

of theological truth either inexact, or inadequate, or misleading. Enough, however, has been offered to indicate the responsibility that attends the handling of the subject; enough to draw attention to the hazard of a slipshod use of the terms of this sacred science.

In view of the present difficulties of their task, it would appear expedient that preachers and teachers should, in their public utterances to a mixed audience, be very guarded, and even sparing, in their use of theological language, and clothe the truths they have to present in as unconventional a dress as possible, avoiding abstract terms where they may be dispensed with without lowering the dignity of the theme. The writer remembers how once, years ago, when he was called to preach to a north-country congregation, the old rector cautioned him on the previous Saturday evening: "We want," he said, "the concrete here." We suspect other folds besides the one referred to need a similar diet. Whenever another treatment is indispensable, let the preacher select his phraseology with the carefulest discrimination, defining at every step. No mean part of his duty should be to insist upon exactness, first of thought, then of its expression. The majority in every community will, we fear, always be satisfied with clap-trap; but it lies upon the teacher to ensure that they do not get it. Besides which, as a brilliant writer says, "A paper currency is employed, when there is no bullion in the vaults." It is our high service to see that the currency of our divinity shall be gold, and not paper; and that each several piece we trade with shall be stamped with the image and superscription of Heaven's truth.

ALFRED PEARSON.

ART. VI.—THE VALLEY OF THE NAP.

TWO hours by rail from the capital of Austria brings us to one of the loveliest valleys among the Tyrolese mountains. The whole country, indeed, is celebrated "for its airy beauty, rocky mountains, smooth green valleys, and swift-rushing streams." Odorous pinewoods clothe the steep mountain slopes, crowned by battlements of gray rocks, and little villages inhabited by a simple-hearted and kindly peasantry, mostly engaged in wood-cutting and toy-making, lie sheltered here and there under the shadow of the glorious hills. Lakes, waterfalls, woods, deep ravines, brightened with lovely ferns, and grim-looking castles with a story attached to them, give a rare picturesque aspect to the whole scene.

In the midst of this beautiful country is the rocky valley of the river Nap, in which is situated the little hamlet of Napwald (Forest of the Nap), the home of one of the two sole Protestant communities to be found in the outlying districts of this province of Lower Austria. Up to the year 1782 there were but few scattered huts in Napwald. The inhabitants lived their lonely life—

The world forgetting, by the world forgot—

seen of none, we may say, save God only. At length this apparently worthless corner of the empire, bestowed centuries before on the Counts Hoyos, of Spanish descent, as their hunting-ground, began to have a marketable value. The neighbouring Imperial iron works needed fuel, and in 1799 entered into a contract with the proprietor for a supply from the primeval forests of the Nap. The peasants set to work, trees were felled, and in the course of some months an immense quantity of wood lay ready for transport to the iron-works. But now the serious question presented itself which should have long before engaged their attention, namely, how the wood was to reach its destination. From the nature of the country the difficulties of transit were enormous. It took more than four hours to walk the distance, and not one of the Imperial engineers or architects could devise a plan to transport the wood through the valley, choked by *débris* of rocks, whirlpools, and rapidly-flowing rivers. In this emergency a man was raised up, as we may well say, by God for the work. George Hubmer, the son of a wood-cutter of Gosan, near Salzburg, undertook the Herculean task. He and his brother were already noted for daring enterprise in their arduous calling. With their axes alone, using only wooden nails, without scaffolding, fastened by a rope which might at any moment be cut by the sharp rock, causing them to be dashed headlong into the depths below, with the aid of a few comrades bold and energetic as themselves, they succeeded, in the year 1782, in getting the 4,000 klaftes or cords of wood agreed upon safely to the Imperial works.

But our object in this paper is to say something about the Protestantism of these poor people of the Tyrol. How did they become Protestants? It was said that the Reformation had not gained access to them or to their neighbours, the Bavarians, or at least had made no great progress amongst them. The learned Canisius compared the Tyrolese and the Bavarians with the two tribes of Israel, "who alone remained faithful to the Lord." No doubt this is in great measure true. But from their proximity to Germany it was unavoidable that they should receive some sprinklings of the great "showers

of blessing" which God was pouring out over that favoured country. Luther's Bible and occasional German hymns crossed the border, and found admission into the valleys. And the poor wood-cutters met secretly in the forest and in caverns and ravines, and under the shadow of great rocks,

In wet, black passes, and foam-churning chasms,
And God's free air and hope of better things,

to read the wonderful Book which had fallen into their hands, and to pray and sing and talk to one another of the new Evangel that had come to their ears. They might say in the words, slightly altered, which the Poet Laureate puts into the mouth of Sir John Oldcastle :

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,
Who whilom spakest to the south in Greek
About the soft Mediterranean shores,
And then in Latin to the Latin crowd
As good need was, thou hast come to our vales.

In this way they imbibed Reformation principles, and the mild sway of the Archbishops of Salzburg during the Thirty Years' War caused the heresy which had crept in amongst them from Germany to spread and increase. They did not, however, dare to meet publicly for religious service. They had no churches. In quiet lonely places they used to assemble to worship God. They read His Word on these occasions, they prayed to Him, they sang hymns to His praise; and then, when their simple service was over, they buried their Bibles in the ground, or hid them in trees, or in holes of the rocks, or behind waterfalls, till the appointed day of meeting again came round, when they took their axes, as if to fell wood, disinterred their spiritual treasures, and listened to the words which were as balm to their wounded spirits. A rock spread with white linen, or covered by the hand of Nature with edelweiss and Alpine roses, became their Communion-table, and needed but a simple wooden cross to be completely furnished; and so they feasted together, to the strengthening and refreshing of their souls, in memory of their dear Lord's love and death. Sometimes they sailed away on a lake among the mountains, and its silent waters resounded with their prayers and praises. "The Invisible Church," they called themselves. For many years these simple people of the Tyrolese Alps lived and worshipped in this way, good workmen, as all who write of them testify, and blameless in their lives.

In 1728, however, persecution commenced. Prince Eugene's troops were sent into the Province of Salzburg, but, proving too merciful, they were superseded by others more cruel and unscrupulous. In the depth of winter, with the snow on the

ground, and the keen winds biting in the valleys, barefoot, and with scanty clothing, and equally scanty provisions, the unfortunate peasants were hunted by the fierce soldiers over the mountains into Bavaria. In a touching chapter of his history of Frederick the Great, Carlyle tells us how, about this time, some twenty thousand people of those parts emigrated to Prussia, where they were received with ready and generous hospitality by the reigning sovereign. "More harmless sons of Adam," says the sympathetic historian, "probably did not breathe the vital air than those dissentient Salzburgers; generation after generation of them giving offence to no creature." Perhaps there is no sadder chapter in the history of Protestantism than that which records the compulsory emigration of those poor peasants of the Tyrol from their beloved homes. Men, women, and children are there. Old tottering grandsires, and infants at the breasts of their woe-begone mothers, swell the dreary cavalcade. With tears in their eyes, and hearts lifted up in prayer to God, they look on their beautiful valleys for the last time; and then, "staff in hand," and wallet slung upon their backs, they go forth.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd their last.

"A pilgrimage like that of the children of Israel; such a pilgrim caravan as was seldom heard of in our Western countries." All along the march after they had entered German territory they were warmly welcomed by all classes of the people. "On their getting to the Anspach territory there was so incredible a joy at the arrival of these exiled brothers in the faith, that in all places, almost in the smallest hamlets, the bells were set a-tolling, and nothing was heard but a peal of welcome from far and near." And when the first body of the emigrants reached Berlin, the king himself, Frederick Wilhelm, father of Frederick the Great, went out to meet them: "stoutish short figure," so Carlyle describes him, "in blue uniform and white wig, straw-coloured waistcoat, and white gaiters; stands uncommonly firm on his feet; reddish, blue-reddish face, with eyes that pierce through a man." And "her majesty was charity itself, charity and grace combined, among these pilgrims." They settled in Lithuania, and there they found, through the king's generosity, everything ready for them—"tight cottages, tillable fields, all implements furnished, and stock." And they set to work with such zeal and industry and trust in God, that they prospered much, and their influence on every side, like that of the Huguenots in the previous century in England, was beneficial in a very marked degree.

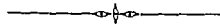
And what of those who remained behind in the valleys of the Tyrol? They were not convinced of their errors, they remained faithful to the truth, and still met in secret to read and pray and sing; but they were obliged to exercise more caution. The Romish partisans were, however, on the alert; and those who were discovered felt the heavy hand of the enemy. At length Maria Theresa took pity on the hunted fugitives, and, having heard of a child being carried for hours in the snow for baptism, she permitted them to create a parish. It was rapidly succeeded by others. By-and-by the Emperor Joseph II. issued an edict of tolerance, and there was a lull in the storm of persecution that swept over the troubled valleys. Foremost amongst the thousands who thanked God on bended knee for this great mercy were the wood-cutters from the archbishopric of Salzburg, and the brothers Hubner, of whom we have spoken. In Gosan, the birthplace of the Hubners, nearly 1,000 out of 1,100 inhabitants declared themselves Protestants; and in Napwald a community was constituted, headed by the two brothers. The elder, John, died in 1799, in the faith of Christ. The younger, George, carried on the good work with unflagging energy and zeal. "Patriarch of Napwald," as he was called, he erected a school and church, sent for a schoolmaster, a Protestant shoemaker who could sing psalms and read aloud the Bible, prayers, and religious books. At first the services were held in Hubner's own house, then and now called the Reithof. On great occasions all the congregation still crossed the Alps to the mother-parish, Mitterbach in Styria; but in 1826 Hubner, with something of the faith of our own George Muller of Bristol, took courage to buy part of the Oberhof, in Napwald. There he built a stately house, part church and part dwelling for the master, a bold undertaking in heretics, who lived merely on sufferance. He then obtained permission to lay out a Protestant burial-ground, put up a wall round it, erected a large cross, and the first who was interred in this "God's acre" was the noble and devoted Hubner himself. Mourned by the whole community, who felt they had lost a father and a friend, he died in 1833.

After his death things went badly with his poor people. Many who had contrived to put together a miserable hut were driven from it as standing on ground not their own. At last better days dawned upon the valleys. Now, the Tyrolese Protestants are recognised as a factor in the land. They are permitted to worship God in peace. Still they are wretchedly poor, spending the whole week in the woods, and only Sunday with their families. When the railroad at last approached their lonely valley, they were visited by a pastor

from Vienna at Easter or Whitsuntide. This was always a time of joy and blessing.

A rich merchant of the city, Mr. Rudolph Arthaker, once strayed to Napwald, and was so struck with the simple service there, and the devout earnestness of the people, that he thenceforth became their constant benefactor. In the year 1840 the house which George Hubner had built was enlarged, so as to accommodate the pastor in the first floor above the church, and the schoolmaster's dwelling, all under one roof; and close beside stands the quaint, low, wooden belfry, with its three bells, "Faith," "Hope," and "Charity." The first minister was installed in 1861; and Mr. Arthaker constituted a society called "The Napwalders," whose good work it is to aid the poor community. Every Christmas the school-children are clothed; once a year a bride is furnished with an outfit; and near the church a refuge has been erected for the poor children, who come from long distances. From the middle of November till the middle of March about twenty are housed and fed there, going home for Saturday and Sunday. In summer the house is let to visitors, to defray the expenses. The present parish, scattered over four square German miles,¹ contains about 600 souls; and nearly 100 children attend the school, eleven of whom are Roman Catholics. A good and blessed work, which deserves the sympathies and prayers of all true disciples of Christ, is carried on; and we trust that many English Christians who visit the Continent may be stirred to direct their steps to this remote valley of the Nap, and while feasting on its glorious beauty, and thinking of the sad associations connected with it, may be moved to minister out of their abundance to the necessities, temporal and spiritual, of its interesting people.

WILLIAM COWAN.



ART. VII.—THE MEDIATOR,

"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."—1 TIM. ii. 5.

THIS verse has often been employed in controversies between those who are commonly called Protestants and other Christian Churches which, in the words of our XIX.th Article, have erred "not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith."

¹ About sixteen English.