

ix. 9-17, where the promise of peace is strangely blended with the notes of war.

5. Most frequently the attitude of the nations is that of ready and willing submission. They are described as bringing back the captive Israelites to their homes, as in Isa. xiv. 2, and in xlix. 22 the prophet of the Captivity expands the promise of Isa. xi. 12, 'Thus saith the Lord Jahweh, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the nations, and set up Mine ensign to the peoples: and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.' In the next verse they are described as doing homage to the Israelites: 'They shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet.' Often the nations are represented as bringing gifts as a token of submission. Thus in Ps. lxxii. 10, the kings of Tarshish and of the isles are to bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba to offer gifts to the king. The nations even become the slaves of the Israelites, as in Isa. xiv. 2, 'And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jahweh for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.' Many of these thoughts are combined in Isa. lx. The light which is to arise upon Israel is a signal for all nations to come and bring their offerings, and those who will not come are to be destroyed. It is true, of course, that here, as in many other similar passages, the act of homage is not to Israel merely, but to Jahweh; yet still it is to Him as the God or King of Israel that the

homage is rendered. This is very clearly brought out, for example, in the concluding verses of Zechariah.<sup>1</sup>

And so we reach the double thought (1) of a world-wide religion of which the temple is at Jerusalem, and (2) a world-wide empire of which Jerusalem is the capital.<sup>2</sup> It is but seldom, if at all, that the prophets rise to the higher thought that all nations have equal religious and political rights in the sight of God. But at least the way is prepared for this conception by Amos ix. 7: 'Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?' We find also the converse of the same thought in the bitter sarcasm of Jeremiah: 'Behold, the days come, saith Jahweh, that I will punish all them that are circumcised in their uncircumcision; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon and Moab . . . for all the nations are uncircumcised, and the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.'<sup>3</sup> And Isaiah foretells the time when at any rate the two great enemies of Israel shall have equal religious privileges: 'In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jahweh of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv. 16-21.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Ps. lxxxvii.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. ix. 25, 26.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. xix. 23-25.

## Notes on Select Passages of the New Testament.

BY PRINCIPAL THE REV. DAVID BROWN, D.D., ABERDEEN.

ROM. iii. 25, 26.

A.V. 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.'

R.V. 'Whom God set forth to be a propitia-

tion, through faith, by His blood, to show His righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforesaid, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.'

Of all the changes for the better of the Revised Version, I hold this to be one of the best. For the

great majority of those who read these verses as in the Authorised Version, understand by 'the sins that are *past*' to mean the sins committed by Christians before they become believers; whereas when we believe *all sins* are forgiven (Col. ii. 13).

Again, sins, whether past or present, are not forgiven through the *forbearance* of God, but through His mercy. What the apostle here says is, that the sins which were committed *under the former dispensation* by believing Jews were not *remitted* at all; they were only *passed over*, through the *forbearance* of God. There was no atoning blood for the remission of their sins; 'for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins' (Heb. x. 4).

Not all the blood of beasts,  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.

The sins, therefore, of believing Jews were not 'remitted,' they were only 'passed over,' through the *forbearance* of God.' But they got to heaven notwithstanding, *on the credit of an atonement to be made*, at the fulness of time when God should send forth His Son. The Father knew that His Son would do this, and the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats, though it made no atonement, was a *pledge* given—a kind of *promissory note*, which,

when presented at God's bank, would be duly honoured, as the title to heaven of all Jewish believers.

Accordingly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, after a long list of ancient worthies, "of whom the world was not worthy," who through faith overcame the world, the apostle says: "These all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise [that is, the fulfilment of the promise], God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect" (Heb. xi. 39, 40).<sup>1</sup>

In other words, since God could not, under the ancient economy, disclose the way of salvation in naked terms—by the death of His own Son, He could only foreshadow it by the sacrifice of innocent animals for the sins of guilty men, 'which was a figure for the time then present.' But a figured salvation is no salvation at all, the *reality* being reserved for *us*, who have the *finished* work of Christ, 'that they apart from us might not be made perfect' otherwise than we are.

These are great truths, and very precious, but quite lost in the Authorised Version.

<sup>1</sup> I have said, the *apostle* thus writes; because with Origen in the third century, than whom none was better able to judge whether Paul actually *wrote* this Epistle (or his amanuensis), I believe the *matter* is certainly his.

## At the Literary Table.

### THE BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

(The Prices of the Books mentioned below will generally be found in the Advertisement pages.)

#### II.

THE REPOSE OF FAITH. BY THE REV. ALEX. J. HARRISON, B.D. (*Longmans*. Crown 8vo, pp. xiii, 320). Mr. Harrison has had a large experience in practical apologetic. He was in no hurry publishing. He seemed to find his work on the platform first, and quite enough of it. But having turned to a wider audience and found a hearing, he has added book to book, till now this is the fourth large volume within a year or two. In this way some of our ablest writers began late, and then did excellent and even voluminous work.

Though Mr. Harrison nowhere says so, it is

evident that the present volume is intended to fit into and follow *The Ascent of Faith*, published a year ago. And they who have come to the knowledge of that book should by all means make the acquaintance of this also. They will find that, notwithstanding its name, its topics are as entirely of the hour, and the handling of them as sensible and actual. It is not the favourite of theological fortune who never knew a doubt for whom Mr. Harrison is concerned. He may have repose of faith—if it is worth his having. But there never was an unbeliever or atheist, if only he is willing to fight his doubts and gather strength, who may not