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Notes and Queries.



VARIATIONS IN THE MEANING OF THE WORD "DAY," AS USED BY ST. PETER IN HIS SECOND EPISTLE.

BESIDES the intrinsic interest in the study of every word of Scripture, and the incidental light thrown by the results of such study on the literary problems of Text and Authorship, two great subjects which especially attract the believing student at the present hour, may, I trust, receive some elucidation from this brief note.

The first of these subjects is scientific. I refer to the precise meaning of the word DAY in the Mosaic narrative of the creation. The second is Apocalyptic: the meaning of this word when applied to the period of the Second Advent of our Lord and Saviour.

My attempt is to show that no less than eight shades of meaning may be detected in the word DAY, as used in the second Epistle of St. Peter. If this inquiry is concluded in the way which I anticipate, the following inference may, I hope, be fairly drawn, namely, that we have Scriptural warrant for a wide interpretation of the word DAY, particularly when it refers to the remote past, and to the mysterious future of God's dealings.

The word DAY appears ten times in all in this Epistle; the following are the references:

Chap. i. 19.

Chap. ii. 8, 9, 13.

Chap. iii. 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 18.

The tenth example is not apparent in the English text; but the Greek equivalent of the word DAY is the last word but one in the Epistle. Comparing these passages carefully together, the following shades of meaning can be discerned:

1. The first appearance of light (chap. i. 19).
2. The twelve hours of daylight as opposed to night (chap. ii. 13).
3. The whole twenty-four hours (chap. ii. 8).
4. The periods of the Christian dispensation (chap. iii. 3).
5. The exact scientific day as a basis of computation (chap. iii. 8).
6. The future period of the kingdom of God (chap. iii. 12).
7. A limited portion of that period (chap. iii. 7).
8. A beautiful paraphrase for eternity, namely, "the age-day," (chap. iii. 18).

H. J. R. MARSTON.

ICOMB.

SURPASSING THE NATURAL.

Neither the universe nor man is the effect of any one sense or attribute, whether finite or infinite. Nature, whether physical or organic, has not sprung from mere power. Knowing this, we go beyond nature to the Master. The perfect man, who longs for that which is behind the veil, is the whole man in utmost and best development, physical, vital, mental, moral. Every perfect man surpasses nature by laying hold on eternal life. Nature at best is the whole of nature without decay, incorruptible, without pain, without sorrow, without death; at this best the natural surpasseth itself.

Science, subjecting nature, makes discoveries faster than we know the full meaning of them. Art in poetry and general literature; in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, that perfection of the two—"the poet's

dream of beauty frozen into stone"—in music, the romance of sound, always leads on, when guided aright, to something more and better than the natural man imagines.

Religion, not superstition; theology, not priestcraft; Scripture interpreted by wisdom, not as human patchwork, but as by inspiration of God, are making souls capable of, and lifting them into, bliss and splendour. Onward, then, to perfection! Onward to every great and glorious thing!

Beauty and use of the present, use and power of thought, our entering and knowing the unknown, the fact that we are not to regard anything as unknowable, show that nature unites many forces, and these centre in ourselves by lifting us up to God. Our whole man concentrates itself, enthrones itself, in reasonable, holy, happy intercourse with eternal majesty and infinite love.

Even if we are only as one in nature, God never loses us at any time. Those sperm-cells and ova, which give rise to succeeding generations, do not die. The continuity of the germ-plasm in an unbroken line, from generation to generation, to children's children, is a fact; and so we live on after death in those who follow us. We move, the worlds move, to a grand consummation. Not a dash, crash, destruction! No grandeur in that. We are not a flock of sheep for some great butcher. Patience, moral discipline, self-denial, the Divine and human key to the universe, open to us the possession and perfection of the world. We are sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, through Jesus Christ, with whom we shall live for ever.

JOSEPH WILLIAM REYNOLDS.

Review.

St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen. By W. M. RAMSAY, D.C.L., LL.D. London: 1895. Hodder and Stoughton. Price, 10s. 6d.

THIS work is one of the most brilliant and satisfying pieces of expository criticism we ever remember to have seen. Alike in the fulness of the writer's knowledge, the vigour and perspicacity of his style, the masculine grasp of the subject which is everywhere displayed, the book is admirable. That Professor Ramsay has materially and permanently enlarged the horizon of modern New Testament criticism would be evident from the present work alone; but this book is only the latest fruit from a tree which has already produced a splendid harvest. "The Church in the Roman Empire," "The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia," and, above all, "The Historical Geography of Asia Minor," cannot be dispensed with by the historian; they are already become the chief mine from which will yet be dug material to furnish forth commentaries upon, and elucidations of, the *crucis* of New Testament criticism. The special object of this new work of Professor Ramsay is to investigate the Acts of the Apostles, in conjunction with certain Pauline Epistles, discussing the questions of the trustworthiness of these documents as occasion requires; and then, from this basis, to build up what the writer holds to be the true account of the missionary efforts of the great Apostle of the Gentiles from their commencement till the day of his death at Rome, A.D. 65. Chapter i. deals generally with the criticism of the Acts; chapters ii. to xv. with the missionary journeys and labours of St. Paul