fanatical and pitiless heathen multitudes demanded that these helpless creatures be thrown into prison, be wrenched and crushed by the rack, and their flesh be torn by nails, knives, and hooks; and savage was the

yell of delight when some poor victim, unable longer to endure the lacerations of whips, or the stings of insects attracted to his naked body besmeared with honey, extended his hand in token of his readiness to burn a little incense on the idol's altar. Then these men and women of blunted sensibilities gloated over the tortured and writhing form of the unhappy apostate, and abandoned themselves to frantic expressions of joy. From such orgies they would frequently turn away to hunt for "suspects" in town or country; and woe to the saint, whether sister or brother, who should fall into their hands! Mercy they knew not. To strip the prisoner, to force him by exquisite sufferings to shriek, and if possible to blaspheme, and then, perhaps, to leave him half dead on the highway, afforded these wretches indescribable pleasure.

In the martyrdom of Polycarp (156 A. D.) we have a striking illustration of the rancorous enmity of the mob. According to the accounts we have received of this tragedy, the chief pastor of Smyrna when arrested was taken by Herod, the Irenarch, into his chariot, where he and his father Nicetes remonstrated with him for adhering so unfalteringly to his faith, inquiring: "What injury will it do thee to say Lord Cæsar, and to offer sacrifice?" The captive meekly replied: "I cannot do what you ask of me." Incensed by his steadfastness, the officers rudely thrust him from the chariot, wounding him in the shin. Still he walked cheerfully on until he came to the Stadium, where great throngs of turbulent people were gathered. The proconsul formally arraigned him. He asked whether his name was Polycarp, and then urged him to renounce Christ, cry, "Down with the atheists," and offer sacrifice to Cæsar. "Swear, and I release thee; revile the Christ." Then came the memorable answer: "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he has never done me a wrong. How can I blaspheme him, my King, who has saved me?" The proconsul was apparently anxious to rescue the bishop, but he could not

¹ Uhlhorn, "Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," p. 263.

¹ Romans viii, 22. 23 (Revised Version).

do so unless in some way he could appease the savage plebs. He therefore addressed himself again to the prisoner: "Try to persuade the people."

Polycarp. "I feel bound to give an account of myself to *thee*, for our religion teaches us to give due honor to the powers ordained of God as far as possible. But I hold *these*" — pointing to the clamorous rabble — "unworthy of any reason I might render."

Proconsul. "I have wild beasts ready. Unless thou repentest, I will expose thee to them."

Polycarp. "Let them come! We are not accustomed to repent with that repentance which changes from better to worse. On the contrary, I hold it good to pass from worse to better."

Proconsul. "Since thou despisest beasts, I will cause thee to be consumed by fire, unless thou changest thy mind."

Polycarp. "The fire thou threatenest burns for an hour, and is soon after extinguished. Thou knowest not that penal fire of judgment and punishment which is reserved for the ungodly. But why dost thou delay? Do thy will!"

The magistrate was perplexed by this sublime firmness, and hardly knew how to act. He, however, aroused himself to the discharge of an unpleasant duty, and sent a herald up and down the Stadium to proclaim the fatal fact: "Polycarp has confessed that he is a Christian!" Then arose the strident sound of many voices, crying, "This is the teacher of Asia! This is the father of the Christians! This is the overturner of our gods!" For him the crowd had no thought of mercy. The angry multitude demanded of the Asiarch, as the president of the games, that a lion be loosed upon Polycarp. But when he sought to gain time, and told them that the gladiatorial spectacles were ended, a tumultuous and howling clamor hushed his plea. If lions were not to be had, fire was near at hand. The magistrate, unable to restrain the brutal throng, yielded everything, and the aged saint was speedily surrounded with wood and straw, hurriedly brought by the populace from the shops and baths. When about to be nailed to the stake he asked that he might only be bound: "For he who allows me to undergo the fire will enable me to remain unmoved without your fastenings." Then, with his hands bound behind him, the venerable sufferer offered this final prayer: "Omnipotent Lord God, Father of thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of thee; God of angels, and powers, and of all creatures, and of the family of the just who live in thy sight; I bless thee that on this

day and hour thou hast counted me worthy to make one of the number of thy martyrs, to partake of the cross of Christ, and to look for the resurrection to eternal life both of soul and body, through the power of the Holy Spirit, praying that I may be received to-day among the number of thy saints, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, according as thou, the true God, hast prepared me by thy forewarnings and their fulfillment. Therefore, for all things, I bless and glorify thee, through the everlasting and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom to thee and the Holy Spirit, be glory, now and through all ages. Amen!"¹

Then the smoke began to enwreath the martyr, and the flames to shoot forth furiously. But as a breath of wind disclosed to the spectators the body still unconsumed, perhaps fearing a miracle of deliverance, the *confector*, whose business it was to slay unmanageable beasts in the amphitheatre, thrust Polycarp through with a sharp instrument. The sparks gleamed anew in the black cloud that enshrouded the martyr, and the fires surged and roared. The people, their deadly task completed, turned away as heartless as ever from the sickening scene, having afforded to all ages another impressive instance of their blindness to their own interests, and their awful blindness to the gracious interposition of heaven in the ministrations of Christianity on their behalf. Bigoted as priests have been, intolerant and prejudiced as philosophers have often proved, never have they surpassed the mob in corrosive animosity and unreasoning prejudice against movements that have sought by unusual means to deliver mankind from entrenched evils and time-honored tyrannies.

But this bitter dislike was not confined to the populace. It was shared by some of the most enlightened and philosophical minds of the age.² And, strange to say, "more clemency was shown toward the followers of Christ by emperors whom we are accustomed to call tyrants, than by those who are considered models of virtue. The author of the "*Philosophumena*" (Book IX, chap. xi) says that Commodus granted to Pope Victor the liberation of the Christians who had been condemned to the mines of Sardinia by Marcus Aurelius." And yet in his "Meditations," this ruler says that he had learned from Diognetus, probably his tutor, "to endure freedom of speech." It was also in his reign that Felicitas and Justin Martyr suffered death (163 A. D.), the latter being denounced publicly by the philosopher Crescens. Evidently he was not at heart as tolerant as some of his reflections would imply. Neither was Celsus, another philosopher,

¹ Eusebius, "Ecclesiastical History," IV, xv.

² Lanciani, "Pagan and Christian Rome," p. 313.

strongly inclined toward "sweet reasonableness." His writings are full of scorn and fierce invective, which, in the nature of things, must have roused the worst passions of the mob. Lucan travestied martyrdom and parodied miracles, helping on the savage work of extermination by his heartless ridicule. The priests were grateful to their allies, and employed their influence to eradicate every trace of the new religion.

When the emperor Decius resolved to reform Rome, and to that end insisted that the ancient office of censor should be restored, and the worship of idols be revived, it was comparatively easy for the pagan hierarchy to inflame the zeal of the government against the Christians. A determined and sanguinary effort was made during the third century to reanimate expiring heathenism, and its failure was certainly not due to any sentimental weakness on the part of the sacerdotal orders. The story is told of Diocletian, who was committed to this policy, that in the presence of his court, where there were many Christians employed, he ordered a sacrifice, and directed Tagis, the chief priest, to examine the entrails for signs. The disciples of our Lord crossed themselves to show that they had no part in the superstitious rites, and, as the wished-for omens failed, the priest exclaimed: "The gods refuse to appear at our sacrifice because profane men are present, and hinder the revelation by means of the sign [the cross] which the gods hate." This was enough to arouse the slumbering animosity of Diocletian, and presently a persecution was ordered, which ranks among the most terrible recorded on the pages of history. So pitiless and terrific was this outbreak that to this day the Coptic Churches date from the accession of Diocletian (284 A. D.) the "era of the martyrs."

It would seem, then, from these facts, that the entire land was in arms against the new cult, and that there was a spontaneous outburst of fury against its adherents. Only the Flavian proscription, which decreed that these adherents should be dealt with as common brigands, was satisfactory to the enraged public sentiment; and the only cry that had a soothing effect on the turbulent spirit of the mob—including the priests and philosophers—was "*Christianos ad leones*!"

But while the Roman world, without regard to government, was obviously incensed against the Christian faith, in due course of events the authorities in formal and official manner proceeded against its supporters. They reflected in their action the demands of the majority of citizens. Human nature is not necessarily tolerant, and administrations are not always independent. Theists and atheists are no more

inclined to be liberal than prelates. The atheistical party of the French Revolution doomed the clergy to death, and the deistic party, under Robespierre, sent the atheists Cloutz and Chaurmette to the guillotine. The only safety for freedom of thought and freedom of conscience, in any age and any country, lies in the permanent constitutional separation of the State from interference with the untrammelled exercise of mind and worship. As long as the error is held that government is responsible for the belief and religion of the citizen, just so long will coercion in some form be brought to bear against dissidents, and will seriously curtail their liberty and happiness. With the history of thousands of years before our eyes, it were the height of folly to imagine that we can even now intrust our most sacred rights to the generous forbearance of our fellow-beings. Ecclesiastical majorities, if in any way they could subordinate the forces of government to their purposes, would be dangerous to human freedom, for rulers are not always above corruption, and as a general thing protect only those individuals and communities who can protect themselves. Still is it true that to many politicians the voice of the majority is the voice of God; and consequently it is imperative that their hands be securely tied by constitutional law to prevent them from executing what that voice might demand against some unhappy minority, whose religious doctrines might be considered objectionable. But this wisdom the Roman empire had not learned when the events of our narrative were taking place, and in some portions of the globe it is yet unmastered by chiefs and potentates.

With the administration of Trajan the relation of Christianity to the government came first to be considered. By the year 112 A. D. this religion had spread so rapidly in Bithynia that many temples were forsaken, and the sacrificial ritual was to a great extent abandoned. These facts were brought to the attention of Pliny when he assumed authority in the province, and very likely he was shown that commercial interests were being impaired by the decline of the national altars. Charges of various kinds were preferred against the Christians, and investigation followed.

"He proceeded to inquire into the cases individually; and he learned, first of all from those who recanted, and afterward from two deaconesses (who, being slaves, were examined under torture), that the rites of the Christian religion were simple and harmless, that their discipline forbade all crimes, that the worshipers bound themselves by a *sacramentum* to do no wrong, and that the charges commonly brought against them of practicing child-murder, cannibalism, and other hideous offenses at

their private meetings, were groundless."¹ This favorable report did not lessen his ardor against the saints. He forbade them to meet as communities, for the emperor condemned "the formation or existence of *sodalitates*." They obeyed in this particular as far as the evening social gathering was concerned, and yet many of their number were punished even with death. But Pliny was unwilling to proceed alone in this matter, and therefore addressed to his imperial master epistles giving account of his proceedings, and seeking from him further instructions. An answer was received in the following explicit terms:

"You have done perfectly right, my dear Pliny, in the inquiry which you have made concerning Christians. For truly no one general rule can be laid down which will apply itself to all cases. The people must not be sought after. If they are brought before you and convicted, let them be capitally punished; yet with this restriction, that if anyone renounce Christianity and show his sincerity by supplicating our gods, however suspected he may be for the past, he shall obtain pardon for the future, on his repentance. But anonymous libels in no case ought to be attended to, for the precedent would be of the worst sort, and perfectly incongruous to the maxims of government."

And on this "clemency of despotism" Tertullian has left the significant comment: "O sentence necessarily inconsistent! He denies that inquiry should be made concerning them, as if they were innocent, and commands them to be punished, as if they were guilty; he spares them, and is enraged with them; he dissembles, and blames them. Why dost thou lay thyself open to such censures? If thou condemnest, why not inquire? If thou dost not inquire, why dost thou not absolve?"

But still the question remains: Why were the followers of Christ punished by the strong and unflinching arm of the law? Why did Pliny believe such a course legitimate? In his letters he takes for granted that it is right, and only seeks guidance in the application of a fundamental principle of imperial rule. Ramsay explains, that the Christians maintained an extra-imperial unity, and consequently were proscribed on political and not on religious grounds.

"Rome had throughout its career made it a fixed principle to rule by dividing; all subjects must look to Rome alone; none might look toward their neighbors, or enter into any agreement or connection with them. But the Christians looked to a non-Roman unity; they decided on common action independent of

Rome; they looked on themselves as Christians first and Roman subjects afterward; and, when Rome refused to accept this secondary allegiance, they ceased to feel themselves Roman subjects at all. When this was the case, it seems idle to look about for reasons why Rome should proscribe the Christians."¹

This view of the case is, I am sure, true enough, but it is not the whole truth. It must not be overlooked that in the empire the prevailing heathen cult was part and parcel of the national life. Creeds that did not antagonize it were amalgamated with it, or were permitted to dwell with it amicably. Friction was avoided as far as possible. But when a religion appeared that challenged the right of all others to exist; that refused to render homage to the emperor as their divine head; that spurned their ceremonies, denounced their ethics and reprobated their customs, it would inevitably come to be condemned on account of what the age would regard as its impiety. And this is just what occurred as Christianity became known to the Roman government. The new faith was hostile to the old. Fellowship was out of the question. The two systems could not abide together in peace. There was hardly anything in common between them. Christianity would not countenance a lie. To her a lie was no more sacred when sanctioned by the altar than when pronounced in the forum. She took her stand against falsity, whether in the abstract or the concrete. Heathenism was the religion of compromise; for it never realized the authority of truth. "Seneca, having recounted in the most derisive terms the absurdities of the popular worship, concludes his enumeration by declaring that the sage will observe all these things, not as pleasing to the divinities, but as commanded by the law; and that he should remember, 'that his worship is due to custom, not to belief.' Epictetus, whose austere creed rises to the purest monotheism, teaches it as a fundamental religious maxim, that every man in his devotions should conform to the customs of his country. The Jews and Christians, who alone refused to do this, were the representatives of a moral principle that was unknown to the pagan world."²

Yes; for Christianity from the start has never been the religion of expediency, for to her, error, whether countenanced by herself or by others, is a deadly thing. Hence, the conflict between the old and the new. To Christianity heathenism was altogether devilish; to heathenism Christianity was thoroughly impious. Consequently, the test by which her members were constantly judged was ultimately a reli-

¹ Ramsay, "Church in the Roman Empire," p. 205.

¹ Ramsay, p. 356.

² Lecky, "History of European Morals," Vol. I, p. 230.

gious one. They were called on to execrate THE NAME, to offer incense to the genius of the emperor, and to sacrifice to the gods. Their examination before the magistrates was not conducted so as to ascertain whether they paid taxes, obeyed ordinances, and avoided conspiracies against the commonwealth. It is, therefore, not sufficiently accurate to say that they were proscribed purely on political, and not at all on religious grounds. As the then existing order of worship was a State institution, non-compliance with which was constructive treason, and as such was bound to be punished, it may be conceded that political considerations influenced persecution. But when it is remembered that the faith of the martyrs was ever made the subject of judicial inquiry, it is surely evasive to claim that persecution was not inspired by religious rivalries and antagonisms. How any other view than this can be held by those who are familiar with the annals of martyrdom is almost beyond comprehension. For instance, the account that has descended to us of the last days of Ignatius confirms and illustrates this position.

When Trajan, under whom the proceedings against the saints assumed a more legal form, visited Antioch, Ignatius, then distinguished by the name of Theophorus — "God-bearer" — one who has God in his heart, answering to the Greek word, "Christopher" — presented himself that by his own self-sacrifice he might save his flock from the wrath of the emperor. Being introduced to Trajan, that ruler said:¹

"Who art thou, wicked demon, who art so precipitate and hasty in transgressing our orders, and persuadest others also to perish miserably?"

Ignatius. "None can call Theophorus a wicked demon, for demons have widely departed from the service of God. But if you so call me because I am an enemy to demons, I confess the charge. For, holding Christ to be the heavenly King, I dissolve their enchantments."

Trajan. "And who is Theophorus?"

Ignatius. "He who has Christ in his heart."

Trajan. "Dost thou not think then that we have the gods in our minds when we use them as allies against our enemies?"

Ignatius. "Thou errest in calling the heathen demons gods; for there is one God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and one Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, whose kingdom may I obtain."

Trajan. "Dost thou speak of him who was crucified before Pontius Pilate?"

Ignatius. "I speak of him who bore my sin on the cross with its author, and, condemning all the errors of demons and all wickedness, put them under the feet of those who carry him in their heart."

Trajan. "Dost thou, then, bear the crucified within thyself?"

Ignatius. "I do; for it is written, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.'"

Trajan. "Since Ignatius has declared that he bears the crucified in himself, we order that he shall be carried bound by soldiers to great Rome, to be food for beasts and a spectacle for the people."

Ignatius. "I thank thee, Lord, that thou countest me worthy to honor thee in perfect love to thee, and hast thrown me in iron chains like thine Apostle Paul."

If the traditional account of what further followed may be believed, the condemned, upon being brought into the great Flavian Amphitheatre or Colosseum, before the lions were loosed on him, thus addressed the assembled multitudes:

"Romans, spectators of this present scene, I am not here because of any crime, nor to absolve myself from any charge of wickedness, but to follow God; by the love of whom I am impelled, and whom I long for irrepressibly. For I am his wheat, and must be ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may become his pure bread."

Manifestly the political element is scarcely if at all, discernible in this graphic story of martyrdom. I do not say that it is entirely absent; only that it has no perceptible place in the narrative. And my contention simply is, that the religious movement — as a religion — must be taken principally into account when inquiring into the causes of persecution. The religion of the Christians wounded the prejudices of heathenism, and attacked its cherished convictions and customs fearlessly. It was willing to sacrifice earthly prospects to heavenly principles, and was unwilling to be limited in its scope, or to be isolated from any human interest. Therefore, while secret organizations, spreading rapidly and mysteriously throughout the land roused the suspicion and ire of the government, the strange creed held by these societies, so widely separated from the national cult, was also potent in determining official action against their existence. Doctor Plummer says truly: "The toleration of the Romans had tightly drawn limits. Cicero had laid it down as an axiom that no man may have private gods of his own, or adopt fresh ones until they have been officially recognized; and Mæcenas is represented as advising Augustus to worship the gods according to the laws, and *compel others to do the same* — not merely

¹ Hefele's Pat. Apos. Op. Prolegom; Smith & Wace, "Dictionary of Christian Biography," article on Ignatius, Vol. III, pp. 209-222.

out of respect to the gods, but because those who introduce new deities may go on to introduce new laws. The Christians, therefore, committed a double offense — they induced citizens to abandon the rites prescribed by law, and they introduced rites not sanctioned by law. Theirs was not a *religio licita*. As they were repeatedly told, *Non licet esse vos* — ‘You have no right to exist.’”¹

It has not been uncommon of late for a certain class of writers to underestimate the extent and severity of the persecutions under the empire. The school of thought that eulogizes pagan toleration, and serenely and loftily ignores all testimony to the contrary, not illogically tries to show that the number of martyrs has been greatly exaggerated, and accounts of their sufferings unwarrantably colored. These apologists would have us believe that the Roman people were too broad-minded and too liberal to press extreme and cruel measures against any company of worshipers; and that, while occasionally they may have indulged in some slight outbreaks of violence, they were far from being guilty of the sustained and inhuman attacks on the followers of Christ attributed to them by Eusebius and Lactantius. These representations are not trustworthy. While it is not possible to defend at all points the accuracy of Eusebius or Lactantius, the euphemistic arguments of Dodwell and Gibbon will not bear the test of scrutiny. They are elegant and eloquent, but they are not solid and satisfactory. Even Lecky, who in the main sympathizes with their trend, discerns in them the spirit of special pleading, and declines to subscribe to them without reserve. He condemns Gibbon for the “persistence with which he estimates persecutions by the number of deaths, rather than by the amount of suffering.” And then he gives a view of pagan atrocities, the result of his own investigation, which serves as a sufficient answer to the specious palliations put forth by his brother rationalists. He closes his first volume on “European Morals,” with these words: “We read of Christians bound in chairs of red-hot iron, while the stench of their half-consumed flesh rose in a suffocating cloud to heaven; of others who were torn to the very bone by shells, or hooks of iron; of holy virgins given over to the lust of the gladiator or to the mercies of the pander; of 227 converts sent on one occasion to the mines, each with the sinews of one leg severed by a red-hot iron, and with an eye scooped from its socket; of fires so slow that the victim writhed for hours in their agonies; of bodies torn limb from limb, or sprinkled with burning lead; of mingled salt

and vinegar poured over the flesh that was bleeding from the rack; of tortures prolonged and varied through entire days. For the love of their divine Master, for the cause they believed to be true, men, and even weak girls, endured these things without flinching, when one word would have freed them from their suffering.”¹

But surely it must be evident, though Lecky does not say so, that such horrors could not be perpetrated without involving an immense and incalculable loss of life. The very severity of persecution suggests at once an idea of its enormous extent. These excesses of cruelty reveal a vicious disregard of everything sacred, and would hardly have been possible in a limited circle. They are simply the climax and index of a widespread spirit of inhumanity, which once enlarged would hardly fail to assert itself in crimes against mankind proportionate in number to its own awful dimensions. We are warranted, therefore, in measuring the extent of persecution by the intensity, and the magnitude and malignity of the demoniacal fury by which it was inaugurated and directed. Thus judged, we shall not regard as incredible the picture drawn by Lanciani, which taxes the imagination to compass the vast area of brutal indignities inflicted on the early Church, but which, coming from the pen of a recent explorer, discredits the over-confident assumptions of Gibbon and his recent imitators. He writes: “In 249 the ‘days of terror’ returned, and continued fiercer than ever under the rules of Decius, Gallus, and Valerianus. The last persecution, that of Diocletian and his colleagues, was the longest and most cruel of all. For the space of ten years not a day of mercy shown over the *ecclesia fidelium*. The historian Eusebius, an eyewitness, says that, when the persecutors became tired of bloodshed, they contrived a new form of cruelty. They put out the right eyes of the confessors, cut the tendon of their left legs, and then sent them to the mines, lame, half-blinded, half starved, and flogged nearly to death. In Book VIII, chapter 12, the historian says that the number of sufferers were so great that no account could be kept of them in the archives of the Church. The memory of this decade of horrors has never died out in Rome. We have still a local tradition, not altogether unfounded, of 10,000 Christians who were condemned to quarry materials for Diocletian’s Baths, and who were put to death after the dedication of the building.”²

Historians have been accustomed to reckon ten general persecutions, which have been classified as follows by Broughton:

¹ “History of European Morals,” Vol. I, pp. 493-496.

² “Pagan and Christian Rome,” p. 314.

¹ “Church of the Early Fathers,” p. 163.

1. Under Nero, 64 to 68 A. D.
2. Under Domitian, 95 and 96 A. D.
3. Under Trajan, 97 to 116 A. D.
4. Under Antoninus Pius, 136 to 156 A. D.
5. Under Severus, 199 to 211 A. D.
6. Under Maximinus, 235 A. D.
7. Under Decius, 249 to 251 A. D.
8. Under Valerian, 257 to 260 A. D.
9. Under Aurelian, 273 to 275 A. D.
10. Under Diocletian, 302 to 312 A. D.

This arrangement has not always been adhered to by writers who are wedded to the notion that there must have been ten persecutions, no more and no fewer; and some of them have tried to find a place in their somewhat artificial scheme, probably inspired by what is revealed regarding the ten kings who make war against the Lamb,¹ for the severe measures enacted by Adrian (118-126), and by Marcus Aurelius (161-174) against the kingdom of Christ. Probably this scheme of counting by tens originated with Augustine. Lactantius, however, recognized only six seasons of special proscription and cruelty. The number can readily be increased or diminished according to the fancy or the method of the student. To me the entire period embraced within three centuries was in reality one of persecution, varying in degrees of intensity, with now a lull and then a tempest, with brief or prolonged intermissions of deceitful calm, but with never an assurance of immunity from attack on the part of the authorities or the mob. The Church was, throughout this entire time, practically proscribed, and if she was permitted a respite occasionally from excruciating agony, it was merely due to the weariness of her tormenters, or to the changing moods and oscillating policy of the emperors. She had no rights which anyone was particularly bound to respect, and when it suited the governing powers, she was simply made to feel—as far as whips and fire could make her feel—her desolate and outcast plight. It is surely hardly worth while to classify her sufferings, after the manner of the ten plagues, when for 300 years she knew hardly anything else than the plagues of anguish, trial, and bitter sorrow. Her condition through all these years may be likened to that of a ship on a stormy sea. Her path lay through the billowy waters of tribulation, with here and there a mighty wave, such as may be seen in mid-Atlantic towering over the restless floods, and engulfing all its smaller neighbors, breaking over her and threatening to swallow up her precious treasures. Such a wave dashed against her when Nero imputed to her hated deeds of shame, and tried to attach to her the odium of an execrable crime, and when, ac-

ording to Clement of Rome, "By reason of jealousy, women, the Danaïds and Dirce, being persecuted, after that they had suffered cruel and unholy insults, safely reached the goal in the race of faith, and received a noble reward, feeble though they were in body." Similar tidal waves beat upon the helpless bark of Christ during succeeding reigns.

The outbreak of savagery under Domitian had in it much of personal vindictiveness. Why it should have been thus inspired no one knows unless it was occasioned by the discovery that some among his own near relations had professed the "degrading superstition." It is believed that 40,000 of God's dear children were butchered during the administration of Domitian. With the accession of Trajan, proceedings against the Christians became more formal and regular, and the relation of government toward them and their institutions were inquired into and defined. As a result of this new departure, multitudes were called on to surrender ease, safety, possessions, and not infrequently life itself.

While Antoninus Pius was of a more humane disposition than Trajan, nevertheless, Augustine, who had opportunity sufficient to learn all the facts, includes him with the persecutors, and the rescript of Marcus Aurelius went far beyond the instructions issued by Trajan in his correspondence with Pliny. Accusations were encouraged by bribes, and the confiscated property of the saints went to the informers. As a result, a vast crowd of unfortunates were cast into prison, and, for the sake of deserving the reward, betrayers of innocent blood charged their victims with the perpetration of unspeakable crimes. Traces of this policy were soon visible in torture and bloodshed throughout Italy, Byzantium, Gaul, and Africa; and among its own prominent sufferers may be named Blandina, a tender maiden, who to all questions replied: "I am a Christian! Among us no wickedness is committed"; and Justin Martyr, whose mind had been favorably influenced toward Christianity by the martyrdom of others, and who at last himself secured its crown. He testifies: "I heard of the accusations brought against Christians; yet I saw them fearless in the midst of death, and of all other calamities which seemed terrible, nor could I understand how it was possible that they could be guilty of the wickedness and licentiousness with which they were charged."¹ And he also, in his turn, witnessed in his death to the pure, elevating, and sustaining influence of the Gospel. We have an account,² that is doubtless substantially correct, of his arrest and of his

¹ "Apologia," II and XII.

² "Acts of the Martyrdom of Justin the Philosopher," Gallandi, I, 707, seq.

¹ Revelation xvii, 12-14.

conduct before the bar of Rusticus, one of the emperor's philosophers. He appeared there the center of a group of prisoners, the names of some of whom have been preserved. These are: Chariton and Charitana; Evelpistus, a member of the imperial household; Hierax, a Phrygian; also Peor and Liberianus. During the trial the following conversation is reported to have occurred:

Rusticus. "Hear, thou who art called an orator, and who thinkest thou hast gained the true philosophy; if I scourge thee from head to foot, thinkest thou that thou wilt go to heaven?"

Justin. "Should I suffer what thou threatenest, I hope to receive the reward of true Christians."

Rusticus. "Thou imaginest, then, that thou shalt go to heaven, and be there rewarded?"

Justin. "I do not only imagine it, but know it, and cannot entertain the least doubt respecting it."

He and his companions were then commanded to go and sacrifice to the gods, and were warned that if they refused that they would be tormented without mercy.

Justin. "There is nothing which we more earnestly desire than to endure torments for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is this which will advance our happiness, and impart courage before his bar, at which the whole world must appear."

His associates likewise cried out: "Accomplish thy purpose quickly; we are Christians and will never sacrifice to idols."

Rusticus. "As for those who refuse to sacrifice to the gods, and to obey the imperial commands, they shall be first scourged, and then beheaded according to the law."

This sentence was mercilessly executed, and thus died Justin, "the most celebrated of those who flourished in those times."

Commodus, who succeeded Aurelius, 180 A. D., stayed these harsh proceedings. Not, however, immediately, for during the midsummer of that year the Medaurian and Scillitan martyrdoms took place. But in a comparatively brief space of time after becoming sole emperor, he was influenced by the "God-loving concubine," Marcia, whom he promoted to the throne in 183, to grant peace and respite from terror to the churches. This time endured for about twenty years. While it continued immense activity prevailed among God's people, and had this energetic enterprise been confined to them all would have been well. But the period was also marked by the revival of heathenism. Every effort was put forth to bring back society to the old gods. Theurgy, and magic, and demon-worship were introduced; voluptuous indulgences were converted into

religious rites; and self-inflicted punishments were encouraged as evidence of most extraordinary piety. The Persian deity, Mithras, was especially honored; and Apollonius of Tyana was paraded by Philostratus as superior in wonder-working power to Jesus Christ. Neoplatonism was affected by Julia Domna, the consort of Septimius Severus, while her elder niece, Soæmias, mother of Elagabalus, was devoted to neopythagoreanism, and her younger niece, Mammæa, was captivated by pure Orientalism. These women of rank, with their philosophical predilections and amours, could hardly fail directly or indirectly to influence the future of the Church. The power of misguided women over the masculine mind is always to be feared. It is subtle and dominating, and, where differences of religious opinion have been involved, has sometimes shown itself to be intolerant and merciless. From this deceitful calm, persecution stormed forth once more. After the assassination of Commodus (192 A. D.), and the abortive efforts of Pertinax and Didius Julianus to wear the purple, Septimius Severus ascended the throne, and in 202 A. D. a new decree was issued against the Christians. To what extent his wife was responsible for this hostile demonstration cannot now be determined; but it is not unlikely that she encouraged him in a course that would strengthen her own party. There was really no relaxation of cruel measures while her husband reigned; but a lull occurred during the short administrations of Caracalla and Elagabalus, and deepened into a period of peace under the more gentle sway of Alexander Severus (222-235 A. D.). It is widely credited that his mother, Julia Mammæa, when in Antioch had met with Origen, and had been deeply impressed by his teachings, and that, while not abandoning her interest in Orientalism, had desired to find a meeting place of friendship for the rival systems. It is, therefore, assumed that she disposed her son in the direction of toleration; and if this be true, it goes to show how much of the varying fortune of the early Church may have depended on the potency of woman. She made society in no small degree, then as now, and there can be but little doubt that if her fidelity and heroic self-surrender advanced the cause of Christ, her narrowness and vindictiveness had much to do with its struggles and its anguish.

The quiet that prevails for a moment in the trough of the sea is not assuring. It will speedily be overwhelmed and obliterated by the roll and sweep of the towering wave. In a manner somewhat similar Maximin the Thracian, who was chosen to succeed Alexander Severus (235 A. D.), speedily deluged the fair

hopes that had cheered the Church for twelve or thirteen years. Pontianus and Hippolytus of Rome were banished to Sardinia, and many others were exposed to severe and bitter trials. In three years the Thracian had ended his regal career, but those who came after him, Gordian, Philip, and Decius, were animated by no nobler sentiments toward the followers of Christ. It is claimed that under the Gordians and Philip, called the Arabian, the disciples were unmolested; but these rulers were no more reconciled to them and their teachings than were others, and presumably were too busy guarding their own precarious authority to venture on extensive expeditions against the faith. With Decius it was different. He was a vigorous man and felt greater security in his perilous office than did his immediate predecessors. Moreover, he was something of a statesman, and was anxious to revive and consolidate the power of Rome. Believing unity in religion to be indispensable to national strength and greatness, he proscribed Christianity in an edict proclaimed in 250 A. D. But he desired to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, though he was always ready to doom to death bishops, whom he regarded as ringleaders in the prevailing mischief, and is said to have dreaded the election of one in his imperial city as much as he feared the choice of a rival Cæsar. He sought to reclaim the wanderers from the heathen fold, as a company of wolves might be solicitous to draw a flock of defenseless sheep into the glades and solitudes of their native forests. The reluctant were to be admonished, the hesitating ones were to be tortured; then confiscation and banishment were to be tried; and finally, as a last resort—death. But no indiscriminate massacres were to be allowed, and no haste to slaughter instead of first trying to rescue the infatuated from their folly. Organizations were to be broken up, property to be appropriated by the State, punishments to be graded to the degree of guilt, and life was to be spared as long and as far as possible.

But, notwithstanding all these precautions, and the seeming desire to pursue a humane policy, the ranks of the faithful were fearfully decimated, and for a season it looked as if Christianity might be effectually exterminated. Gallus and Valerian adopted the methods of Decius. On the election of the latter in 253 A. D. he exercised some measure of clemency toward the oppressed Christians, but soon returned to the policy of Decius, under whom he had served as censor. Indeed, he went farther in his opposition to the existence of the religion whose cross threatened to become more powerful than his scepter.

The year 258 A. D. was memorable. Everything like forbearance and consideration ceased.

An edict was published that put an end to temporizing. Bishops, presbyters, and deacons were to be executed without delay; all Christian senators and magistrates were to lose their property, and if they did not abjure were to be slain. Women, likewise, were to be deprived of their possessions and be sent into exile, while members of the imperial household who held, or ever had held, to the detestable creed, were to be sent as slaves to toil on the estates belonging to the throne. While this fearful work was going on, Bishop Sixtus was arrested in the Catacombs, where he was engaged in directing divine services. He was condemned and was led back to the sacred spot where he had just been celebrating the Lord's Supper and there beheaded. On the way to the Catacombs one of his deacons, Laurentius by name, met him: "Whither goest thou, father, without thy son? Whither priest, without thy deacon?"

To his questioning Sixtus is said to have replied: "Cease weeping; thou wilt soon follow me." Soon, indeed, for on the fourth day after, being the tenth of August, 258 A. D., Laurentius was bound to an iron chair and destroyed by fire. This infamous year likewise witnessed the martyrdom of Cyprian, one of the most vigorous minds in the earlier stages of Church progress. He was brought before the proconsul at Carthage. The trial was short and not very formal.

"Thou art Thascius Cyprianus?" inquired the judge.

"I am," answered the sturdy bishop.

"Thou hast permitted thyself to be made an official in a sacrilegious sect?"

"True."

"The sacred emperors have commanded thee to sacrifice."

"THAT I WILL NOT DO."

"Consider it well."

"Do what is commanded thee; in a cause so just no reflection is necessary."

He was promptly sentenced to die by the sword, and hailed his doom with an ejaculation of thanksgiving. His demeanor was firm and triumphant. The poor executioner trembled as he drew near the condemned. Cyprian calmly unloosened his robe and prepared his neck to receive the fatal stroke. By his own majestic fortitude he encouraged the official to discharge his duty; and, after a few moments spent in prayer, the indomitable spirit was released to share with the redeemed in an eternity of praise.

Unexpectedly the clouds were dispersed. Valerian was taken prisoner by the Persians. His reign suddenly closed and Gallienus succeeded (261 A. D.) to the empire. It seemed as though summer had dawned on Christianity after its long winter; for the new ruler revoked

the edicts of his predecessors, and if he did not make Christianity a *religio licita*, he treated it with the most distinguished favor. He returned to the Church its forfeited property, and permitted its religious services to be conducted without molestation. The waste places were rapidly restored, and the work of converting the heathen was resumed with old-time fervor. An immense number became "obedient to the faith," and on every side evidences of prosperity multiplied. Alas, for human expectations, this gracious season had its limits. Gallienus was slain at Milan in 268 A. D. This calamity, however, did not end the period of repose and good will. Claudius Gothicus and Aurelian adhered in the main to the policy of conciliation. But during the closing years of the latter portentous storm-clouds gathered on the horizon. A strong party arose in favor of the discredited and neglected Roman divinities. Once more a persistent attempt was to be made to bring back what many regarded as the better times of heathenism. On this movement the emperor smiled. He sought to place a violent restraint on Christian tendencies, which threatened an expansion dangerous to the existence of the old mythologies. Consequently he reversed the action of Gallienus, and signed an edict against the Christians in 275 A. D., the year of his own violent death, and thus prepared the way for the crowning persecution under Diocletian. This emperor changed the form of Roman government, appointing colleagues of higher and lower rank, to administer affairs, and even moved the chief seat of authority from the Eternal City. He transferred his residence to Nicomedia. But if he was determined on innovations in government, he was equally set on reaction in religion. Though his wife, Prisca, and his daughter, Valeria, were at least sympathetically Christians, he was resolved to reestablish the pagan cult, which did not presume to interfere with monarchs, and even increased their influence by consenting to their deification. He gave to himself the high-sounding title of *Dominus*, "Lord," and spoke of himself as Jovius, and called his associate in power, the crafty Maximian, Herculeus. Nothing less than the mantle of Zeus was adequate to adorn his majesty; and only the temple of Jupiter was sacred enough to receive his adoration. He tried to build a new political structure on the crumbling foundations of an effete religion. But in seeking to actualize his ideal he did not at the outset contemplate employing coercive measures. He could not understand why there should be any serious objections to compromises on the part of the Church, and he employed his art to bring about such a result. His pacific policy was a transparent failure. God's children were not

to be seduced by royal smiles and specious arguments. Galerius, one of the two Cæsars, and son-in-law to Diocletian, became incensed by their firmness and set himself to accomplish their ruin. His mother Romula, who delighted in Phrygian orgies, and Hierocles, governor of Bithynia, and a philosopher of the violently intolerant sort, did all in their power to excite his prejudices and stimulate his anger. He was young and strong; Diocletian old and feeble. He was active, impatient, and fanatical; while Diocletian was vain, cautious, and moderate; and it is hardly to be wondered at that he should have gained a masterful sway over the mind of his senior. But at the beginning the emperor would only permit him to try the effect of pressure—and that only within limits—on the army. He was not long in availing himself of this concession. Orders were issued requiring all soldiers to sacrifice to the gods, and threatening degradation in case any of the men refused. Many Christians were in the ranks and not a few held important commands. To the surprise and consternation of Galerius, resignations were sent to headquarters, and entire companies declined to follow the imperial standards. This looked like mutiny. But it was not. It was only another proof that the will of Christ was considered more sacred and imperative than the will of any earthly ruler. The spirit of this revolt is summed up in the declaration of Marcellus, who was done to death because he renounced his military position: "From this moment I cease to serve your generals. I scorn to worship your gods of wood and stone, which are only dumb idols. If military service brings with it the obligation to sacrifice to the gods and to the emperor, I throw down my belt and staff. I desert the standards and cease to be a soldier."

The climax was at hand. Diocletian, still averse to bloodshed, imagined that he could abolish Christianity by proclamation. An edict was issued designating February 23, 303 A. D., when occurred the Feast of the Terminalia, as the fitting time for an end to be put to the religion of our Lord. One circumstance peculiarly marked this attempt at suppression—the sacred writings of the church, her Gospels, biographies, and apostolic epistles, were to be exterminated. If her literature were blotted out, it was sagaciously surmised, her faith could not survive. The loss entailed on humanity by this policy can hardly be estimated. It is known that many manuscripts of incalculable value perished, and the few that were saved were only rescued by the zeal and astuteness of the clergy. "A singular expedient was adopted by Mensurius, bishop of Carthage. He removed all the precious manuscripts from

his church, and left in their stead a collection of the writings of heretics, which were seized. Annulinus, the proconsul, was informed of this device, but declined to make search in the house of the bishop for the true writings. It appears that this was not the only occasion on which the officers of justice were deceived by the substitution of false writings for the true. Those who gave up their sacred manuscripts, in order to make peace with the heathen magistrates, were branded with the names of *traditores* and were excommunicated."

Not only were the much-prized documents of Christianity officially doomed; its possessions, edifices of every kind, were condemned to destruction as well. On the dawning of the *Terminalia*, officers of the law invaded the great church of Nicomedia, and speedily a terrific conflagration swallowed up its ornaments and treasures, and left it a heap of smoldering ruins. Other buildings were given to the torch, and in many portions of the empire ecclesiastical property was ruthlessly sacrificed. Confusion and distrust spread. Acts of resistance and retaliation on the part of the harried disciples were suspected, especially in the mysterious breaking out of two fires in the emperor's palace at Nicomedia, and in some popular disturbances that alarmed Melitene and Antioch. The excitement must have been intense, and during its continuance not improbably a few of the sufferers may have been impelled to strike back. And why not? Just think of their condition and of the pains and penalties to which they were liable under the government of one who desired to avoid bloodshed! All Christians were deprived of their civil rights, were reduced to slavery, and stigmatized as outlaws. Appeal against every kind of outrage and torture ceased with their proscription. Their maids and matrons were flogged with rods, half-naked, up and down the public streets, and some of them were even sentenced to the brothel, and their men were lacerated and ignominiously mutilated. Edict followed edict. Life was no longer respected. Whether with the approval of Diocletian or not, death was again invoked in its most awful forms to extirpate a religion that would not yield to other modes of coercion. New torments were invented. Many persons were slowly consumed by fire; others succumbed to a bath of boiling lead; and others yet were simply hewn to pieces. But the story need not be pursued in all its sickening details. Suffice it, so fearful were these times that not a few apostatized; while to their honor be it recorded, where often strong men faltered, women and children persevered unto the end. A young girl by the name of Victoria could

have saved herself by pleading insanity, a defense made on her behalf by a loving relative, but she preferred to taste death for Christ. And a little boy named Hilarinus would not accept deliverance on account of his tender years, but cried out with heroic courage: "Do what you please. I am a Christian."

Gradually the violence of the persecution diminished. The Church stood calmly resolute. Though bleeding from many wounds, she lived. The butchers grew weary of the slaughter; and there were more victims waiting to be slain than there were knives to slay them. Then Diocletian was prostrated by what seemed a paralytic stroke and Galerius was smitten down by a mysterious disease, which made him an object of loathing to his attendants, and from which he suffered indescribable agony. Some persons discerned in these afflictions the marks of retribution, and speculation as to their causes could not be restrained. Many shuddered at the vengeance which apparently had overtaken the enemies of the Church, and not a few among the heathen were filled with consternation. Nor was it diminished, but rather heightened, when Galerius issued (311 A. D.) an edict putting an end to persecution. He was convinced of the futility of forceful measures to regulate the religious opinions of his subjects. Weary, weak, and wretched, a physical wreck, he sent forth a document which announced to the empire his own defeat, and which reminds us of the great, though oft-forgotten truth, that "he fights ill who fights against God."

Yes; no weapon formed can ultimately prevail against Christ's Church. She has always been in the minority, and yet in the long run has triumphed over the majority. It is not for her to count battalions. A just cause can make headway against iniquitous oppression, though the latter may be mailed in steel, and the former be armed only with a shepherd's sling and a few smooth pebbles taken from a brook. It seems as if God delighted in overcoming mightiness by feebleness, and in dispersing the multitude by the hand of the few. Modern history records innumerable instances where unpretentious Christian communities have protested against and opposed political tyranny, social inequalities, and municipal corruptions, and have made themselves felt, though overwhelming odds have derided and abused them, and sought in every way to circumvent them. The world is not necessarily governed by majorities; and we need not, therefore, be surprised that the early Church not only withstood the crushing weight of the Roman empire, but in the end trampled on its dignities, and seated itself in her throne.

"The lions' feet, the lions' lips, are dyed with crimson gore,
 A look of faith, an unbreathed prayer, the martyr's pangs are o'er.
 Proud princes and grave senators gazed on that fearful sight,
 And even women seemed to share the savage crowd's delight;
 But what the guilt, that on the dead a fate so fearful drew?
 A blameless faith was all the crime the Christian martyr knew;
 And where the crimson current flowed, upon that barren sand,
 Up sprang a tree, whose vigorous boughs soon overspread the land.
 O'er distant isles its shadows fell, nor knew its roots decay,
 E'en when the Roman Cæsar's throne and empire passed away."¹

The students of these sanguinary annals ought never to overlook the fact that they are illustrative of the strain to which the conscientious life is still subjected in the world. The path of moral perfection is ever the path of suffering. Official tortures are abolished everywhere—at least with few exceptions. The Stundists in Russia and the Armenians in Turkey even now are oppressed by men in power. But, as a rule, freedom of thought has little to fear from the commonwealth. The crown of heaven is only won by battling against deadly antagonists. He likewise is the martyr, who for the sake of right will not abandon his convictions to escape censure and loss; and who, without hesitancy, accepts poverty and obscurity rather than prove faithless to his trust, be that trust mercantile, political, social, or religious.

"Meek souls there are, who little dream
 Their daily strife an angel's theme;
 Or that the rod they take so calm,
 Shall prove in heaven a martyr's palm."

Perhaps they can never quite dream this dream, or comprehend the significance of their struggles, until they enter the heavenly kingdom. But at least from the tenor of this narrative all can see the value of steadfastness. Loyalty to conviction is worth more than liberality. Faithfulness has wrought more for progress than breadth. Latitudinarianism would never have overthrown a heathen shrine; and the poetry that sees only the greatness of the good in evil things, and never the immeasurable mischievousness, will hardly succeed in expurgating the evil. It is easier to be friendly with errors and corruptions than to denounce and resist them.

There is a venerable legend suggestive in this connection. It is related that when the Neronian persecution prevailed, the disciples besought Peter to flee from the city, that his life might not be hazarded. He hastened along

the Appian Way, and when about two miles from Rome he was met by a vision of Christ. In wonder he exclaimed: "Lord, whither goest thou!" The Master replied: "I go to Rome to be crucified a second time." Immediately the divine form vanished, and Peter perceived that the Savior had rebuked him for his flight. He deliberated hardly a moment, but straightway returned to his post, to duty, and to death. Many a man, like the apostle, has abandoned his high vocation as a representative of eternal truth, that he might escape censure and ridicule, and might not be classed with the uncultured and obstinate crowd who prefer suffering to shame. But if he were a genuine servant of Christ he went not far along his cowardly path without remonstrance from the divine Spirit dwelling in him. When faltering at the bar of his own conscience he must have heard the mysterious voice exclaiming:¹ "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It is the need of the hour that this voice should be heard and honored. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life"; "he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death"; "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna"; "he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations"; "he that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment"; him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God"; and "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Such is the message of the Spirit to the churches. Never a word of hope, encouragement or promise to moral cowardice or to disloyalty. Everything to firmness, conscientiousness, and steadfastness; nothing in time or eternity to fickleness, perfidy, and treachery. Everything to the conqueror; nothing to the craven. In spirit the Christians of all ages are allied with the martyrs. The difference between them is purely one of condition or environment, and not of obligation or of vocation. Alike they are pledged to uphold the Gospels at any and every cost, and alike they are to pass through the great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. If any man has no heart for fellowship with this "noble army," he can hardly claim a place in the company of the redeemed. But happy are they who are willing even now to endure crosses and losses for the truth's sake. Happy the men and women who are ready to lay down life itself for humanity, and who are sustained by the poet's vision, and breathe the poet's prayer.

¹ Hamilton Buchanan.

¹ Revelation ii, 10.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LABARUM OF VICTORY.

THE year 312 A. D. is famous in the annals of Christianity and marks the beginning of a new epoch in the world's history. Over the Cottian Alps a small army, barely numbering 60,000, but consisting of hardy and war-inured veterans, had swept onward to the plains of Italy, like one of the mountain torrents in that region—strong, swift, and irresistible. It was late in the summer, or early in autumn, when tidings of this insolent and intrepid invasion reached the imperial capital. At first it was a subject almost of derision, and excited contempt rather than alarm. Had not Severus with a far more imposing force been obliged to retreat, in 307 A. D., from before the gates of Rome, and had he not found that the morasses and walls of Ravenna were insufficient to shield his person from the superior craft of the power he had ventured to assail; and if he had failed, why be apprehensive of serious calamities resulting from presumptuous demonstrations of an inferior body of troops? What were 60,000 or 80,000 men in the presence of 170,000 foot and 18,000 horse that were being concentrated against them? Cause for sport rather than of fear, this reckless expedition directed against the Eternal City, the mistress of the world. Still there was some degree of excitement observable among the people as they conversed on passing events and observed the hurrying to and fro of soldiers and the unusually grim bearing of the prætorian guard. In the neighborhood of the Colosseum, whose massive stones had been cemented by the tears and blood of 12,000 captive Jews, and on the Forum of Julius Cæsar and the Forum Romanum, groups of citizens doubtless discussed, though without anything like panic in their speech, the supreme question of the hour. The aristocratic classes, the proud patricians and their families on the Palatine, where from an immemorable date the rulers of society had built their palaces, unquestionably must have been languidly solicitous as to the outcome of a movement that arrayed the supreme authorities of the empire against each other; and some among the affluent, more curious than the others, may have climbed the Pincian, where once Lucullus feasted Cicero and Pompey in his villa, and where Messalina had abandoned herself to voluptuous orgies, to see if the country round about gave evidence of an approaching enemy, as Vettius had sought signs of the "awful storm from Ostia," which, in the person of Claudius, was to engulf the adulterous empress and her lovers.

Nor could the temples or the gods have failed to be at such a time as this centers of interest, though the thought of extreme peril was not entertained by the populace. True, multitudes of the people had lost faith in paganism and cared little for Castor and Pollux, had outgrown their veneration for the Vestals, and rarely sought the fanes of Concord, Fides Publica, Jupiter Capitolinus, Janus Quirinus, Mars, or Victory, or any of the rest once so dear and sacred to the Roman heart. Nevertheless, many of those who had not become Christians, and whose superstitions were easily aroused by any unexpected and threatening developments, would naturally return to their neglected altars to supplicate for favor and protection, especially as the foremost official, if not the foremost man, in the capital had consulted the Sibylline Books and had not failed to receive an encouraging, though, as usual, a dubious reply.

The Christians themselves, with their strong reliance on Providence, and with the confidence of ever-growing influence proceeding from ever-increasing numbers, could not have been indifferent spectators of what was passing round them. They had no reason to suppose that in any sense a deliverer was coming to the succor of the faithful; neither had they visions of luminous crosses and other signs of impending revolution. To them the issue of battle might mean a change of heathen masters, and might affect their social standing for good or ill in some respects; but nothing more. How could they have foreseen that they were on the eve of a tremendous upheaval; and that their wonderful successes against heathenism were about to be acknowledged, the sacred symbol of salvation about to supplant the eagle at the head of the legions, and the door be opened for the spiritual conquest of mankind? So wonderful a transformation in their condition and circumstances could hardly have been anticipated; and yet, who knows? God reigns and all things are possible. Out of existing troubles some advantage might possibly arise to the Church. How, or in what way, no one knew; but it was right to seek divine aid in every season of perplexity. And, while citizens were idly gossiping, bands encamping round the city, senators hastening to offer money and men to the emperor, pagan priests fanning the embers of their incredible myths, military officers inspecting the defensive walls, and an air of uncertainty hung over the scene, the simple-minded disciples of our Lord, whom

Tacitus had described in his day as "a vast multitude," in their places of worship doubtless called on the Most High to remember Zion and cause all things to work together for her good; and not a few may have crept unseen once more into the Catacombs, where millions of Christian graves sanctified many miles of subterranean streets, and, moved by the monuments commemorating the suffering past, may have cried: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

But the contempt of some, the indifference of many and the apparent confidence of all, suddenly gave place to something like consternation. Tidings in swift succession reached the city of battles won by the enemy, and of a rapidity in executing manœuvres and of moving his forces characteristic only of Julius Cæsar and recalling his achievements. One day it was reported that Susa, at the foot of the Alps, had fallen; on another, that Turin had surrendered; then that the conquering foe had entered Milan; then that he was marshalling his little armies along the Æmilian and Flamilian ways; then that he was encamped on the Adige and had encompassed Verona; and then, worst of all, that he had defeated Pompeianus and was approaching with terrible celerity a place called Saxa Rubra, not over nine or ten miles from Rome. A last and supreme effort must be made to arrest his progress. All was confusion, and excitement, and apprehension in the city. Horrible forebodings everywhere prevailed. Lying oracles were consulted by the pagan; money and precious stones were hidden, and retreats where concealment could be obtained were sought; and the Christians, with a trifle more of pallor on their faces and with something more of earnestness in their voices, were entreating God to be a munition of rocks and a sure defense to his people. But nine miles away, while prayers were ascending in church and catacomb, the final act in the tragedy was being enacted. There, with the river Tiber as their base and hindering retreat, and with the right and left wings of the army extending over an immense plain, the Romans awaited the attack of their adversaries. Nor had they long to wait. The commander of the invading forces at the head of his cavalry, glitteringly arrayed, charged impetuously the Moors and Numidians, who held the center, and overwhelmed them. He and his soldiers struck the lines of the defense as a thunderbolt crashes through trees and masonry, and they wavered and broke. Nor would the conflict have been prolonged had it not been for the disciplined courage of the prætorian guard. These stubborn veterans comprehended the situation at a glance and

realized the difficulty of contending with the Gallic horse. But, though dismayed, they were not prepared to yield without a struggle, and, keeping well together, they fought doggedly and valiantly; nor would they give an inch, but fell one by one at their post. Few of them escaped the awful slaughter; and nevermore does this old guard that had played so questionable a part in the election and the fate of emperors appear again in history. They had been swept away, and with them went the cause they had so heroically upheld. The rout was general.

Throughout the ranks disorder prevailed. The Italians had lost the day, and the retreat had become a hurried flight of cravens from the destroying sword of the victors. Riderless horses tore furiously through bleeding companies and groups of fugitives, and trampled the wounded and dying beneath their hoofs, while the shouts of the conquerors and the execrations of their victims added to the indescribable and sickening horrors of the scene. Many of the fleeing soldiers perished in the waters of the Tiber, and others were crushed to death in the crowds struggling to escape by the Milvian bridge. That narrow passage spanning the stream soon became choked by an utterly demoralized and desperate mass, pushing, fighting, writhing, cursing, and even slaying; striking wildly at friends and comrades in the frantic effort to secure personal safety. No consideration was shown to age or rank; the highest officers as well as the meanest, subaltern being indiscriminately mixed in the mad melee. Not even was the emperor recognized by the affrighted fugitives as he sought a way across the Milvian bridge, by which a secure asylum might be reached, but was rudely jostled and roughly thrust from the path of those who but yesterday would have trembled at his slightest frown. Alas! poor Cæsar! He was Pontifex Maximus, Augustus, and twenty other mighty things, and had claimed, indeed, to be the sole Augustus in the empire, and had now to strive like any common plebeian in a stampeding herd of disorganized soldiery for bare existence. Neither was he equal to the savage scuffle, but was borne down by the rushing, swirling throng, was caught in the vortex of panic-stricken humanity, was sucked under the feet of the brutal multitude, and was finally shoved off the bridge, battered, bruised, wounded, into the river, where next day his sadly disfigured corpse was found.

So fell Maxentius, master of Rome, before the triumphant arms of Constantine, called the Great, who, with incredible celerity, had traversed the distance between Gaul and Italy, had vanquished armies, and over the dead body of his rival now marched to claim the reward of

his prowess—the throne of the tyrant and the homage of a people whom he had delivered from his violence and vices.

These two rulers in a very important sense represent the social and religious transition through which the Roman world was passing at the beginning of the fourth century. Maxentius impersonated the superstition, the weakness, viciousness, and cruelty of the old order hastening to extinction; while Constantine embodied in some degree the faith, the vigor, the virtue, and the magnanimity of the new, rapidly advancing to supremacy. The first was the product of paganism, of pagan literature, customs, institutions, and traditions; while the second was the product of Christian influences, though contaminated, unfortunately, and measurably vitiated by heathenism. Maxentius was the unmistakable and legitimate child of the decaying idolatrous civilization; but Constantine was the progeny of parents who had never been joined in wedlock, and never could be honorably wedded—the new Christian cult and the old heathen culture. Maxentius was the son of Maximian, who had been associated with Diocletian as Augustus in the cares of empire. That he had not secured the confidence of his father was made apparent when Maximian and Diocletian resigned the purple (303 A. D.); for he was not then chosen to the rank of Cæsar. Even his father-in-law, the haughty Galerius, who had become Augustus on the abdication of his seniors, discerned in him no special merit; for he passed him by and exalted Severus to the throne of Italy and Africa. Indignant and outraged by this contemptuous treatment, Maxentius seized the first opportunity to rebel and assert his claims. Severus being absent from the city, he suborned the senate and soldiery with gifts and flattering promises, and assumed the imperial ornaments. Prominent leaders, realizing his incapacity, and he himself probably having a dull consciousness of his own weakness, agreed to invite his father to abandon his retirement and once more enter on the responsibilities of government. The father saved the son. He destroyed Severus, and compelled Galerius to accede to what was practically an usurpation. But, once secure in his high office, the son, with base ingratitude, speedily broke with his sire, who was forced to seek a refuge at the court of Constantine, at Arles, on whom he conferred the title of Augustus, and to whom he gave his daughter Fausta in marriage. At this time the affairs of the empire were in a deplorable condition. Six rulers divided the authority of state and were secretly plotting against each other or openly devising plans for the concentration of power in the hands of one supreme magistrate. Five of these rulers were destined

to early graves. Maximian, discovered in an attempt to dethrone his son-in-law, Constantine, saved himself from a worse fate by committing suicide; Maximin, nephew of Galerius, at a later date, having failed in an enterprise against Licinius, imitated his example; Galerius himself perished of a horrible disease; Maxentius, as we have previously described, came to an ignominious end at the Milvian bridge; and, some nine years after, Licinius provoked civil war, was defeated, banished to Thessalonica, and there put to death, and Constantine reigned without a rival.

Concerning Licinius we have the following story: When about to measure strength with his great adversary, he sought to enlist on his side heathen prejudices. He railed against Constantine as a religious renegade, as a traitor to the traditions of Rome, and charged him with infamy in placing at the head of the army the sign of the cross, which through all ages had been identified with crime and violence. Against him he invoked the vengeance of the gods. According to Eusebius he deliberately said: "The present crisis will prove which of us errs in judgment, by deciding between our gods and those revered by our foes. And, indeed, if the stranger [Christ] whom we now laugh at prove victorious, we too must recognize and honor him, and bid a long farewell to those for whom we burn tapers in vain. But if our own gods conquer, as is no wise doubtful, then, after this victory, we will prosecute the war against the impious." Out of his own mouth was this despiser of Christ condemned. He appealed to the Unseen and the Unseen judged him. The army that came against him bore the hated standard of the cross. Everywhere was it victorious, and as the soldiers of idolatry hastened, demoralized, from the scene we can almost hear the taunting voice of Elijah calling as of old from Mount Carmel: "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked." And it would have been no wonder, after the defiant and arrogant attitude of Licinius had been answered by the arbitrament of battle, if, when all the people saw it, they had fallen on their faces, crying: "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." This, in fact, they did not do; but the result of the conflict deepened the popular impression that Jesus Christ was entitled to faith and homage.

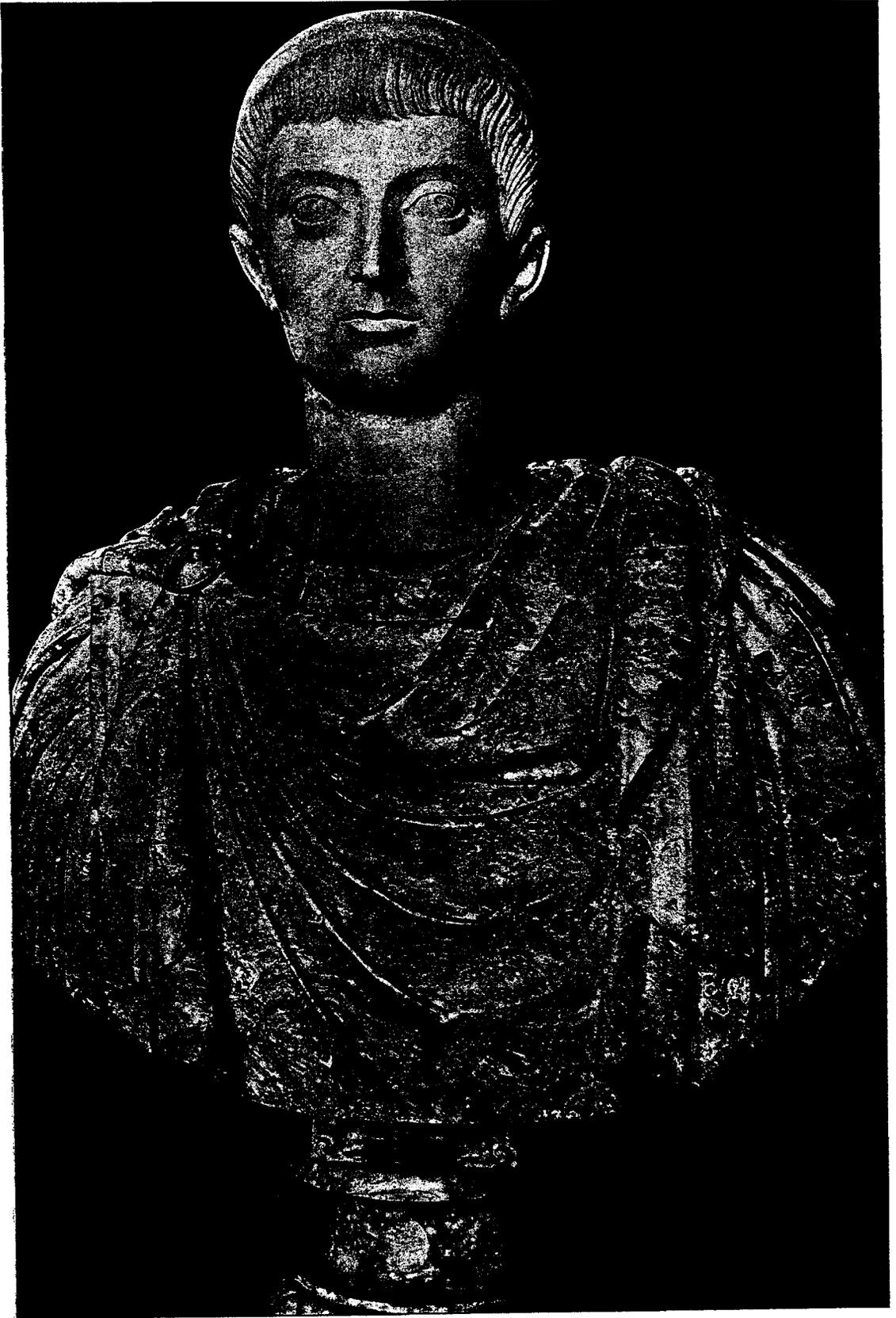
During the earlier part of this brief period, and when the affairs of the nation were most unsettled, restraints were few and the gravest outrages were perpetrated with safety. Officials abused their trust, the strong took advantage of the weak, and the vilest lusts were gratified at the expense of all that was sacred

and noble in humanity. Rome became the center of this lawlessness and moral anarchy, and the despicable monster who wallowed in this corruption with more shamelessness than any other, was its master, Maxentius. He was depraved in his tastes, self-willed, conceited, and cruel. Having no personal sense of honor, he could not understand its scruples in others. Being lord over the country, he supposed that he was lord over the conscience and the virtue of his subjects, and being able to confiscate their estates to his service he did not see why they should hesitate to surrender their bodies to his pleasures. Neither maidens nor matrons were safe if his ever-hungry passions demanded food. He would tear the wife from the arms of her husband, and have the husband brutally murdered if he dared remonstrate; and he was startled beyond measure when Sophronia, a Christian woman, stabbed herself rather than yield to his embraces. Exalted to enforce the law and maintain its majesty, he outraged it at every point and degraded it in his own person and conduct. He who had been set apart as the supreme judge of men had made himself the supreme criminal; he who had been sceptered and crowned to protect the weak and the wronged and to defend the land against its foes, had become the foremost and most infamous oppressor and traitor. He was fickle, filthy, faithless, degenerate, debauched, and devilish; a sensualist by nature, a coward at heart, and a villain by preference. In him appeared the worst features of that neopaganism that had domesticated itself in the temples of Rome, the abominations, cruelties, and lasciviousness of the heathen religions from Egypt, Persia, and Phrygia that had joined hands with the old Latin deities. He reproduced them all. Maxentius was the real Pantheon; for in him dwelt the vilest of the gods. He prostrated himself before lust, anger, hatred, and all other pernicious things that pollute and destroy mankind; and in history he survives as a painful and revolting illustration of the dehumanizing influences of ancient heathenism, and as an enduring warning against every endeavor, in the name of sentiment or culture, to restore its baneful presence—or the shadow of its presence—to darken the way of the children of men.

Constantine was no saint. Like the feet of the image seen by Daniel, his character was partly iron and partly clay. But, placed by the side of his rival, Maxentius, his superior worth becomes instantly manifest. Confessedly he was not all that he might have been, and leaves much to be desired to the very end of his career. He was cautious, prudent, sagacious, and not over frank; dignified, and yet vain, stern and yet generous, ambitious and yet magnani-

mous, affectionate and yet jealously suspicious, intelligent and yet superstitious; a man who did not provoke war and yet did not shrink from it, and one who knew alike how to command in battle and how to execute, and that, too, with reckless intrepidity. In person he was tall and robust, a magnificent physical specimen of a soldier and a chief. He was scrupulous in his attire almost to foppishness, ostentatious in display, and at times a trifle stilted in his bearing. But no one knew better than he how to discard this finery for the armor of the warrior, and how to disdain the soft luxury of a palace when duty called him to the tented field. There was much of barbaric splendor in his dress when he received ambassadors; and unhappily, especially in the latter years of his reign, an occasional outbreak of barbaric ferocity, as witnessed in the deaths of Crispus, his son, and Fausta, his wife. Of his intellectual ability there can be no doubt. He was more than an ordinary general, more than a commonplace statesman; and by the laws enacted during his reign, and by the founding and building of Constantinople, and by his noble bearing in the heated discussions of the Council of Nicæa (325 A. D.), he gave proof of remarkable sagacity, foresight, and persuasive power.

But he was no real Christian. It were to confuse the simplest of distinctions to regard this man, this murderer of his own wife and son, this official stained with the blood of the families of his defeated colleagues, this rapacious ruler lavishly spending on his personal magnificence the earnings of his people, as a true follower of the just and loving Jesus. This prince, clothed with the fantastic richness of an Asiatic monarch, crowned with false hair and a diadem, even though he does profess to carry one of the nails of the blessed cross as the chief ornament in his horse's bridle, seems to have hardly anything in common with the Divine Teacher, whose servant he claimed to be. That he believed himself to be a Christian need not be questioned. He called himself a bishop of bishops; he preached to admiring audiences; and he legislated in the interests of Christianity. But his religion was sadly lacking in very essential elements. There are vague reports even of his reverting to the Flamens at Rome for purification after the death of Crispus; and it is well known that he was not baptized until he had reached the verge of the grave. Then, and not till then, in Nicomedia, as his biographer writes, "alone of Roman emperors from the beginning of time, was Constantine consecrated to be a witness of Christ in the second birth of baptism," a sentence that indicates how far many of the leaders of the Church had already departed from the



CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

doctrine of its gracious founder. He is perhaps rather to be pitied than to be blamed. Never did he receive careful instruction in the faith. He lived at a time when Christian and pagan ideas, while in direct conflict, were becoming strangely mixed, and his ecclesiastical advisers, Eusebius and Hosius, were too much given to courtier-like arts for them to protect him from error, especially as they themselves were not free from its meshes. It is not, then, to be wondered at that the emperor was never quite emancipated from heathenism, even while believing himself to be a Christian, and that his baptism, being of the kind it was, pretending to supply renewing and cleansing grace, may have left him on his deathbed more of a pagan than a saint.

But the vulgar charge of hypocrisy, which has been too hastily preferred against him by writers who are inadequate students of human nature, should not for a moment be entertained. It is not difficult to impute fraud and imposition, where the actions of men are somewhat inconsistent, and where motives are open to suspicion. But this method of explaining the singularities and contradictions of eminent historical personages has of late fallen into disrepute, as being crude and superficial. Nor is it sufficient to account for the deficiencies and weaknesses of the first Christian ruler. It is well known that in 315 A. D. there was reared at the foot of the Palatine, "where the Via Triumphalis diverges from the Sacra Via," the famous Arch of Constantine, but it is not as well known that an inscription thereon testifies at this late day to the sincerity of its hero. The epigraph referred to reads: "The S. P. Q. R. have dedicated this triumphal arch to Constantine, because *instinctu divinitatis* [by the will of God], and by his own virtue . . . he has liberated the country from the tyrant [Maxentius] and his faction."¹ For a long while it was supposed that the terms I have transcribed in Latin had been added to the original text, or that they had been altered from *diis faventibus* (by the help of the gods). But careful examinations conducted in 1863, under the auspices of Napoleon III., finally dissipated all such theories. It was demonstrated by experts that the inscription had not been tampered with, and that it, therefore, indicated on the part of Constantine sincere belief in the Christian God. At this period of his career, it should be remembered that his position was not assured. He was beset by perils and confronted by powerful and unscrupulous foes. For him, therefore, to consent that such an acknowledgment should be made on the Triumphal Arch as committed him to

the new creed, speaks well for his honesty at least. However faulty his personal religion, and however adulterated by pagan ideas, he must assuredly be acquitted of conscious hypocrisy. As well make such charge against Ambrose of Milan, an incomparably nobler man, because in the funeral oration pronounced over Theodosius he subscribes to the story of Helena presenting to her son two nails taken from the rediscovered cross, and exclaims: "O wise Helena, who assigned to the cross its place upon the head of the emperor, that in the emperor the crown might be honored! O good nail, which holds the Roman empire together!"¹ In judging this mighty ecclesiastic, who once firmly withstood his imperial master, we would certainly make allowance for the superstitions of the times, and not denounce him as false and disingenuous because he was not altogether superior to them. And by the same rule of common sense and of charity we must exonerate the monarch, who first among kings acknowledged Christ to be his Lord, from aspersions derogatory alike to integrity and dignity.

Not Britain, but Naissus in Dacia, was the place of Constantine's nativity. He was born 274 A. D. His father, Constantius, was an eminently just, amiable, and noble prince. On the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian he had been invested with the rank of Augustus, and his subjects loved him as a most humane, gentle, and temperate sovereign. The necessities of the period compelled him for a season to fix his court at York, England, where he died, and where his son was first proclaimed Cæsar. The wife of this celebrated man was Helena, long since canonized as a saint. It is said she was the daughter of an innkeeper, and was reared among the lowly and the poor. On the exaltation of her husband she was divorced; but on the accession of her son to power she was restored to a position of honor in the royal family. She was an avowed Christian. Tradition has it that she was converted when her famous son espoused the cause of Christ. It is, however, more than likely that before his birth, or at the latest, during her residence in York and prior to her divorce, she had come to sympathize with the new religion, though her comprehension of its teachings was always exceedingly faulty. She being of humble origin and mingling with humble people, the very class that had most generally and most generously accepted the creed of the great Nazarene, it would have been only natural for her to be influenced by her associates. Moreover, the Gospel having been preached in Britain by the apostles, she may again have

¹ Lanciani, "Pagan and Christian Rome," pp. 20, 21.

¹ "Oratio Funebria de Morte Theodosii," p. 491.

been brought in touch with its witnesses. These suppositions being admitted, much light is thrown on Constantine's most remarkable conduct. At her knee he may have heard of Jesus, of his reputed prodigies, and of his saving grace. Her conceptions were doubtless crude, and, after the manner of her age, not unmingled with superstitions; but they must have been potent in determining the future of her son. Unconsciously he would be molded by them; and when he heard from her lips or from others the story of martyrdom, and how saintly men, women, and children had boldly confronted the lions in the Flavian amphitheatre, the cause she pleaded and for which they heroically died would appeal to his imagination and fill him with an indescribable awe. And this predisposition in its favor could hardly fail to be strengthened by its wonderful success; and the sagacity which characterized him may have led him to perceive that, as it could not be suppressed, its adoption by the State would prove a master stroke of political wisdom.

Thus prepared by the influence of his mother and by the spirit of the age, and likewise by his own reflections on the conditions and needs of the Roman world, he may have decided on a course of action that would give to the Church a protector and to society a savior. Nor is it incredible that in the excitement attending so high and novel a resolve—a resolve evidently reached amid the noise and confusion of camp and battle—that he should have imagined a vision of the cross, or have mistaken some natural phenomenon, such as a "parhelion," which in the afternoon has been known to assume the form of a cross, for a supernatural sign in the heavens, given for his redemption and the redemption of the empire, as the original was reared on Calvary for the redemption of mankind. His own account of this strange experience as communicated to Eusebius, and as related by that historian, sets forth that when on the march to meet Maxentius, at Saxa Rubra, while engaged in prayer, when "the day was declining," he saw a blazing cross appear in the sky and round about it the words "In this conquer." He was exalted and inspired by the vision, and that night while dreaming of it Christ appeared to him in person bearing a strange standard. Next day, gathering around him the clergy, who were in camp ministering to the Christian soldiery, he advised with them regarding the significance of these things, and as a result of the conference he avowed himself a Christian and decided on substituting a new standard for the imperial eagles. Other versions of this story have descended to us from the pens of Lactantius, Nazarius, and Philostorgius. But these

need not be repeated. Evidently the emperor was sincere enough in his belief that he had been supernaturally called of God to a glorious mission; but the real explanation of his alleged vision we may well leave undecided as we leave similar mysteries in the lives of others. The facts are—and these are sufficient for the students of this history—that either immediately before or subsequent to his victory over Maxentius, Constantine was impelled by some striking occurrence to proclaim himself a Christian—alas! only a nominal one, as we now understand that much abused term—and the defender of the Church, signalling his so-called conversion, and the new relation of the empire to the faith, by the adoption of a military ensign for the legions, termed the Labarum.

The word "Labarum" is supposed to be derived from the Greek *laba*, a staff; and *ruomai*, to rescue from peril. That for which it stood consisted of a gilded staff, crossed at the top by a bar from which was suspended a square purple cloth profusely ornamented with jewels. The upper extremity of the staff was decorated with a golden wreath or crown, and the sacred monogram formed of the first two letters of the Savior's name. Its appearance can readily be pictured and has frequently been reproduced, as in Fig. A, page 343, Vol. IX of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." When it was first given to the legions is still an open question. Gibbon argues that it was not displayed until 323 A. D., as by that time the authority of Constantine was recognized everywhere; and it is not likely that he would have taken so radical a step until he was sure that he could do so without rebuke or peril from any quarter. Uhlhorn, however, contends for an earlier period. He writes: "With all the labor that has been spent on the task, it has proved impossible to make away with the fact that first in the war with Maxentius, and after that more and more prominently, the cross [evidently he means the Labarum] was the banner under which Constantine fought and conquered. At this date the heathen emblems disappear from the imperial standard, and are supplanted by the cross and the monogram of Christ. On the helmets, on the shields, on the very coins, we find from that date, in hundreds of examples, the cross and the two sacred letters, X P, the Greek initials of the name, Christ." But whenever the device was committed to the army, and wherever it was afterward borne, it proclaimed the substantial victory of Christianity. Many who beheld it in the fourth century possibly argued that it was witness to a triumph wrought for religion through the power of the State, as careless students in our day are in danger of concluding that its success was due to the position of Constantine, instead of seeing

as they ought, that his position was entirely due to its success. He was not the man to espouse a forlorn hope. When the Church had demonstrated her ability to maintain herself, notwithstanding the superstitious hatred of Macrianus, and the deadly persecutions of Valerian, Galerius, and Diocletian; and to survive the loss of such eminent men as the bishops of Nicomedia, Tyre, Sidon, and Emesa, and even to grow stronger and more majestic through tribulation; when, in other words, she had proved conclusively that she was not dependent on an arm of flesh, the emperor stepped forth to embrace her and support her. Doubtless it was very much to her advantage for so notable a personage to become her ally and friend. It meant a decree of toleration and permission to make converts anywhere unhindered; it meant the restoration of her property, confiscated during the persecutions; it meant also restoration to the rights of citizenship, and, by the enactment of a Sunday law, an open door to the masses of the people.

No wonder that some enthusiastic souls imagined that the millennium had dawned, and that soon the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of God and his Christ. In Egypt, aged Alexander and youthful Athanasius, as well as the devoted Arius, must have rejoiced when they heard of the end that had come to ecclesiastical disabilities; likewise the bishops of Syria and of some parts of Asia, Eustathius, Eusebius, and Macarius, and also Leontius of Cæsarea, Maris of Chalcedon, Menophantus of Ephesus, Marcellus of Ancyra, Nicolas of Myra, and other well-known, shining lights in the Church, could hardly fail to believe that the glorious prophecies of Zion's exaltation and of the world's subjection to her sway had at last begun. Humbler professors of religion by the thousands congratulated one another, and came forth from obscure hiding places, while here and there some aged Simeon cried: "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." They felt that the promises made by Christ and his apostles were being fulfilled; and that he might soon be expected to come the second time to reign in glory on the earth. The days of mourning were ended; sorrow had fled with the night, joy had come with the morning. These simple souls probably never stopped to ask how much or how little of this wonderful emancipation was due to Constantine. They saw in him an instrument of providence as Cyrus had been in another age, and as such they had honored him, and left future generations to determine whether he became defender of the faith when the faith had triumphed, or had secured its triumph by becoming its defender. We also should be grateful

for this sublime victory of the cross, especially as we can see on looking back that it cannot be traced to the interposition of a human scepter; for it teaches us anew that the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation," and that, if faithfully proclaimed, it will overthrow heathenism everywhere and prevail against every form of iniquity.

The edict of Milan, the first tangible fruits of Constantine's successful attack on Maxentius, was published in 313 A. D. This edict may be regarded as the Magna Charta of Christianity. It proclaimed absolute freedom in religion. All persons were to be entirely untrammelled in the profession and exercise of their faith. There thus dawned on the world the glorious principle, which was soon after to be obscured for ages, and which was not to be established as fundamental to society until recent times, that the individual cannot and ought not to abdicate his sovereignty over the domains of thought and conscience. In spiritual things he is responsible to God, and to God only. From the standpoint of civil government the citizen has as much right to be a pagan as a Christian, an infidel as a believer; and had this right been recognized from 313 to 1895 without any reserve, the world would have been spared the terrible spectacles of massacres and unnamable outrages, perpetrated often by monsters of iniquity clothed in sacerdotal robes, for the sake of coercing men and women nobler and purer, and, in the true sense of the term, more sincerely religious than themselves. While Constantine began well, it was soon apparent that his mind was not emancipated from the antique political maxim that, as religion is in some vital manner necessary to the State, the State is bound to watch over it, guard it, and suppress its opponents. Hence, he speedily released the clergy from the duty of serving in municipal affairs, and he donated large sums for their support. The burdens of taxation were diminished, and the Church was permitted to inherit property. Some notable and needful reforms followed. Crucifixion as a punishment was abolished; and criminals were not to be branded any longer on the foreheads. For God had been incarnated, had magnified humanity, and the tabernacle wherein he had dwelt must not be degraded. Capital punishment also, for similar reasons, became less frequent; and merciful treatment of captives was encouraged. Statutes were enacted favorable to greater sanctity in the marriage relation, and advantageous to the protection of children and of slaves. A law was also promulgated setting apart the first day of the week, called Sunday, to rest from toil. The text of this famous document, which was issued 321 A. D., is as follows: "On the venerable day of the

Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in the work of cultivation may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. Given the seventh day of March, Crispus and Constantine being Consuls, each of them for the second time."

How far this decree was inspired by a desire to advance Christianity, which had from the beginning observed this very day as "Lord's Day," cannot very well be determined now. One thing, however, is clear: it facilitated the work of the Church by disengaging the attention of the people from the cares of ordinary pursuits, and yet was fair to heathen as to Christian by not imposing any religious observances. Indeed, the attitude of Constantine at this period toward heathenism would not have justified him in any extreme measures of discrimination. He had to move cautiously, and, though evidently disposed to favor the Church, he was not prepared to break finally with the old cult. As M. Beausobre observes: "Constantine advanced but very slowly and amid much circumspection. He allowed the greater part of the pagan temples and other public abodes of idolatry to remain. Divination there was publicly sanctioned. The priests, the Vestals, all the ministers of superstition, were supported at the cost of the public funds, and their privileges, their lands, their funds, and their revenues were carefully maintained. If the private sacrifices were forbidden, public ones were permitted in the great cities, and especially at Rome. The altar of Victory was in honor there to the time of Constantine, who caused it to be removed, soon to be reestablished by Julian. Pagans were admitted to places of trust, and composed the Senate. Constantine himself, nine years after his conversion to Christianity, gave permission by law to consult diviners or augurs, and ordered their answer to be reported to him."¹

But these times of ambiguity were destined to pass away. The defeat of Licinius (323 A. D.) on the plains of Hadrianople, and the fall of Byzantium, consolidated the power of Constantine and gave assurance of immunity from pagan plots and aggressions. Paganism had been discredited in battle, as it had previously been outmatched in argument. The discomfiture was complete and irreparable. Now a series of enactments were announced which facilitated the gradual extinction of the

old faith. The temples that had fallen into decay were not to be restored. Officials were forbidden to participate in sacrifices to the gods; and lawless plundering of shrines and altars was not restrained as it should have been. Constantine himself entertained court circles with edifying discourses on the truth of Christianity; and, as often the word of royalty has carried more weight with certain polite classes than the profoundest efforts of the logician, it is not to be wondered at that office-bearers and courtiers were speedily converted by an emperor turned preacher. Either in form or in fact the patricians were savingly impressed. Bishops were received in the palaces of the great, and inferior clergy were generally flattered and honored. Church buildings were enlarged, and such edifices multiplied rapidly and were enriched exceedingly. The change was transcendently wonderful. Christianity, from being poor, despised, derided, and persecuted, suddenly became affluent, respected, venerated, and protected. Everywhere the saints were jubilant. Congratulations were common in every meeting of disciples, and songs of thanksgiving and hope were sung throughout the empire.

Alas! this transformation was not without its dark and portentous shadows. The friendship of Constantine was not an unmixed gain. He not only favored the Church, he interfered in her internal affairs. And his connection with her gave rise to notions, theories, customs, and claims that have plagued Christendom ever since his time, and which, in some measure, afflict it still. The *Labarum* at the head of the legions, while at the first a source of great elation, came in the long run to miseducate the people. What right had any man to use the symbols of Christianity for the purpose of consecrating warfare? There is something akin to profanity in carrying the image of our Lord's cross to wave over the passions of strife, and over the agonies of maimed and disfigured humanity on the battlefield. Let the nations have their tigers, their lions, and their eagles when they must fight, fit emblems these of their savage enmities, but the cross surely has nothing to do with these deadly feuds. Neither ought the sacred monogram ever to have been placed in such dubious fellowship. From the moment that it gleamed above the heads of the armed men, one of the most distinctive ideas of our holy religion, the idea of brotherly love, expressing itself in peace, in generous kindness, and in self-sacrifice for others, was obscured and practically discredited. It looked as though Christianity approved the employment of force, and as though she were willing to lend the sanction of her great name to violence and aggression. Better would it have

¹Preface to "Apocalypse."

been if her bishops had forbidden the use of any of her emblems by bodies of troops. Their faithful protest would have gone far by this time to render warfare disreputable, as the testimony of saintly souls in the early centuries finally broke up the disgraceful and bloody scenes of the amphitheatre and prepared the way for the abrogation of slavery; and doubtless would have saved the Church from the frightful and frequent application of physical coercion on the part of secular government to her own members, who could not, for conscience' sake, comply with its infamous decrees.

Moreover, a serious error was committed in adopting certain pagan rites and ceremonies, and in associating with idolatrous works of art Christian ideas and doctrines. By these concessions not a few prominent people, who were offended by the cross, were soothed and were finally persuaded to submit. But the unfortunate compromise entailed on Christendom a number of superstitious observances, which in no small measure perverted its character and hindered its progress. The extent to which this process of adaptation was carried has been set forth by Giovanni Marangoni in a learned volume, and anyone who visits Rome and notes how frequently heathen names are connected with churches, such as St. Maria in Minerva, St. Stefano del Cacco, and observes how, as in the Catacombs of Priscilla, pictures of Orpheus are set forth as pictures of Christ, and how on altars, as in St. Michele in Borgo, there are still bas-reliefs and legends describing the story of Cybele and Atys, may form a judgment of his own on the subject. I confess, as I became personally acquainted with the worship of modern Rome and versed in its lore, I anxiously debated in my own mind whether, after all, Christianity had conquered heathenism, or heathenism had prevailed against Christianity. And as a student of history, were I not satisfied on other grounds as to the presence of a supernatural element in our religion, I should, from a careful induction of facts, be compelled to consider it as evolved from Judaism on the one side, and from paganism on the other. I am not, therefore, surprised that multitudes of thoughtful people in all ages have hesitated to subscribe to its claims, and have failed to see under the gorgeous robes of glittering mythologies, the beauty and simplicity of that gracious Gospel, which charmed and comforted when proclaimed by its divine Author in the cities and villages of Palestine.

In almost every respect the official alliance of the kingdoms of this world with the kingdom of Christ has turned out to be a grievous misfortune. It has tended to secularize and degrade religion, and has given rise to the suspicion that Christianity would never have suc-

ceeded had it not been for the patronage and support of kings. Still is it a stock argument in the mouth of those ecclesiastics who delight in being recognized at court, that worship cannot be adequately maintained on the voluntary principle. The advocates of this union fail apparently to realize that in accepting favors from the State the law of reciprocity comes in, and that the Church must repay, and in such a way as to satisfy her benefactor. Hence the temptation to subordinate religion to government, and to make the former as much a mere matter of policy as the latter. Professionalism on the part of the clergy, formalism on the part of the laity, and latitudinarianism on the part of the nation, both in belief and in morals, are some of the evils inseparable from this fellowship. Where it has prevailed the State has not improved, has not been conducted with more enlightenment and with less corruptibility than elsewhere, and the Church has always lost in purity, spirituality, and independence. The ill effects of the system are felt even after the system itself has been repudiated. To-day, in countries where it is maintained no longer, it is seen that multitudes of Christians seek the smiles and patronage of the world, study its moods, adopt its methods, and judge their successes and failures by its standards. They seek exemption of Church property from taxation, they plead for rigorous sabbath laws to be enforced by the secular arm, and at times ask for appropriations in lands or moneys from the commonwealth in the interests of their benevolent institutions and schools of learning. In some nations the alliance between Church and State has simply given way to a fresh adultery—the alliance of the Church with the world. The queen may not be acknowledged as "Defender of the Faith," but fashion has been enthroned in many congregations, ecclesiastics may no longer sit in legislative halls, but some among them do not hesitate to employ the vulgar political machine; preachers may decline to be bound by ancient decrees and old theologies, but they often exhibit the most remarkable alacrity in squaring their teachings to the wildest speculations of a fluctuating and uncertain science; and committees, deacons, elders, may now piously rejoice that they are absolved from obedience to the temporal power in holy things, but at the same time manifest a most unseemly obsequiousness to the views of gilded society in directing the affairs of the Redeemer's empire. Will it please? will it pay? will it be popular? are inquiries more frequently indulged in when discussing pastorates, special services, and new departures, than the higher questions, Will it help, and bless, and save? To such wretched depths has the kingdom of Christ been driven by the fatal

friendship of Constantine, and the deplorable consequence of the time-serving spirit, the littleness, cowardice, and sordidness that have debased the Church, that the world has but meager respect for her authority, and in sacrificing her own dignity to gain its support she has lost its homage.

But in addition to these unhappy effects of what at the time was considered a great boon, the so-called conversion of the emperor gave rise to a certain fiction, which has been employed with remarkable success in bolstering the assumptions of the papacy. This fable is known to ecclesiastical students as the "Donation of Constantine." It asserts that in the seventh year of his reign he was afflicted with leprosy, and that after trying the skill of magicians, and after being advised to apply the blood of infants, he was healed by the Roman bishop. The story declares that Constantine was baptized in the Lateran palace by Sylvester, on whom he bestowed, not only the palace, but Rome itself and Italy as well. That this tradition obtained wide and general credence is witnessed by Dante's familiar lines:

"Ah! Constantine; to how much ill gave birth,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope received of thee!"

And yet this alleged transaction is not sanctioned by a particle of trustworthy evidence. Historical students attach no importance to it in our day; and it is only circulated in subdued tones among ignorant devotees by ecclesiastics, who know no better or who fail to see the moral enormity involved in an agreement whereby a prominent pastor is willing to grant absolution for the murder of a wife, a son, and a nephew, in return for a temporal principality. We think too highly of Sylvester to imagine him capable of so monstrous a crime. It is probable that the story originated in connection with the transfer of the Lateran palace to the Church by the empress Fausta, to whom it belonged; and that in course of time the legend was evolved and elaborated to suit the pressing needs of an hierarchy that claimed authority over all the kings of the earth. In confirmation of this view it should be remembered that Sylvester did not preside at the Council of Nice, the first General Council held after the allegiance of Constantine had been pledged to the cross; neither was that council called in his name, nor was he termed Pope, that ominous title being given early in the fourth century only to Alexander, the aged bishop of Alexandria, in Egypt, and that, too, merely as a matter of affection and courtesy. But who is there that cannot see in the stupendous and overshadowing structure that has risen on so slim a foundation the evidence that from apparently

trifling mistakes gravest sequences, out of all proportion in magnitude to their causes, may proceed, and that the introduction of an element foreign to the genius of Christianity has largely determined and, may it not be said, perverted in historic development? The influence of Constantine went far toward turning the religion of our Lord from the lofty ideals by which it was governed in its primitive stage, and facilitated its despicable subordination to the kings of the earth.

This momentous era has long since closed, and yet we suffer, many of us, perhaps unconsciously, from its mischievous movements. Its alliances and councils have confused our moral judgments and have enslaved us to ideas and methods that are vicious and delusive. Dead hands pull the wires that are composed of centuries of religious fatuity and falseness, and the poor puppets of this generation go mechanically through their pious platitudinizing and attitudinizing. No organization has as yet been able to break entirely the spell of that long past. It reigns supreme. If deliverance is to be attained, it can only come through a resolute determination to return to the Christianity of the New Testament. But so great a change, so remarkable a reaction, would be a marvel almost as stupendous as that which ushered in the establishment of the primitive Church. No passage of resolutions, no elaborate annual sermons before conventions, immensely applauded and immediately forgotten, and no fresh contrivances in the way of sensational armies or boys' brigades will succeed in restoring to God's people their real liberty and power. If this history, from the first book to the last, teaches anything distinctly, it is that man's religious life can only be maintained by direct communion with the Almighty, that its fires can only be kindled and perpetuated by the live burning coals taken directly from the invisible altar, and that its expansion, enlargement, and completion can only be effected by the immediate presence and direct action of the Infinite Spirit. When this truth has not been realized, the Bible has shown us only idolatries, formalities, hypocrisies, growing into violence and corruption; but when it has been felt, that book has disclosed the loftiest characters and the noblest achievements. We need again to learn that the source of everything holy, profound, and inspiring in society is the spiritual, and that the Church is designed to be the organ of the spiritual, and that, consequently, only as she is spiritual is she capable of fulfilling her exalted vocation. Here, then, is the sufficient answer to the lamentations of those who bewail the condition of Zion. Her help to-day is where it was in the times of Isaiah and Paul, when her children

were cast into the fire at Babylon, or to the lions at Rome. If Christians would only believe this and call on God to save them, he who remembered his people in the past would restore their real glory in the present. This is the burden of Bible history; and this from the beginning has been accompanied by the thought that whatever is wrought is achieved through the grace and power of the Christ. And this, too, our century needs to learn.

I have said that the conformity of the Church to the New Testament ideal would be a miracle. But it is a possible miracle; for it is a work which must be done by Christ if done at all. The prominence given to him in the Bible reminds us that he must be equally magnified in the Church now, if we would see the grandest results. He must be made in the Church what he is in the Old and New Testaments, if the Church is to regain her primitive standing. And to this end the labors of all our preachers, teachers, critics, philosophers, and philanthropists should be directed. A learned writer once ventured the statement that, however excellent the translation of Homer, no one had ever been able to convey a just idea of the true character and air of the original; and that even Pope had only clothed the naked majesty of Homer with the graces and elegancies of modern fashion, and had degraded the poet by such a dress. Yet, notwithstanding such blemishes, the Greek bard, the more he is studied the more completely does he master thought and cultivate taste. And this is far truer of Jesus than of Homer. We may have failed in our translation of his preëminent greatness, and may never be able to reproduce that indescribably divine something about him that has charmed the ages. It is probable, also, that we, too, may have belittled him by some of our descriptions, and perhaps by our attempts to define him and explain him in the terminology of our meager theologies. Nevertheless, all that we are for good is due to our thought of him; and if we would escape from the worldliness that came into the Church with Constantine, and if we would realize in Christ's kingdom a "kingdom not of this world," then let us meditate upon him supremely "to whom gave all the prophets witness," and trust him who imparts unity and splendor to all the ages embraced in Bible history, and before whom, in the fullness of time, "every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and . . . every tongue confess" that he is "Lord, only to the glory of God the Father."

Above the gateway of the Signoria Palace or Municipal Hall in Florence may still be seen carved in stone the monogram of Christ. On the same tablet there had once been inscribed

the words: "Jesus Christ, elected by decree of the Senate King of the Florentine people." Three centuries before, also, the mayor of the city, Niccolo Capriivi, and the Council and the people generally had acknowledged him to be their chosen ruler, and solemnly engaged to be loyal to him, and to him only. A record is still preserved of this covenant. It may be read on the battlements of the old palace. And likewise the hope, the confidence and dependence of the citizens have been expressed in these felicitous Latin sentences:

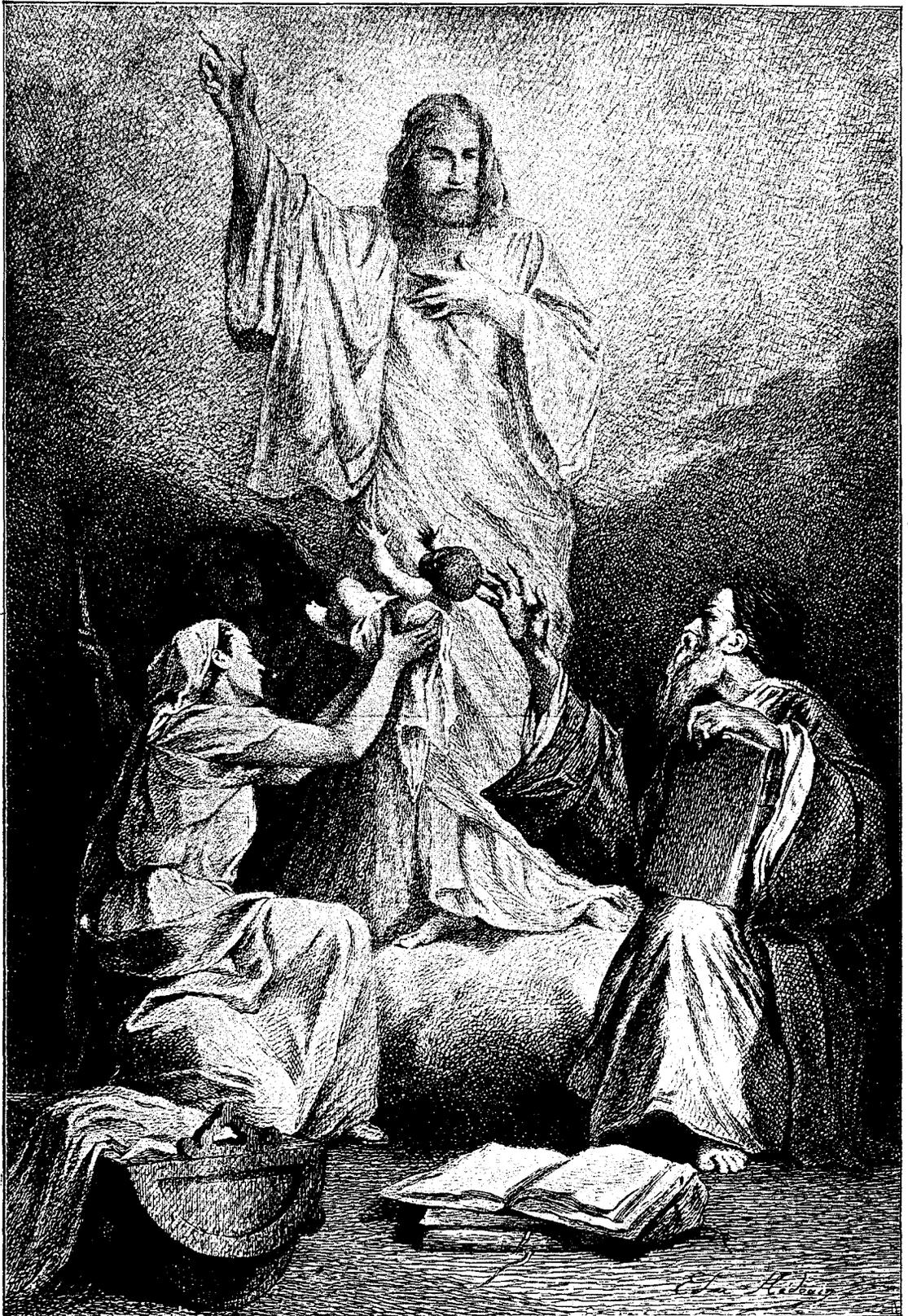
"JESUS

Christus Rex Gloriæ venit in pace;
Christus vincit, Christus regnat,
Christus imperat,
Christus ab omni malo nos defendat!"

"Jesus Christ, the King of Glory, comes in peace;
Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ rules: may Christ
protect us from all evil!"

As we have examined in this history the sacred Scriptures, from the beginning to the end we have caught glimpses of his name. Even over the gateway of Genesis we have discerned his monogram, though the full text of his coming to bruise the serpent's head is not as legible to some of our interpreters as it was to the Fathers. But as we have examined the towers and battlements of divine truth we have had yet clearer evidence that they are written over with promises and predictions of his advent and mission. And as we have inspected the New Testament we have seen him the center of loving groups, pledging him their loyalty, and vowing themselves his forever. The example of the Florentines, which but faintly illustrates the recognition of our Lord's supremacy in the Bible, should appeal to us on the close of this nineteenth century. We, too, should elect him to be our King. When he is related to modern society as he is to every section of Revelation, to the Law, to the Psalms, to the Prophets, and to the Gospels and the Epistles—that is, when his righteous will becomes the rule of our statutes, his spiritual beauty the ideal of our art, his sacrificial love the soul of our music and poetry, his personal sympathy the model of our philanthropy, and when his character becomes the inspiration and pattern of our manhood—then will the injustice and inequality, which distress and lead to despair, disappear like the night before the ascending day.

The writers of this volume have tried to show how Christ is the central figure of Holy Writ, giving to the inspired Word its unity, its spirituality, and splendor, that the people who read may be constrained to make him central to the coming age, that in its turn the age may be, like the Bible, coherent, progressive, and morally sublime. In the treatment of so



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THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

large a theme by various pens some repetitions, and even some differences of interpretation, could hardly be avoided. But, though the point of view may not always have been the same, and one author may, therefore, not have agreed with the others in matters of detail, all the eminent men who have contributed to this history have laid the tribute of their genius at the feet of Christ. They have with one accord exalted him, as he ought to be exalted by humanity everywhere; and, closing these pages, he will have read but poorly who does not

realize, as never in the past, the truth of what has been sung in many a modest church and stately old cathedral, and which should be to him the expression of his own creed and purpose:

"The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee.
The noble army of Martyrs praise thee.
The holy Church throughout all the world doth
acknowledge thee.

THOU ART THE KING OF GLORY, O CHRIST.
THOU ART THE EVERLASTING SON OF THE FATHER."

Geo. C. Loring



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