

Finally, *truth* is mentioned as being the foundation of all other virtues, and of the first necessity in approaching GOD. Before we can come before HIM we must put off self (lies, hypocrisy, etc.), and put on truth. Without the guileless nature which hideth nothing, we have not taken the first step towards communion with HIM.

Zoroaster saw this many years before the coming of Christ, and the beauty of his cult lies in the stress laid upon this virtue. The Egyptians understood it, for their priests wore the sapphire image of truth around their necks. And what is, in any case, the most ancient, if not the most correct, interpretation of the mysterious Urim and Thummim of the old dispensation points them out as signifying respectively light and truth (LXX. *δῆλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια*).

L. L. BARCLAY.

### Genesis ii. 16, 17.

"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The revealed will of God is a restraint on men.

In the case of Adam the restraint was in *one* thing. With us, the restraint is in *many* things.

From the text I observe—

1. *That God restrains man from nothing that is essential to his well-being or enjoyment.*—The fruit allowed to Adam was abundant, and in great variety. Only one tree was forbidden, and that he

did not require. Everything is lawful that is good for us. We have liberty, but not licence. The use of things, but not their abuse. What is forbidden is harmful; licentiousness, covetousness, theft; selfishness in all its forms.

2. *That things forbidden stand in the midst of things allowed.*—The tree of knowledge was in the *midst* of the garden, easy of access. The bad ever lies near to the good. A thing in moderation is good; in excess bad. Covetousness lurks behind frugality; severity behind duty; a vain ambition lies near the lawful desire to serve; lying is often near to kindness; formalism to reverence; abuse to use.—Discretion and watchfulness are always necessary.

3. *That the penalty of violating God's law is death.*—The words, "the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," are probably a warning, not a threat. They were uttered in kindness. As water drowns, fire burns, so sin kills. We need not assume that there was poison in the fruit of the tree. Taking the fruit would be disobedience, unbelief, defiance, sin, which is deadly poison. Disobedience is death, killing the soul first, and through the soul the body. An act of transgression separates the soul from God; beclouds and confuses the moral nature; is destructive of innocence, purity, and self-respect; and obliterates heaven from the soul's prospect. This, in Bible phraseology, is death. "The wages of sin is death."

J. GASKELL.

## The Religious Literature of the Month.

### BOOKS.

#### Three Great Fathers.

MESSRS. LONGMANS have published *Lessons from the Lives of Three Great Fathers*, by William Bright, D.D., Canon of Christ Church, Oxford (crown 8vo, 6s.). The three great Fathers are Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Augustine, who receive forty-eight, sixty-one, and seventy-four pages respectively, after which there come one hundred and twenty-eight pages of valuable appendices. The book opens with a singularly clumsy preface, containing single sentences which fill whole pages, and in one of which we have counted, not without labour, ten separate statements. But when the subject proper is entered upon, all this is speedily forgotten. There is energy in the writing, delicate sympathetic insight in the thought, and proportion in the arrangement. It proves itself a most pleasant and helpful guide to the study of these three mighty ones.

#### The Practical Teaching of the Apocalypse.

From MESSRS. LONGMANS there comes also *The Practical Teaching of the Apocalypse*, by the Rev. G. V. Garland,

Rector of Binstead, Isle of Wight (8vo, 16s.). It is a handsome octavo, whose 498 pages are made up of thirty-six chapters, and two short appendices on the "Eternity of Matter" and the "Symbolic Meanings of the Apocalyptic Numbers." For the most part each chapter of the Apocalypse receives a chapter of the book to its elucidation, and special points are dealt with separately. There is no discussion of authorship, date, or composition. The moral and spiritual lessons of the Apocalypse are brought to bear upon modern times and modern places by a large and generous application of the symbolical method of interpretation. No one will deny the justice of applying that principle of interpretation to any book of Scripture, and least of all to this. But is there any other that demands the same rigorous self-restraint in its application? Mr. Garland presses into his service elements of doubtful advantage. Thus etymology plays some considerable part; but it is etymology of a bewildering description. "*Agnos*, a lamb, appears to be derived from the Hebrew *Amen*, the truth." "The Keltic London, 'the fort in the marsh,' may bear also another interpretation, in its possible derivation from the Hebrew, 'the lodging-place of judgment,'" and so become identified

with Babylon the Great. There are philologists still who connect Semitic and Aryan words; one has recently offered the derivation of the word "Aryan" itself from the Hebrew *ari*, a lion, as if the Aryans were the royal Semites, the sons of the tribe of Judah. But sober scholarship is all against it at present; and Mr. Garland's etymologies weaken his interpretation.

#### The Creed in Scotland.

MESSRS. W. BLACKWOOD & SONS have published *The Creed in Scotland: An Exposition of the Apostles' Creed*, by James Rankin, D.D., Minister of Muthil (crown 8vo, 7s. 6d.). The book (which is got up in the best Edinburgh style) opens with two introductory chapters on "Creed History," and "The Creed in Scotland;" and then enters upon an exposition of the Apostles' Creed. Each article is dealt with in a separate chapter, and in the most thorough way. Every word or phrase is examined in the light of Scripture, of history, and of recent literature; then extracts are given from Archbishop Hamilton's Catechism of 1552, and from Calvin's Catechism of 1556; and a selection of Latin and other hymns concludes the chapter and the article.

#### Karl Sell's Lectures.

MESSRS. T. & T. CLARK have issued *The Church in the Mirror of History: Studies on the Progress of Christianity*, by Karl Sell, D.D., Darmstadt, editor of the "Life and Letters of H. R. H. Princess Alice" (crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.). The translation is by Elizabeth Stirling. To the translator is due the present title, the original being *Aus der Geschichte des Christentums*. It is a volume of 250 pages, and contains these six lectures:

1. Primitive Christianity.
2. The Early Catholic Church.
3. The Middle Ages.
4. The Reformation.
5. The Counter-Reformation.
6. Christianity during the last Century.

The book has had a great run in Germany, for it is popular in the only right sense of that word—clear, firm, attractive, scholarly.

#### Gethsemane.

MESSRS. T. & T. CLARK have also issued a new devotional work by Mr. Newman Hall—*Gethsemane: Leaves of Healing from the Garden of Grief* (crown 8vo, 5s.). A brief prefatory note points out its mission:—

"This book is the fulfilment of a long-cherished purpose. It expresses the thoughts and prayers of many years, and is published with devout desire to minister consolation to some of the afflicted children of God. The author asks that the metrical pieces, some of which are selected from his *Songs of Earth and Heaven*, may be regarded, not as quotations, but as integral portions of the present series of meditations."

#### The Biblical Illustrator.

By MESSRS. JAMES NISBET & CO. another volume is issued of *The Biblical Illustrator*, by Joseph S. Exell, M.A. (8vo, 664 pp., 7s. 6d.). The book of Scripture is

Genesis, and this volume covers the first seventeen chapters, in the same way, and with the like wealth of illustration, as previous volumes of the series.

#### Men of the Bible.

MESSRS. NISBET also send three newly issued volumes of the series "Men of the Bible." They are *Isaac and Jacob*, by Canon Rawlinson; *St. Paul*, by Professor Iverach; and *Gideon and the Judges*, by Dr. Marshall Lang (crown 8vo, 2s. 6d. each). The names of these writers will command the confidence of readers, though we must say that the first is at present running some risk. But we shall deal with the books separately in a little.

#### Why am I a Christian?

MESSRS. A. & R. MILNE, Aberdeen (Edinburgh: Andrew Stevenson), publish an exceedingly chaste booklet, by the Rev. John Philip, M.A., Fordoun—*Why am I a Christian?* (small 4to, 6d.). It is possible that there are those who, if they were to ask this question with Mr. Philip's candour, should find themselves exclaiming, "Why, I am *not* a Christian!" This is, perhaps, one purpose of the little book. For, then, will they not ask more seriously, "Why *am* I not a Christian?" It is a good confession Mr. Philip makes, to be understood of all. It will do good.

#### The Death of Christ.

MR. ELLIOT STOCK has published *The Doctrine of the Death of Christ, in Relation to the Sin of Man, the Condemnation of the Law, and the Dominion of Satan*, by the Rev. Nathaniel Dimock, A.M. (8vo, 7s. 6d.). We read the papers as they appeared in the *Churchman* last year. But there is much new matter here, and especially an appendix of ninety-two pages, which consists of quotations bearing on the theology of the death of Christ, carefully chosen from representative Christian writers from the second century to the fifteenth. Thus Mr. Dimock's great contention "that the atonement is the effect, not of the incarnation of Christ, but of the death of the Incarnate Son of God," is supported by a long and a strong chain of authority. The book, though it might have been made easier of access by a good index, will be at hand for constant reference.

#### The Letter of the Larger Hope.

MR. ELLIOT STOCK also sends *The Letter of the Larger Hope*, being a rendering into modern English of the First Epistle General of St. Peter, by John W. Owen, B.A., St. Paul's, Adelaide (8vo, 112 pp.). "This little volume is, I believe, the first book on biblical criticism ever brought out in South Australia," says the Dean of Winchester, who contributes an Introduction that does more for the book than merely lend a name, that does really introduce it in a most interesting fashion. We have in the volume, first, a new and thoroughly modern translation of the Epistle; then, textual illustrations and running analysis in either margin; a fuller statement of the argument under each section; and, finally, a series of notes which sometimes expand into short essays. It is Oxford scholarship face to face with the new life of a fast-growing colony.

### PERIODICALS.

#### How to Prepare an Expository Sermon on the Life and Works of Stephen.

To the *Old and New Testament* for January, Professor G. B. Stevens, of New Haven, contributes a short paper under the above heading, grouping his suggestions under two heads:—(I.) The Gathering of the Material; and (II.) The Use of the Material for the purpose of the Sermon.

I. (1) Read carefully through all notices of Stephen and his works in Acts vi. 5 to viii. 2, xi. 19, xxii. 20. (2) Ascertain the significance of such facts as that he was (a) a deacon in the Church, and (b) a Hellenist. (3) The occasion and subject of his disputes with the Jews. (4) The Jews' accusations against him; their probable grounds. (5) Seek out any expressions or hints in Stephen's address before the Sanhedrin which may throw light on the ground of their accusations against him. (6) Consider the effect of his martyrdom on the course of events in the Church (see especially chap. xi. 19). (7) Study his work as a preparation for the work of Paul.

II. On the basis of such a study a discourse could be prepared upon Stephen's life and character as an illustration and incentive to Christian fidelity. If the design was to make it strictly expository of the brief scriptural notices about Stephen, the order of thought indicated above could be followed with a little adaptation. If the sermon were to approach nearer to the topical plan of treatment, the same material, at least in the main, could be used according to some such outline as this—(1) Introduction upon the critical relations at this time between the Jewish and Gentile Christians, and upon the increasing opposition of the unconverted Jews to Christianity. (2) Stephen's adaptation to meet the emergencies of this crisis. (3) His ability to learn from history (Acts vii.) lessons applicable to the present time. (4) His fitness to be the forerunner of Paul, the great champion of Gentile freedom, and the fearless censor of Jewish unbelief. (5) His faithfulness to his convictions and to his duty, even unto death, as an example and proof of the saying of one of the Church Fathers that "the blood of the martyrs is seed."

#### The Coming Minister.

The Rev. Dr. Gregg, who succeeds Dr. Cuyler as pastor of the Lafayette-Avenue Church, Brooklyn, has made, says *The New York Evangelist*, a distinct hit with his first sermon. It was living, telling, evangelical. His text was 1 Tim. iv. 6, "A good minister of Jesus Christ;" and he announced as his theme, "The Coming Minister: Shall he be? and What shall he be?" To the first question he replied that (1) the Gospel ministry is a Divine ordinance, and carries with it a Divine and outreaching promise; and (2) it is a necessity of human nature. To the question, What shall the coming minister be? he replied: First of all, a man of God, and his call from God will appear to him in this—his inability to choose any other pursuit. Next, the coming minister will appreciate the achievements of the past, but be himself of the century in which he lives. Third, he will be a preacher of the Book and of its Christ; and, fourthly, he must be a man of faith and character.

### NEW MAGAZINES.

The New Year always has its new ventures. THE RELIGIOUS REVIEW OF REVIEWS (6d., 15 York Street) has not satisfied the critics. Perhaps the editor, not being a Stead, did not realise what it meant to read and review all the religious magazines; print, correct, and arrange his own, and have it out before the middle of the month. We wish him better success next time.

THE LADDER (6d., Marshall), under Mr. David Balsillie's editorship, is a more leisurely product, and thoroughly deserving. It succeeds the SOCIAL PIONEER, takes even higher ground, and will most assuredly, if it can maintain that ground, prove a great force in education.

ONWARD AND UPWARD is the journal of the Haddo House Association, and is edited by the Countess of Aberdeen. This first issue is full of life.

PRAY AND TRUST (1d., Dundee) is a little monthly, edited by Mr. James Smith, of the Dundee Y.M.C.A. Its earnestness and generous sympathy are most commendable.

THE EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE, having commenced its ninety-ninth volume, is scarcely to be classed here. Yet it is, to all intents and purposes, a new magazine. Under a new editor it enlists a new staff, gives the word "evangelical" a new definition (by Mr. Horton), and opens a new career. Here is the editor's manifesto, which, did we need a manifesto, we could adopt for ourselves, and especially in its latter part:—

"In sending out the first number of the new volume, the editor desires to express his determination loyally to uphold those evangelical principles which are so dear to British Christians. While keeping within the old lines, he believes that greater freedom may be given to expression of views on those questions which are to-day regarded as of supreme importance. It must not, therefore, be concluded that he is responsible for all the views expressed by contributors. So far as possible every article will be signed, and it must be distinctly understood that only the writers are responsible for their respective contributions. The golden sentence, 'In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things charity,' has for nearly a century been, under successive editors, the key-note of *The Evangelical Magazine*, and it will still rule its melodies.

"The editor must ask contributors to cultivate the art of brevity. He has no leisure to look through long articles, and he doubts if readers have patience to read them. The Rev. Dr. Mather wrote over his study door, 'Be short.' Will friends who write for *The Evangelical Magazine* kindly take this for their motto? Life is short. Time is short. Patience is short. Learn to condense and intensify; thus two sentences will be put into one, and three words into two. There is much truth in what Sydney Smith once said, 'After you have written an article, take your pen and strike out half the words, and you will be surprised to see how much stronger it is.'"

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