

his resolution to reform? None with any knowledge of human nature could for one moment think so. The thing described is happening every day, and always ends, and must end, as described by the author, unless the man has more than fear and more than warning—some source of strength not sought by René Delorme. Sinners less feeble and hopeless than he are brought face to face with death, and even terrified into seeming repentance, and when health returns, and the new chance is given, continue their old life, exactly as Delorme, “without hesitation and without struggle.” Sin is a dead-weight in every person’s life, and they who try earnestly and strenuously, by the best means known to them, to shake it off are few. All others are fairly represented by René Delorme in kind, though not in degree. All know well, and are incessantly warned, that death is real, certain, and terrible. Does that alone check them? Never. Visions and threatenings, denunciations, entreaties, apparitions, the very Valley of the Shadow of Death are of no avail. If they hear not Apostles and Prophets, if they reject the Saviour of man, they will not be persuaded though they are plucked themselves from the very clashing of the teeth of Death.



## Studies in Texts.

SERMON SUGGESTIONS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

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Suggestive book: “Apocalypse of St. John i.-iii.,” by F. J. A. Hort.

SUBJECT: *Christian Testimony*. TEXT: “*Who bore witness.*”—REV. i. 2.

**P**ECULIAR prominence of idea of “witness” in both Apocalypse and Fourth Gospel (p. xxxviii). *μαρτυρία* and cognates nineteen times in former book. The thought of testimony emphasizes the Christian principle of passing on spiritual benefits; see in illustration the chain of five links in i. 1—God, Christ, angel, John, bondservants (p. 7). When did John bear the “witness” indicated in text? Not in writing of Apocalypse. The Greek indicates “a previous bearing witness” (p. 8). “Most natural

explanation is that he means specially that bearing of witness which led to his banishment" (p. 9). The phrase "he saw" refers to his eye-witness of Christ's life (p. 10; *cf.* John xix. 35, 1 John i. 1).

1. THE SCOPE OF THE TESTIMONY. "*Word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ*" (ver. 2).

(a) He testified to belief in the Word of God. "What we call His revelation" (p. 8).

(b) He testified to Christ's reality to himself. "Could be rendered only by Christians." "Every man living in and by the faith of Him, and prepared to die rather than betray it" (p. 9).

"Word of God" and "testimony of Jesus" linked together in vi. 9, xx. 4, i. 9 (p. 8). *Cf.* also "Testifying to Jesus is the spirit underlying prophecy" (this appears to be Hort's view of xix. 10, p. 9). History affirms a vital connection between the Word incarnate and Word written. The temptation to surrender the second in Matt. xiii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 8 (p. 9). Not only faith in, but obedience to, the Word is implied (see varied phrase in xii. 17, xiv. 12, "Keep commandments," p. 8).

2. THE PRICE OF THE TESTIMONY. "*Slain for the word and testimony*" (vi. 9). Faithful testimony involves persecution. "Witness" comes to mean "martyr," not because martyr includes idea of suffering or death, but because the "faithful witness borne" involves bitter consequences (p. 9). In vi. 9, xx. 4, these men "suffered death because they refused to abjure their witness" (p. 8). Christ Himself is the great pattern, the faithful witness (i. 5, iii. 14, p. 11). So "because John had been faithful," "he found himself in Patmos" (pp. 8, xlv.). But word and testimony were likewise entrusted to every Christian to bear "witness in his measure" (p. 8; *cf.* ii. 13, Antipas).

3. THE RESULT OF THE TESTIMONY. "*They overcame*" (xii. 11). "They overcame him on account of the blood of the Lamb" (*i.e.*, sprinkled on them, and enabling them to shed their blood in like manner), "and on account of the word of their testimony" (p. 8). Victory was the result of apparent defeat (p. xxxviii). The opposition comes from those who have made earth, not heaven, *their permanent aim and abode* (*cf.* vi. 9, 10). "They that dwell upon the earth." Phrase occurs eleven times, "always in a bad sense" (p. 35).

*Lessons.*—I. Christian exists to testify to the vitality of the Word of God and reality of living Christ. II. The price of testimony is suffering. III. The result is certain victory.

