

Studies in Texts.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SERMONS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

BY THE REV. HARRINGTON C. LEES, M.A.

TEXTS: "My righteous servant."—Isa. 53 11.

"His servant Hezekiah."—2 Chron. 32 16.

[Suggestive book: "Old Testament Problems," by Dr. J. W. Thirtle (= T.). Others quoted, G. A. Smith's "Isaiah," Vol. II. (= S.); Margoliouth's "Lines of Defence of Biblical Revelation" (= M.); Kay's "Isaiah," Speaker's Comm. (= K.); W. S. Caldecott's "Solomon's Temple" (= C.); Orr's "Problem of Old Testament" (= O.); Davidson's art. "Isaiah," Hast. Dict. (= H.); see also Wright's art. "Isaiah," Smith's Bible Dict., Second Edition.]

PROPHECY has usually local application and wider fulfilment. The latter, of course, points to our Lord here. "We assert, what none but prejudiced Jews have ever denied, that this great prophecy was achieved in all its details by Him alone" (S. 267). "Not for a moment would we question the application" (T. 164). But is there also a primary local allusion? T. thinks Isa. 53 describes Hezekiah's¹ illness and recovery in terms typical of Christ. "However much the seer looked beyond to ONE . . . the reigning king could not be out of view" (T. 167). "Davidic King and Suffering Servant supply chief contents of idea of Christian Messiah" (H. iv. 123). Many striking parallels between Isa. 38 and 53. Both describe deliverance by Lord's arm (53 1; 38 20, cf. 2 Chron. 32 8). T. gives twelve parallels (p. 185)—*e.g.*, sick unto death (38 1, 9; 53 3. R.V.M., 12); cut off early (38 10; 53 8); land of living (38 11; 53 8); prolonged life (38 16; 53 10); posterity imperilled (*dor*, "age," "generation," 38 12; 53 8); oppressed (38 14; 53 7); bitterness of soul (38 16; 53 11); peace (38 17; 53 5); visible seed (38 19; 53 10).

I. THE SUFFERING SOVEREIGN. H. a righteous King amid unrighteous subjects (cf. 2 Kings 18 5, 6; with Isa. 1 2-6; 58 1, 2). H.'s illness synchronous with Sen.'s invasion (Isa. 38 6; cf. 38 5 with 2 Kings 18 2, 13). T. suggests illness penal for yielding popular pressure (2 Kings 18 13-16; cf. appeal in 5 27, and Isa. 30 1-17; 57 17, 18), and compares Isa. 53 8b (T. 215, 216).

(a) Possible failure of line: 38 12; 53 8 (see above); and 38 19; 53 10 (T. 165, 180). Manasseh born after² (2 Kings 21 1; Isa. 38 5, 19 LXX. *παῖδια ποιῆσω*).

¹ T.'s theory regards chap. 53 as Isaianic. Usual easy surrender of this view is unnecessary; see M. p. 72 *f.*, and his verdict against plurality "nothing in it" (p. 136); also K. Intro.: O., pp. 458, 536.

² C., though regarding Isa. 52 as work of "Deutero-Isaiah," rightly (though surely not consistently) sees in it a wedding ode (150, cf. Isa. 62 4; 2 Kings 21 1). Whole chapter suggestive in light of Assyrian deliverance (cf. vers. 6, 7, 8, 9; with 2 Kings 18 26, 36, 32). Is it possible, however, that Hephzibah married earlier in barren wife of Isa. 54 1? The sequence is suggestive (cf. *σήμειον*, Isa. 38 19, LXX.).

(b) *H.'s illness probably leprous*: "Boil," 2 Kings 20 7; s.w.a. Lev. 13 18-20; a penalty for forsaking God (Deut. 28 27 R.V., and cf. Deut. 28 14; 2 Kings 18 14; T. 189). This coincides with chap. 53; "sickness" (ver. 3, R.V.M.)="sick" (38 9); "sorrows" (ver. 3)=pains accompanying disease (K. *in loc.*); "stricken" (53 4, 8) used of leprosy fifty-seven times in Lev. 13, 14 (K. *in loc.*, and cf. 2 Kings 15 5); S. translates "smitten of God and degraded" (p. 343), and says A.V. has "masked the leprous figure" (p. 368). So 53 3 LXX. makes hidden face refer to Lev. 13 48; and "healed" (53 5) is the precise word of Lev. 13 18, 37; 14 3, 48).

(c) *Marvellous recovery*: Isa. 38 5; 53 10; cf. 52 13, "prosper" R.V.M. ("recover" T. 163 n).

(d) *Grave with impious*: (53 9; T. 165; S. 361). Does this hint at leper's burial prepared for H. (cf. 2 Chron. 26 19, 20, 23) near Uzziah's grave?

(e) *Startle many nations*: (52 15 R.V.M., and LXX.). See Isa. 39 1; 2 Chron. 32 23, 31 ("the wonder"); exalted, 2 Chron. 32 23; s.w.a. Isa. 52 13.

(f) *Peace*: Isa. 38 17; 53 5; 2 Kings 20 19.

II. THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR. Matt. 8 17; Luke 22 37; Acts 8 32.

III. THE SUFFERING SAINT. Phil. 3 10; Col. 1 24; 2 Tim. 2 12; 1 John 3 16.



The Missionary World.

BY REV. C. D. SNELL, M.A.

AT the Canadian National Missionary Congress of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, which was held at Toronto from April 1 to 4, a striking and stirring report was adopted. Unhappily, limits of space prevent its reproduction in full, but the following brief extracts indicate the tone running throughout it:

"In view of the universality and finality of the Gospel of Christ, and of the spiritual needs of mankind, we believe that the Church of our generation should undertake to obey literally the command of Christ to preach the Gospel to every creature.

"We believe that the call to make dominant and regnant in all human relationship, either personal, racial or national, the principles and spirit of Jesus Christ, presents to every man his supreme opportunity of development, usefulness and satisfaction.

"According to their several ability and opportunity, we believe that the laymen of the Churches are equally responsible with the ordained ministers to pray and to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

"We believe that every Christian should recognize the world as his field, and to the full measure of his ability work for its evangelization."

It is often said that the key to the situation as concerns foreign missions is in the hands of the clergy, but it is quite clear that, if the spirit which