

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE CHURCHMAN

September, 1918.

The Month.

The Fifth Year. THE observance of Sunday, August 4, as a Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving in connection with the War does not call for detailed notice in these pages, but we may, perhaps, be permitted to express our great satisfaction at the large amount of real attention the Day seems to have received, and that, too, not alone from ordinary Church-going people. Congregations were larger—in many places very much larger—than usual and the extra meetings and services arranged in numerous centres were responded to in such a way as to suggest that the fundamental idea of the Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving had really gripped a considerable section of the population. In a sentence, we believe that the nation has entered upon the fifth year of the War with a deeper realisation of its dependence upon God; and, if we are right in that view, it affords the strongest ground for encouragement and hope. The large number of “united services”—held, as they were, in nearly every part of the country—must also be noted with satisfaction. The War, which has welded the several sections of the nation so strongly that we may justifiably claim to be an united people, is certainly drawing together the various branches of the Church. It is of good augury when episcopalian and non-episcopalian meet each other for the purpose of united prayer, and there is every reason to hope that such a coming together will have results for which the Churches and the nation will have every reason to be thankful.

President Lincoln. There has been much discussion amongst us regarding national penitence and national prayer. We do not propose to revive it just now, but it may be useful to place on record three pronouncements, leaving our readers to compare them and to draw their own inferences. The first is

Abraham Lincoln's Proclamation of a Day of National Humiliation and Prayer in America, on April 30, 1863—fifty-five years ago:—

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It behoves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this my Proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope, authorized by the Divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

To come now to the present day. On April 2, 1918, the Congress of the United States passed a resolution appointing May 30 as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, in accordance with which President Wilson issued the following Proclamation:—

President
Wilson.

Whereas, the Congress of the United States, on the second day of April last passed the following Resolution:—

“Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it being a duty peculiarly incumbent in a time of War humbly and devoutly to acknowledge our dependence on Almighty God and to implore His aid and protection, the President of the United States be, and is hereby, respectfully requested to recommend a day of public humiliation, prayer, and fasting, to be observed by people of the United States with religious solemnity and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God for safety and welfare of our cause, His blessing on our arms, and a speedy restoration of an honourable and lasting peace to the nations of the earth.”

And Whereas, it has always been the reverent habit of the people of the United States to turn in humble appeal to ALMIGHTY GOD for His guidance in the affairs of their common life;

Now, therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, the thirtieth of May, a day already freighted with sacred and stimulating memories, a day of public humiliation, prayer, and fasting, and do exhort my fellow-citizens of all faiths and creeds

to assemble on that day in their several places of worship, and there, as well as in their homes, to pray ALMIGHTY GOD that He may forgive our sins and shortcomings as a people and purify our hearts to see and love the truth, to accept and defend all things that are just and right, and to purpose only those righteous acts and judgments which are in conformity with His will; beseeching Him that He will give victory to our armies as they fight for freedom, wisdom to those who take counsel on our behalf in these days of dark struggle and perplexity, and steadfastness to our people to make sacrifice to the utmost in support of what is just and true, bringing us at last the peace in which men's hearts can be at rest because it is founded upon mercy, justice, and good will.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

The third pronouncement is that made by the
 Mr. Prime Minister of England. When on July 17 he
 Lloyd George. moved that the House of Commons do attend the
 State service at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on August 4, Mr.
 Lloyd George said—

When millions of our young fellow-countrymen are daily hazarding their lives so that right and justice should prevail on earth; when the fate of our country and the destiny of the world depend upon the issue of their efforts and the efforts of their comrades from many lands, it requires no words from me to commend to the House of Commons the motion that on the fourth anniversary of this terrible struggle the representatives of the nation should attend a special service to invoke the Divine Blessing on our just cause and on the brave men who are upholding it.

We do not propose to offer any comment upon the contrast afforded by a comparison of these three utterances, although others have done so, but it is useful to place them on record.

The visit to England of Archbishop Meletius,
 Christian Metropolitan of Athens, for the purpose of "drawing
 Rapprochement closer the bonds between the Greek Orthodox and the
 Anglican Churches" has naturally caused some comment, being noted as an event of not a little importance. And so it is, but it is at least doubtful whether there is sufficient similarity between the two Churches as to warrant any expectation of a working unity. At present the exact nature of the Archbishop's mission has not been disclosed, and until more is known about it comment would be out of place. The chief interest of the visit seems to be in the evidence it affords of the growth of the movement towards unity which is manifesting itself in various quarters, and Bishop Weldon, now Dean of Durham, writing in connection with the

visit of Archbishop Meletius, points out in a letter to *The Times* three objects which he thinks the Church of England may deliberately set before herself at the present time : " The first, to establish peace within her own borders ; the second, to recognise by some formal action the growing spirit of co-operation and in the end of reunion between the Church of England and the non-episcopalian Churches ; the third, to set the Church, as so confederated or united, in some definite relation to the Orthodox Church or Churches of Eastern Europe. Bishop Welldon argues his case thus :—

It may be hoped that, by a wise revision of the Prayer Book and by the collective action of the Episcopate, Churchmen and Churchwomen who are loyal to the spirit of the Church of England will soon or late be all enabled to work and worship side by side in mutual good will. That the Church of England and the other reformed Churches in Great Britain have been sensibly drawn together of late by many events, and above all perhaps by the experience of their chaplains at the front, is a cause of deep thankfulness to all Christians, and there is some reason to hope that they may in the end agree, if not upon a precise theory of the Episcopate, yet upon the acceptance of episcopacy as the historical system of government in the Church. It is only when the Churches are in some sense re-united at home that they can effectively hold out the right hand of fellowship to the national Churches of the East, which, however widely they may differ from the Church of England or from the other reformed Churches in faith and practice, yet have risen above such intolerance as would forbid all community of participation with them in the public or private offices of religion. The goal is far off ; it may seem to be unattainable—so easy is it, as ecclesiastical history shows, to create divisions, and so hard, when they have been created, to repair them—but the war has breathed a new spirit into the heart of Christendom ; and, so long as Christians keep the goal in view, they may sensibly, however slowly, draw near to it.

Upon each of these three points we desire to offer **Some Necessary** what seem to us to be some necessary comments.

Comments. In the first place, if by " a wise revision of the Prayer Book " Bishop Welldon means the revision upon which the Convocations have been engaged for the past ten or twelve years we are bound to say that that revision will need itself to be " revised " before it offers any sort of hope that it will enable Churchpeople " to work and worship side by side in mutual good will." The Convocations have not yet actually finished their task, and it may be that at the Joint Conference to be held in the autumn some important changes will be made, but so far as the work has proceeded it is clear to all who will face facts that, instead of promoting unity, it has immeasurably intensified our divisions, and that unless some way out is found the result will be to promote a

wider and deeper feeling of anxiety and unrest than has ever before been experienced. It needs to be frankly and honestly recognised that a large number of Churchpeople are now seriously alarmed at what they regard—and quite justifiably regard—as the Romeward tendency of not a few of the proposals which have passed one or other or both Convocations, and that if those proposals are persisted in there is anything but a period of peace before the Church of England in the near future. Members of the Convocations, apparently, are so enamoured of their work that they are all too ready to discount the importance and strength of the opposition to their proposals. If they regard it as “a fire of straw” we can assure them they are grievously mistaken, and we can only hope, for the Church’s sake, that they will realise their mistake before it is too late. Moreover, it is not the Church of England in its domestic concerns that will alone be affected; much of the discussion which has taken place between Churchmen and Nonconformists has shown that one real—perhaps the chief—obstacle to Home Reunion is the existence of this Romeward drift within the Church of England, for it must be remembered that Nonconformity is essentially and unalterably Protestant. We agree with Bishop Welldon that there has been a sensible drawing together of the Church of England and the Reformed Churches of Great Britain, which we hope will become closer and deeper as time goes on—as we are sure it will do if pains be taken to emphasise the Protestant and Reformed character of the Church of England—but we doubt if Bishop Welldon has quite gauged the real feeling of intellectual Nonconformists on the question of episcopacy. Our own pages this month afford strong reason for serious reflection upon the present state of Nonconformist opinion on the subject. Dr. Forsyth’s address needs to be carefully pondered. Referring to the Second Interim Report of the Faith and Order Committee he remarked: “That document says that the Free Churches are not asked to accept any theories of episcopacy, but just the fact of episcopacy, the historic fact. That really will not do. I know how admirably it is meant, but I am quite sure of this, no fact as a mere fact could be held to justify such a monopolist claim except for the theory that was in it or under it.” We do not say that Dr. Forsyth is right; but his views are shared by many other Nonconformists and they have to be reckoned with. Bishop Welldon thinks that some measure of

reunion at home must precede the effective holding out of the right-hand of fellowship to the national Churches of the East, and to a large extent we agree with him; but we venture to add our solemn conviction that the Churches of the East must go much farther in the work of reformation both in regard to doctrine and practice before anything in the nature of real union with them can be effected.

The important Conference of leading Evangelical Churchmen held in London on July 11 in relation to the proposals of Convocation for altering the Service of Holy Communion marks a new departure. An impression is supposed to prevail in some influential quarters that Evangelicals can be persuaded or coerced into accepting almost anything; that they will protest and protest, but ultimately they will yield. The results of this Conference should quickly dissipate such an impression wherever it exists. The resolution adopted by the Conference was as follows:—

“ This meeting of Churchmen affirms its strong opposition to the use of alternative forms of celebration of Holy Communion, as it is convinced that such use would tend to emphasise differences of doctrine within the Church in such a way as to lead eventually to serious bitterness and disruption, and to destroy that ‘ great charter of unity ’ which is now possessed.

“ This meeting also resolutely protests against the proposed alteration in the Prayer of Consecration on the ground that it is a departure from the distinctively Scriptural character of the office of Holy Communion, and also involves a definite disturbance of the doctrinal balance of the Book of Common Prayer, and is thus a breach of the understanding in which Prayer-Book revision was undertaken; and believes that persistence in this alteration will unite a large body of loyal Churchmen in demanding that in the revision of the Prayer Book the office of Holy Communion shall remain untouched.”

A strong Committee was afterwards appointed (with power to add to their number) to determine how best to give effect to the resolution. The seriousness of the proposals has been more than once pointed out in our pages, and the Conference had the advantage of hearing from the Bishop of Manchester a very careful exposition of their significance and an impressive appeal for definite action in order to prevent these proposals becoming realities. The action of the Executive Committee will be awaited with interest: they may certainly rely upon the unqualified support of the whole body of Evangelical Churchmen.

The Priesthood of the Laity.¹

By the Rt. Rev. J. W. DIGGLE, D.D., *Lord Bishop of Carlisle.*

ONE of the most eminent and significant notes characterizing the course of Christian history is the gradual encroachment by the clerisy upon the privileges and powers of the laity. The original purpose of Christ and His Apostles, as far as we can learn from the records of their teachings which have come down to us, was to break down the old distinctions between things sacred and secular, meats clean and unclean, affairs spiritual and civil, days and seasons consecrated to God and days and seasons practically kept apart from Him. The New Testament makes it clear that the religion of our Lord was meant to be a religion equally for all men, at all times, in all places, and through all things. The old religions were sectional, compartmental religions. The religion of Christ is comprehensive and all-embracing. It leaves nothing and nobody out. It takes everybody and everything in. It intends the State and nation to be holy as the churches: the people to be sacred as the priests; work to be done as worship; eating and drinking to be to the glory of God concurrently with fasting and praying. The promise of Christ was not that He would be with His disciples on Sundays alone, but all the days; not that His presence should attend their worship only in consecrated buildings or at selected seasons, but anywhere, everywhere, and always where two or three are gathered together in His name to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. All things and all men in all places and at all times were according to Christ to be subject to the sovereignty of God: because it is a cardinal tenet of His religion that in God and through God and for God all things exist and to Him belong!

The Apostolic Church was thus a truly Catholic, because an all-comprehending, Church. No Church can ever again be equally Catholic unless also it is equally Apostolic and comprehensive. How strait and narrow modern Catholicity is, compared with the Catholicity of Christ and His Apostles is obvious to all who are familiar with the New Testament Scriptures. The atmosphere

¹ A paper read at a Meeting of the London Clerical and Lay Evangelical Union on June 28.

of the New Testament Catholicity is like that of mountain-tops : pure, strong and bracing ; a breath from heaven. The atmosphere of much modern Catholicity, especially of that department which most traffics in the name, is like that of cellars. It is of the earth, earthy : a breath from the nostrils of men, not from the Spirit of God.

The time has now fully come for a firm and even rebellious realization that the course of the Christian Churches has, for many centuries, not been a course ever widening down from great catholicity to a catholicity still greater, but from a catholicity originally true and generous to a catholicity ever more narrow and ever less true. The fount and origin of this non-Catholic contraction may be discovered unmistakably in the first substitution and final replacement of the Church for the Christ, of the Body for the Head, of an institution for a Person, of official priests on earth for the One High Priest Who has passed into the heavens. And to-day, the surest test of the catholicity or non-catholicity of any Church is the relative emphasis which it lays on the Church on the one hand and on Christ on the other. The more frequently and passionately men defer to the Church, the less catholic they are. The more loyally and lovingly they confess the Christ, the more catholic they will assuredly and gloriously become.

It is this frequent substitution of the Church for the Christ which vitiates so much of the teachings of the Fathers, and of the doctrines derived from those teachings : such doctrines as those which confine sacramental grace to sacerdotal channels, or commit the government of Churches and the decisions of doctrines to official priests alone, or exalt the priesthood to the exclusive sovereignty of an absolving and binding caste, and consequently subjugate the laity to their clerical lords. It is, of course, historically interesting to know what the Fathers believed and taught ; partly because they are witnesses to the mighty influence of the Roman Empire upon their beliefs and teachings ; as also because they are an evidence of the immense difficulties found by even the best of early saints to completely disentangle themselves from Jewish traditions and pagan modes of thought. But when all has been said that can be said on behalf of the Fathers, and all possible homage, consistent with truth, gladly and gratefully paid to their opinions, their spiritual discernment and their heroisms ; still none of them, not all taken

together, have the authority of a single apostle, far less of Christ Himself; and the more we find in their writings of the manual transmission of spiritual gifts, or of official restrictions on the validity of God's grace, or of ecclesiastical claims to the spiritual domination of one class of men over another, the more manifest is the distance which separates them from the Divine Founder of their religion, and the more impressive grows the tremendous power which, through the Fathers, paganism and Judaism have exercised over the developments and destinies of the Christian Church. Similarly with Luther's doctrine of consubstantiation and Calvin's autocratic, though most logical and learned institutes. They are no part of the Gospel of God, but are remnants of the scholastic and legalistic teachings of men. The Spirit of God is guaranteed to the Churches as their Guide through all the ages. When, however, either Churches or individuals wander away from the Christ into tracks remote from truth as taught by Him, they are manifestly being led not by the Spirit of God, but by some other spirit.

One of the great duties of the modern age is to restore to Christendom the catholicity of Christ and His apostles. Only by the re-birth of Christ's catholicity can our unhappy divisions be healed and Godly union and concord be substituted in their stead. In this re-birth the laity of the Church are destined to take a very prominent and powerful part. Priestly claims and the priestly temper in every denomination have been the main cause of our divisions. It rests largely with the laity to induce the priests to review their claims in the light of the New Testament, and as a result of that review to restore the universal priesthood of all Christians. From that restoration, and not otherwise, will follow, naturally and of necessity, a genuine apostolic catholicity and reunion of the Churches of Christ.

In a duly organized Church official ministers are clearly requisite and right. We need them for the seemly and sufficient conduct of our services; for the regular, and orderly administration of the Sacraments; for a well-instructed exposition and edifying application of God's Word; for the maintenance of the historic continuity of Church life and order. But, when we accept the teachings of Christ and His Apostles as our guide, we shall discover that the laity are intended to be equally Christians, and as truly disciples of

Christ as the clergy ; and as verily priests unto God and the Father as are the ordained members of the Church. No minister of Christ is, in the New Testament, accorded the title of " priest " in a sacrificial or hierarchic sense. Whenever the word " priest " is used in the New Testament its application is as fitting to the laity as the clergy. No function is conferred on the priest to the abasement of the layman. One of the greatest of the many great messages of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the unique exaltation of the High Priesthood of Christ, and the total abolition in the Christian community of any sacerdotal tribe akin to those of the Levites and Aaronic priests. Even St. Peter, the most Jewish of all the Apostles, and the reputed, though not proven, founder of the most Jewish of all the Christian Churches, declared that all those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, without any discrimination between ordained and unordained, are built up a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. They are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, elected, all alike, to show forth the excellences of Him Who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light (1 Peter ii. 5, 9).

It is evident, says the Preface to the Anglican Ordinal, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church : Bishops, Priests and Deacons. This clear-cut opinion, however, fuller knowledge tends to modify. The same Preface clearly and calmly sets forth the use and need for the careful ordination of each class of these ministers. But this is a quite different thing from the sacerdotal separation of ministers into a hierarchic caste : or the withdrawal from the laity of that royal priesthood conferred on them by Christ and His Apostles. At their ordination a New Testament or Bible is now given to all Anglican ordinands ; but no paten or chalice as was customary in pre-Reformation times. Our licensed Lay Readers to-day in ever-increasing numbers and with ever-deepening effect are ministering the Word of God ; and the withdrawal of the paten and chalice at the ordination of priests opens out the important and interesting question whether the Anglican ordinal definitely forbids the laity to minister the Sacraments also ? One Sacrament at least the laity are confessedly permitted to minister ; and if both the two Sacraments are generally necessary to Salvation, as the Catechism

declares, then as one Sacrament may be rightly and lawfully administered by the laity, with due and definite safeguards, why not the other ?

I further note three things in this connection : (1) The indefinite alternative use of the words "minister," and "priest" in the Book of Common Prayer is a witness to the transition state of the era in which the book was compiled : and the preference to-day severally attached by men to the one or other of these alternative titles is some slight, though not always sufficient, sign of their inclination to medieval notions of the Christian ministry on the one hand, and to New Testament revelations of its character on the other. (2) It is remarkable that although the sacred volume is handed to the ordinand priests and the paten and chalice are withheld, no small proportion of the Anglican clergy say little of that which is given, though they strongly emphasise that which is withheld. Yet they are equally stewards of both Scriptures and Sacraments, and the fidelity with which they minister the one, whether Scripture or Sacraments, ought not to involve them in negligence of the other. (3) In reading treatises on the origin and character of the Christian ministry it is before all things necessary to compare any statements quoted from the Fathers with the teachings of the New Testament. One ounce of New Testament revelation is worth, and weighs, more than tons of patristic learning. The one is pure gold : the other often much mingled with pagan and Jewish dross. It is this old-world dross which has done the Churches such immeasurable mischief. The Churches of the coming age will demand ever more insistently, and yearningly, the pure gold of God rather than the traditional alloys of men.

Again, it should be carefully observed how large a part in past times ignorance has played in the exaltation of the clergy and the depression of the laity. The clergy were for centuries the only learned and enlightened class ; and much even of their learning then was ignorance compared with that of modern days, and their enlightenment little better than darkness. But such learning and light as then there was belonged almost exclusively to the clergy alone. The laity had little share in it. The clergy managed not only the affairs of the Church but those of the State also. How changed all this now is ! The clergy, although better instructed and more capable as a class now than then, have little, far too

little, to say and do in the direction of State principles and State policies. But if the position of the clergy has been greatly changed, that of the laity has been altogether revolutionised. In ability, education, knowledge, enlightenment, they are fully abreast and no whit behind, the clergy. Even in theology many laymen, and some laywomen, outstrip the average clergyman in solid learning and accurate thinking. Multitudes of them have close acquaintance with the laws of thought and have well-trained judicial minds. In a theological examination, to say nothing of an examination on other subjects, the pew to-day would not infrequently beat the pulpit, and the parishioner well hold his own by the side of the pastor.

These fundamental facts must be vitally and vividly remembered in considering ecclesiastical questions to-day and in framing our plans for the union of the Churches. We must insist on the abandonment of medieval and sectarian notions of catholicity and return to the catholicity of Christ and His Apostles. We must re-conquer and re-establish the Evangelical priesthood of the laity as revealed in the New Testament, yet frequently concealed and sometimes denied in post-apostolic teachings and medieval traditions. We must recognise the mighty advance which the laity have made in modern times in all kinds of knowledge, including Biblical and theological knowledge; in forming sound and accurate judgments; in cultivating clear, definite, scientific ways and habits of thinking, both inductive and deductive; in creating and cherishing lofty ideals of human life and spiritual aspirations after Godlike perfection. In these ideals and aspirations the laity are seldom behind, and are sometimes in advance of the clergy: thus adding another to the many evidences we possess that the Holy Ghost, according to Christ's own promise, guides the laity as well as the clergy in the paths of truth and righteousness. Every Church, therefore, which exalts its clergy at the cost of abasing its laity will, from generation to generation, as knowledge grows and reverence for the Redeemer deepens, find its influence weakening and its authority waning. The laity are always ready, sometimes perhaps over-ready, to treat their clergy deferentially and to pay full homage to their most hallowed office and holy functions. And the more stable the foundations on which the sanctity of this office and the holiness of its functions are built, the

more permanent and worthful will be the regard in which they are universally held. The ministerial priesthood need have no fear of losing esteem by the recovery and re-establishment of the apostolic priesthood of the laity. The more highly exalted the laity spiritually become, the more highly esteemed will the ministerial priesthood become also. It is when the ministerial priesthood builds up its authority on a hay-and-stubble basis, and claims to be an exclusive sacerdotal caste, that it draws nigh to perishing, and when winds blow and rains descend is sure to fall into great ruin.

The remembrance and proper valuation of these facts are, I repeat, necessary to the right solution of many of the pressing religious problems of the present time. They go *e.g.* to the root of the Church and State question. My main objection to the Archbishops' Committee's Report on Church and State is that although it is doubtless well-intentioned, it frequently overlooks or ignores these facts. It too often confuses things ecclesiastical with things spiritual. It confers too much and too exclusive an authority on bishops. It sets apart in different houses the clergy and the laity. It withdraws from the laity all share in the examination and determination of Christian doctrine. It runs contrary to comprehension and catholicity and tends to foster an exclusive and sectarian spirit. Though some great lay names are appended to it, yet it is obviously fashioned in ecclesiastical moulds and intended to promote ecclesiastical notions and ecclesiastical interests. It does not strike a single generous note on behalf of more Christian catholicity. It even goes the length of shearing and clipping our Lord's own most broad sign and loving seal of membership of His Church—at least for purposes of administration and control in the English branch of it—by substituting Confirmation for Baptism as a qualification for the suffrage in Church elections. When the priesthood of the laity is duly acknowledged and the laity are endued with their proper rights and Christian share in the government of the Church such a document as the Archbishops' Committee's Report will, I earnestly trust, become an anachronistic impossibility.

Similarly with the Life and Liberty movement. Like the Archbishops' Committee's Report it is meant well. It displays more strength and breadth, and burns with a brighter light than the Re-

port of the Archbishops' Committee. Its founders and chief leaders are large-minded lovers of the people. Some of them are among our best and most highly esteemed contemporaries. But when they confound Church liberty with liberty from State control they seem to forget both Church history and State sanctity. No Churches have ever been so free and catholic as those in close communion with the State. It was not till after Canossa that the Roman Church could bind its laity in the fetters of transubstantiation and other ecclesiastical chains. The annals of the Roman Church from the time the Empire lost control of it are one long story of the ever-tightening depression of the laity. And as Canon Charles has shown in his remarkable little book on Religious Development (p. 182), "the severance of Church and State was disastrous even to Judaism. . . . All the great work that Judaism did for the world was done when Church and State were one. . . . When the close relation of Church and State was brought to an end Judaism was hopelessly crippled and became a sect, and has remained a sect to the present day."

Few people, I suppose, would contend that the relations of Church and State in England to-day are altogether satisfactory. But which party is at fault? Neither is innocent. Both are culpable. The State does not sufficiently realise the divinity of its origin and obligations. The Church is sometimes bitterly anti-rational and anti-national, arrogantly sectarian, lamentably Roman and anti-catholic. But before the twentieth century closes I hope these faults on both sides will be remedied and that the English Church instead of being disestablished will be re-established on a basis broad enough to include all those within the nation who call themselves Christians and openly confess their allegiance to their Lord.

No Church can be national which is satisfied to continue a sect. A Church can only be, or deserve to be, a National Church which includes all the folds of the flock of Christ within the nation. And my fervent desire is that the Life and Liberty movement will ere long not only open its gates wide enough for all Christians of every denomination to enter thereby into the National Church, but will also draw very definitely a clear distinction between the secular uniformity of ecclesiastical organisation and the sacred unity of spiritual life.

In conclusion I say nothing, though much might be said, of Prayer Book revisions. So far these revisions have been mainly at the will and in the hands of clerical convocations. They have yet to be reviewed by the laity and sanctioned by Parliament. In the course of this review, while I hope that all the good changes will be maintained, yet I trust that the drift of these revisions which has too often been palpably in the direction of medievalism will be firmly deflected and brought into close harmony with modern life and modern needs and modern thought, and thus prepare the way for a real, true, gladsome and Godly reunion of the Christian Churches. In this reunion let us hope that even the unreformed Churches may ultimately take an honoured part when they have reformed themselves and been brought into alliance with the free and glorious gospel of the Blessed God as revealed and taught by Christ and His first Apostles.



Evangelicals and Home Reunion.¹

By the Rev. P. T. FORSYTH, M.A., D.D., *Principal at
Hackney Theological College, Hampstead.*

THE question of Home Reunion is a very large one, and being large it has a great number of aspects, and while those aspects to which our attention has just been called are quite central and vital, there are others which approach the same centre along other radii.

May I say at the very outset that I have no sympathy at all with those people, or those bodies of people, who say, "Let us alone. We are perfectly contented to go on as we are doing, making the best of the house in which we find ourselves, the house where we were born, and we are not too much concerned about our relations with our Christian neighbours." These are the people who say, "Do not bother us about union. We shall do very well if we go on the lines of general sympathy and fraternization, and of general co-operation in those things which are outside the Gospel, and especially worship." I detach myself entirely from that type of feeling. I am very much concerned indeed that the various branches of the Christian Church should publicly and openly make at least an object-lesson of the unity of the spirit in the bond of its peace.

May I also say that I will venture to speak from the point of view of an Evangelicalism which is liberal and generous in its views and intent—a liberal Evangelicalism, an Evangelicalism with what I believe the Devonshire people call an "oncoming disposition." I have heard charges made to the effect that Evangelicalism has too often presented a somewhat grim and inhospitable aspect to certain other directions both of thought and of religious life. I am not undertaking to decide here and now whether that is true or not true, but if it has been true, and if it is not amended, then there is no future for Evangelical Christianity. I venture also respectfully to agree with the Bishop when he alluded to the unfortunate influence of patristics upon our religious and theological belief. The belief of the Church lies to a large extent under the ban of patristic study and patristic authority. Nothing could be more beautiful and profound than the religious insight of the Fathers. Nothing could be more

¹ An address delivered at a meeting of the London Clerical and Lay Evangelical Union, on June 28, and specially reported for the *CHURCHMAN*.

unfortunate, on the other hand, than to stereotype their distant and detailed views either of theology or of Church institutions. I wish—and I have often expressed the wish in quarters where I thought perhaps it might meet with response—that we had an anthology from the Fathers, giving us examples of their most beautiful insight into certain ideas, but leaving out a great deal of their writings that concerns the polity of the Church. The Fathers are more precious for their spiritual insight than for their institutional conclusions.

This matter of unity is no light matter. I know people who are disposed to dismiss it, wondering at the amount of fuss and trouble raised over what seems to them such an obvious thing. It is not obvious. The issues involved in the great controversies of history are not obvious issues, and they are not to be settled offhand, and if we are disposed to settle them offhand we should turn round upon ourselves and ask whether we have taken the measure of the problem. Real union must be planted very deep. As it is one of the consummate flowers of Christian church-life, so its foundation must be at the roots of the holy mountains, if I may so put it. Réal union must be planted very deep. The real unity of the Church must be planted as deep as the foundation of the unity between God and man. When we are dealing with the gulf which separates us from the great Roman Church, for example, that is a very profound and serious matter, and it is so profound and serious, not because the question has played a large part in history simply, but because the points of issue go to the very roots of the relation between the human soul and the Divine Soul. Therefore I am not disposed to dismiss any of these questions lightly, neither do I hope for a speedy solution. I distrust speedy solutions of great matters. I am saying this because a number of people are quite satisfied to cast themselves hastily upon the fact of general Christian sympathies in dealing with this question of union. But that is not the whole ; it plays a great part in the question, but it is not the whole. Again we are told that we must rally the churches together to defend the Gospel against the assaults of the world, of rationalism, and so on. That is all profoundly true ; the more we are drawn together the greater our influence will be in resisting that which ought to be resisted, always being very careful as to the selection we make of the things that ought to be treated so. But we must go deeper than our sympathies, and deeper than Church defence. We must go to the roots of the matter. And here we are brought

up "all standing," as the sailors say, by the charge, "Now you are going to victimize the Church by theology." That remark reveals a most unhappy frame of mind. There is no foundation for so great and ultimate a matter as the unity of the Church unless it be a foundation that would be described by many people as a theological foundation. We shall not treat this question with adequacy or respect or solemnity unless we found it as deep as we can go in the relation between God and man in Jesus Christ.

I venture, therefore, to say this, that the churches must be united, not simply by sympathy, but by authority. Now you, my brethren, possibly have had quite as much authority as you feel you want. But you will understand my particular point of view in saying that there are certain cases and situations where we at least—speaking for the Church to which I belong—could do with a little more. The Bishop has been candid, and I venture to meet his candour from my side. He has not expressed himself in any bigoted way about the incorruptible excellence of the Church of which he is such an ornament, and I am not going to say that the Church which I represent is in any danger of perishing from its own excellences. We have to help each other out in these matters. The churches must be united by a real and common authority more even than by sympathy, for my point would be that you do not get the Christian sympathy created except by Him who is our grand religious and theological authority. The right sympathy is created by the right authority, and the right freedom also is created by the right authority. When I am addressing gatherings of my own people I tell them that the prime necessity for the right freedom is the right authority, and you cannot get the freedom right without the authority. When talking about the freedom of Christians, that is an obvious truth. The foundations, therefore, I venture to suggest, must be laid in heaven rather than upon earth. It is a phrase of Wordsworth's that

Foundations must be laid

In Heaven . . .

That is an epigram, and epigrams are reckoned by many people as extraordinarily dangerous settings of truth. But I always contend that you cannot tell the truth about Christianity except by epigrams, by paradox. We live upon a paradox. The Cross itself is a paradox. "Die to live" is a contradiction in terms. You cannot tell the

truth on these matters without getting an antinomy of that kind which irritates the plain man extremely.

What, then, is the authority? It is the *historic* Redeemer in our *personal* experience. That is paradoxical and miraculous enough, if you think of it. I want to be a little more positive and particular than to say simply that our centre is Christ. Do you mean Christ as teacher? I am very much surprised at the number of clergy who say that our ultimate authority is the teaching of Christ. It is not the teaching of Christ, nor the character of Christ. All that is too placid, too inert, not sufficiently dynamic. What did Christ do? What did He set out to do? He redeemed. We feel the historic Redeemer as our Redeemer. I do not mean the Redeemer legislating about redemption, or legislating about the Church and theology. It was no system He left us. He did not legislate at all. It was not His genius to legislate; it was His genius to redeem. His vocation, His mission, was to redeem, He left a world redeemed, and we have to yield ourselves to that redemption. That is the fundamental thing. Certainly for the Church it is. And that kind of authority will draw us together in a sympathy that nothing else can produce. On the other hand, our link is not simply our experience. It is not the experience of being redeemed. It is our experience of the Redeemer, when we are not thinking about how we are feeling at all. Are there not moments, beautiful and rare, when we have felt that we have touched at once both heaven and earth? We know that our Redeemer liveth and ruleth, and we do not think at all of our feelings and our experience. It is not our experience at all; it is the Redeemer in the midst of our experience.

I want to put the same thing from another point of view. The only thing that can unite the Church is the thing that reconciles the world. It is the world in the Church that divides us so much. It is the unreconciled world in the midst of our Christianity that causes us so much trouble. And the reconciling power is the atoning Christ; not just Christ without more ado, but the atoning and redeeming Christ. And that is why I venture to say that the only foundation of Church unity is the evangelical one. This is not a piece of theology, if you please. It is a piece of the last and profoundest morality in the whole world. We English do believe in morals. Sometimes we do not believe in anything else. But we

do believe in morality, and we are willing to listen to and to go a long way with a man who starts from that foundation. One reason why people are dissatisfied with theology is that it has abandoned that foundation, and we have got into all the intricacies of an old and metaphysical theology. But if one has much to say about the theology of this matter one says it because it is a moral theology. That is, it has to do with the adjustment of man's conscience and God's conscience. And that is really the only source of theology that one need care very much for in the long run. But that has immense roads radiating from it in every direction. We must rally then upon the gospel of moral redemption. If we are going to define, that is one of the best definitions I know of Christianity. That is what we rally upon. We do not even rally upon the Bible. There is a certain way of treating the Bible which makes difficulty for the Gospel. There has been a way of treating the Bible, with a certain amount of spurious respect, which has seriously hampered, not to say endangered, the service which the Bible and the Bible alone is able to render the Gospel. What is it that gives the Bible spiritual value? It is to us the great sacrament of the Gospel of the Christ of God. I am in the way of saying that the real successor of the Apostles is the Bible. And yet there is a way of treating the Bible about which we shall have to deal very faithfully with ourselves. It is possible so to treat the Bible as to idolize it, and to put a barrier between ourselves and the Gospel by its means. We must escape from that. If it were told us by an angel from heaven that it were really necessary that, as of old, the pitchers should be broken at the blowing of the critical trumpets in order that the lamps in the pitchers might shine forth, then the Bible might be well lost if only we could be made divinely sure by the Holy Spirit that it was for the triumph and glory of the Gospel. If the alternative is sharply put we must say that our foundation is the very nature of the Gospel—the one Gospel of the one Lord and the one Saviour. It is not a theory of the Bible.

Moreover, may I put the same thing from this other point of view? The unity of the Church is a supernatural unity. It is not to be got through the devices and engineerings of man. It is a supernatural matter. It rests upon the permanent and eternal element in Christianity. What is the permanent thing in Christianity? What is going to survive the changes that Christian belief

and life must undergo in the years that are to come? There must be some central thing that does not change? What is the permanent and eternal element in Christianity? It is Christ's redeeming work. Our churches' unity must rest upon that if it is to have a permanent foundation. We are really in possession of a greater trust than we have realized when we call ourselves Evangelical. There is a gold-mine upon our estate that we have not yet worked as it should be. If there be a unity coming for the Church, in my judgment it can only be by the concentration upon this evangelical element and its development according to the riches of the spirit and the needs of the world with which we have to do. Church unity rests upon an evangelical succession, not upon a canonical succession. The life of the Church is a matter of evangelical solidarity. This sounds ponderous, but it is very true. The life of the Church depends on its evangelical solidarity, that is to say, its solidarity in the Gospel. It does not rest—this life of the Church—on a canonical continuity. To say that is legalism; it is a relapse into Judaism; it is something which ties up the Church rather than unites it. I would even live dangerously for one moment, and I would say this, that if we could take out of the Mass such doctrines as transubstantiation, the central place which the Mass as the worship of the sacrifice of Christ takes in the Roman Church is one of the strongest things about that Church. It is still, by the place it gives to the Mass, putting in the very centre the Cross and the evangelical element. We do not grumble that they put the Cross in the centre. We only wish their ways of construing the Cross accorded with the principle and authority of the New Testament. It is not baptismal regeneration we have got to rally on; it is conversion. That is to say, our foundation is not a mystic one, it is a moral one. And the reason why the Church is not doing for the world what it should be doing is that it has not got a sufficient moral grasp of the world and the world's case. The New Testament has that grasp, the present Church does not have it in the measure or proportion of the New Testament; we do not duly grapple with the last moral fact of sin.

I would like to point out also that unless we bethink ourselves well about this matter of union, the public will have something to say. But has the public the right to criticize the Church? Well, the secret of the Church is not with the public, it is with the Church itself. The secret of the Church is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes

the life of the Church. If men yielded as they should to the movement of the Holy Spirit they would be within the Church, and not outside it; and then their judgment upon Church matters would be of more value than it can possibly be from people who have never realized the Holy Spirit sufficiently to place themselves in living communion and membership with the Church. The central principles and policies of the Church are to be prescribed by its own inward light and life, with all due regard, of course, to criticism from outside. But criticism is one thing, and prescription is another thing. And there are symptoms at the present day that the world outside claims the right to prescribe to the Church, and not only to criticize. In that respect we ought to make our own opinion and our own practice felt. But yet no Church can afford to be independent of public opinion, and I venture to think that if we do not do a great deal more than we have been doing in the way of mutual approximation we shall lose any such hold upon the world even as we have got. And especially would it greatly endanger our hold if our separation were to retard the educational improvement for which our country is so anxiously pining. I agree with his Lordship's reference to the nation. I am not going to say anything about Free Churchism, but I will venture to say this, that it is impossible for the Church to be out of relation to the nation in which it is. The existing form of the relation is for the moment neither here nor there. But it is impossible for any branch of the Church to become entirely neutral to the State. It could not be, because there is a sanctity that belongs to the State, and which comes from the same Lord as the sanctity that belongs to the Church.

In the Interim Report of the Archbishops' Committee I welcome the fact that two great changes showed themselves in the attitude of the Established Church to the churches outside it. The first of these was the change from what might be called prerogative prelacy to a constitutional episcopacy. That is a valuable approximation. The office should rise from the body of the Christian people, and it should not descend upon it with a formal prerogative from above. That is a very important point, and it is due very largely to our new scientific knowledge both of the New Testament and of Church history. We are owing more to the scientific scholars and students in this matter than most of us have any idea of. There was a time when these

were polemical influences ; now they are rapidly becoming irenic. The other happy change showing itself in the Report was the recognition on the part of Anglicanism of at least the prophetic ministry of the Free Churches. But the insistence in that document is upon episcopacy. Episcopacy is presented as a condition of unity. Now that creates a deadlock. We cannot go any further for the time being. But the door will not be long shut. There are influences—I will not say burglarious, for they are too open for that—which are gradually unpicking that lock and pushing open that door. That document says that the Free Churches are not asked to accept any theories of episcopacy, but just the fact of episcopacy, the historic fact. That really will not do. I know how admirably it is meant, but I am quite sure of this, no fact as a mere fact could be held to justify such a monopolist claim except for the theory that was in it or under it. I am not sorry about the deadlock. Deadlocks give you time to consider where you are. They give time for many things to simmer and improve. But we have got to insist, so far as the Free Churches are concerned, upon—what I have found the Evangelical side of Anglicanism willing to admit—the recognition of our ministerial orders. That comes before everything else. We may go further than you think about episcopacy, being driven by practical considerations, but there is no possibility of fertile action in this direction so long as our orders are unrecognized.

I have no business further to monopolize your time. I want to say in conclusion that the several forms of church polity are not rivals to each other. They are complementary to each other. The three great branches—Episcopacy, Presbyterianism (including Methodism), and Congregationalism—should not be at each other's throats. Episcopacy represents the liberty that is secured by authority, Presbyterianism the liberty that is secured by order, Congregationalism the liberty that is secured by local autonomy and local initiative, and the initiative especially of the laity. "If you want to make a thing living make it local," it has been said. The New Jerusalem is described as a cubical city. It was a great cube descending out of heaven, very like, if one may put it so, a huge block of flats. But even then, cannot we have at our disposal a common chapel, and a kitchen, and a drawing-room in common ? The matter of inter-communion here arises. It is a much greater difficulty to many than it is to myself. Any person who has confessed

the earnestness of his faith in the Redeemer enough to become a Church member should be welcome to communion with any other Church. That is—if I may use a Scotch expression—the doctrine of mutual eligibility. (Oh, we can talk Latin in Scotland!) Less than that does not really mean more for Christ, but it tends rather in the Judaist direction; and it is the Judaism in the Church that is one of our great dangers. There is one thing that society needs more than anything else, and that is a new heart, and there is one institution in the world that has got the secret and monopoly of that; it is the Church of Christ in its manifold branches and powers. The more we unite, the more power we bring to the national confession of the righteousness of God in His historic and everlasting Kingdom.



Madame Guyon.

AT Montargis, a town some fifty miles from Paris, in the year 1648, was born one who was destined to influence the leaders of religious thought, not only in France, but in other countries on the continent of Europe. In early life this child, whose name was Jeanne Marie Bouvières de la Mothe, was afflicted and feeble in health, but she grew up fairly strong, and, as she afterwards said, "life proved victorious over death." When quite a girl she married M. Guyon, a man of considerable wealth, and though her husband's relations behaved unkindly to her in many ways, he himself was no sharer in their behaviour; indeed her married life, apart from the unfortunate experiences to which reference has been made, appears to have been happy. On the death of M. Guyon we are told, her life was for a time quite desolate.

In order to understand the circumstances in which Madame Guyon was placed we must know something of the times in which she lived. The court of Louis XIV was not only profligate, but was allowed by the leaders of religion to exercise its evil influence without any attempt to oppose it. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Madame Guyon, with her exalted views of life and its duties, should come under the ban of some of the dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church. In the forest of Vincennes, near Paris, she was incarcerated in a castle used both as a military fortress and a State prison. But the walls which enclosed her had no terrors to a heart that recognized the presence of God as distinctly in sorrow as in joy.

It is curious to observe that Madame Guyon's captivity was a source of disagreement between two great leaders of thought of the day—Bossuet and Fénelon. With the intention of defending Madame Guyon, Fénelon wrote a work entitled *The Maxims of the Saints*; on the other hand, Bossuet never relinquished his attack on the imprisoned lady. But the authorities found it advisable for the sake of her health to transfer their prisoner to the Bastille, and, subsequently, allowed her conditional freedom. But the end was not distant, and on June 9, 1717, her death took place at the age of sixty-nine.

From this brief review of Madame Guyon's life we notice that

she possessed what may be termed "a strong propension towards God," and an emotional susceptibility to religious influences. Her book, *A Method of Prayer*, was to some "a light to lighten," to others "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." Her teaching of the inward light could not be understood by the theologian, but she could sing—

A little bird am I
Shut from the fields of air,
And in my cage I sit and sing
To Him who placed me there ;
Well pleased a prisoner to be
Because, my God, it pleaseth Thee.

In her *Method of Prayer* the question of perfectness is discussed, and is a résumé of the doctrine of the reception of the Holy Spirit, the new life being the consummation of the old, and the beginning of the new like the seed which is formed in the blossom of the plant. "Jesus Christ," says Madame Guyon, "often giveth us some insight into His states after a very particular manner. Then it behoveth us to receive them, and to suffer our minds to be applied to anything that pleaseth Him, taking equally all the dispositions that He shall see fit to place us in, not choosing one of ourselves, but only this to continue always with Him, to desire Him affectionately and to empty ourselves before Him, receiving with an evenness of mind all that He doth give us, whethèr light or darkness, fruitfulness or barrenness, strength or weakness, sweetness or bitterness, temptation, distraction, pains, troubles or doubtings; nothing of all these should stop us."

It is well for us to remember that the principles of mysticism are the same to-day as they were in the sixteenth century. Dr. Rendell Harris has referred to Madame Guyon as "the teacher from whom I have received more help and guidance in the things of God than from any other person." In her *Method of Prayer* the question of perfectness is discussed, and is a résumé of the doctrine of the reception of the Holy Spirit.

The direct personal realization of God in the soul, which is so characteristic of Madame Guyon, is summed up in the following words: "The soul that is faithful in exercising itself, as hath been said, in love and affection to its God, is all amazed when it feels how by little and little He gets the entire possession of it. His

presence now becometh so easy to the soul that it can no more be without it : it has acquired a habit of this as well as prayer. The soul feels the calm and serenity prevailing upon it by degrees : the silence maketh up its whole prayer, and God giveth it an infused love, which is the beginning of an unspeakable happiness."

J. C. WRIGHT.



Studies in the Gospel of St. John.

VI.

SPECIAL TOPICS.

AFTER mastering the contents of the Gospel as a whole, it is necessary and important to proceed to the definite study of details. This method is of great value and is capable of almost indefinite explanation because of the fullness of matter in the Gospel. The following points are only intended to be suggestive of further study, and at the same time illustrative of similar possible themes.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF THE GODHEAD. 1. His existence (i. 1). 2. His spirituality (i. 18; iv. 24; v. 37; vi. 46). 3. His manifestation (i. 18). 4. His nature (iii. 16). 5. His life (i. 14; vi. 57). These are only a few of the aspects of the doctrine of God scattered through the Gospel, calling for careful consideration and arrangement.

II. THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST. Through the Apostle we are to arrive at the mind of the Lord Jesus, for his purpose beyond all else is to reveal his Master. Every part of the Gospel keeps this idea in view, and looking first at the Gospel as a whole we may think of it as giving a threefold manifestation of Christ. 1. As the Divine Messiah (chaps. i.-xii.). 2. As the disciples' Master (chaps. xiii.-xvii.). 3. As the world's Redeemer (chaps. xviii.-xxi.). Thus we may say that Christ is seen (*a*) as the Word revealing the character of God and His purpose for man; (*b*) as the man revealing God's ideal for human life and the chasm made by sin; (*c*) as the Saviour accomplishing God's will and restoring man to union and communion with God.

But beyond these general aspects we may look still more closely at the detail given of Christ's Person and work. 1. His relation to God; (*a*) as the Word (i. 1); (*b*) as the Son (i. 14). 2. His revelation of God; (*a*) God in Himself (iv. 24); (*b*) God in relation to man (i. 12). For this point special study should be devoted to the discourses in each chapter. 3. His Divine claims: (*a*) In acts (ii. 15); (*b*) in word (viii. 58). "Either He is God or He is not good." 4. His perfect humanity: (*a*) Subject to our physical conditions (iv. 16): (*b*) submitting to our moral conditions (v.

19, 20). 5. His relation to the Jews (as Messiah). See especially chaps. i.-xii. 6. His relation to all men : (a) Light (i. 4), (knowledge) ; (b) life (i. 13) (power). See especially i. 14, 17. " Grace (love) and Truth (light)." 7. His relation to the Church. See especially Chapters xiii. to xvii.

III. THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. This is another of the important features of the Fourth Gospel, especially when considered in the light of the Synoptic Gospels, and the fuller revelation in the Acts and Epistles.

1. The first stage (chaps. i.-vii.). The figure of water is seen, symbolizing (a) the incoming Spirit (chap. iii.) : (b) the indwelling Spirit (chap. iv.) : (c) the outflowing Spirit (chap. vii.). It is also to be noted that i. 32, 33 and iii. 34, associate the Spirit with Christ as at once the Receiver and Giver.

2. The second stage (chaps. xiv.-xvi.). The remarkable revelation of the Spirit on the eve of our Lord's departure, giving the new name Paraclete and various new offices with the strong emphasis on the Spirit's Personality (" He ").

3. The third stage (chap. xx.). The Easter gift of the Spirit is the culminating point of our Lord's earthly manifestation and was perhaps intended as an anticipation of and preparation for Pentecost.

IV. THE REVELATION OF " LIFE." As this is the specific purpose and main characteristic of the Gospel (xx. 31 ; x. 10), it seems to call for fuller attention, though at best this can only be fragmentary. Beyond and above all else Christianity is the religion of life. Eternal life is " the gift of God " (Rom. vi. 23) ; this gift is intended for " justification of life " (Rom. v. 18) ; the believer is to " walk in newness of life " (Rom. vi. 4) ; the Holy Spirit is called " the Spirit of life " (Rom. viii. 2) ; and Christ is our priest " after the power of an endless life " (Heb. vii. 17). In harmony with this we read in Bunyan's immortal allegory that the cry of Christian as he left the city of destruction was " Life ! Life ! Eternal Life ! " John's Gospel is pre-eminently the Gospel of life. Matthew speaks of righteousness ; Mark of service ; Luke of grace ; but John may be said to include all these and very much more by his emphasis on life. While life is mentioned in each of

the Gospels it is far more fully treated in the Fourth than elsewhere, and in particular it is regarded both as a present blessing (vi. 47), and also as connected with a future state (v. 29). At times we find the mention simply of "life"; at others of "eternal life," but between these there is no difference (iii. 36). Life is found in almost every chapter under various aspects.

1. *The Nature.* First of all, we must inquire as to the precise meaning of life as depicted in the New Testament, and especially in John. It is very much more than existence, and always implies and involves the thought of union. Indeed, every reference to life will be found to mean union. Thus, physical life is the union of the soul and the body; spiritual life is the union of the soul and God; while everlasting life in the fullest sense is the union of body and soul for ever with God. And so life spiritual, here and now, means the possession of the Divine nature, the union of the soul with God in Christ and the consciousness of fellowship resulting from it (John xvii. 3). It is impossible for even the ablest man to *define* life; it can only be *described* in its effects; and the one sufficient description of "eternal life" is union and communion with God. This is what St. Paul meant when he spoke of Christ as "our life" (Col. iii. 4).

2. *The Source.* This is seen in the opening words "in Him was life" (i. 4). This is the fount and starting-point (1 John v. 20). Life is so important and prominent in nature that it needs an adequate explanation, and nothing material or mechanical or human can account for it. Life always comes from life. God is the Source.

3. *The Beginning.* We see this in connection with the new birth (iii. 7), where our Lord emphasizes first the fact and then the method, the "what" and the "how." First, the fact of regeneration is shown and its necessity emphasized, and then, the way of its attainment is seen in the requirement of faith in Christ (iii. 15). The opposite of life is said to be death (iii. 16), and just as life in all its aspects means union, so death in its various elements means separation. Physical death means the separation of soul and body; spiritual death means the separation of the soul from God; everlasting death means the separation of body and soul from God for ever. Those who disbelieve are said not to "see life" (iii. 36). Thus we are reminded that Christianity is the introduction of a

new power, and not merely the provision of new knowledge. Knowledge cannot save; there must be life.

4. *The Indwelling.* Reception will necessarily be followed by realization, and the soul that has received God's life and is born again will be conscious of it as "living water" (iv. 11). This realization will in turn be followed by satisfaction, for in union and communion with Christ, our Life, we "never thirst," but find in Him "a well of water springing up unto eternal life" (iv. 14).

5. *The Possession.* A new thought about life is suggested in almost every chapter, and as we contemplate the next section of John's Gospel we are reminded that the Lord Jesus Christ has been appointed by the Father to give us life (v. 21), and that this life is at once a present possession (v. 24) and a future promise (v. 25). The cause of all this is Christ Himself Who has this life (v. 26), and Who is, therefore, able to communicate it to those who receive Him. The word "eternal" here and elsewhere is particularly important, because it implies quality rather than duration. We possess the life now, and it is simply because of its Divine quality that it necessarily lasts for ever.

6. *The Sustainance.* It is very striking that, after Christ claims to be the Source of life (chap. v.), He uses various symbols or metaphors in the following chapters to prove this possession of "life in Himself." Thus in chapter vi. He is shown to be the support of the life of which He is the source. Just as in physical life it is essential to absorb and assimilate matter, so in things spiritual Christ is the Living Bread Who must be appropriated, and the chapter is full of the most striking expressions about eating Him and eating His flesh and blood (vi. 35, 51, 53, 56, 57, 58). Nothing could be more significant and impressive than this almost constant reiteration and increased intensity in regard to the appropriation of Christ.

7. *The Overflow.* It is interesting to observe the three uses of the symbol of "water" in these chapters. In chapter iii. "born of water" symbolizes the incoming of the Spirit. In chapter iv. the "living water" indicates the indwelling Spirit. In chapter vii. 38 "rivers of living water," suggest the overflowing Spirit. That which we receive and possess is to be passed on to others, and from within us will flow rivers of life, giving blessing to those around. This is taken on the usual interpretation that it refers to believers,

but there is much to be said for the suggestion made in the Companion Bible, under chapter vii. 37, that the reference is to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Giver, rather than to the believer as the receiver. But in either case the thought of "living water" clearly implies a constant, perennial and absolutely unfailling source of supply.

8. *The Power.* When the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of Himself as the Light of the World, He said that His followers should not walk in darkness, but "have the light of life" (viii. 12). This seems to refer back to the opening statement that "the life was the light of men" (see also ix. 5 ; xii. 46). It is the possession of life that gives light, for, when we receive into our hearts the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, Friend and Master, the result is such an access of spiritual experience that perception, insight, knowledge become ours, as we follow our Master. There is perhaps nothing more striking in Christian life than the way in which the follower of Christ obtains light on many a dark part of his circumstances.

9. *The Abundance.* The Lord Jesus did not come to bestow life only, great though that is, but that the believer might have it in abundance (x. 10). We are not to be content with anything less than this. And the difference is often the difference between a poor, weak and anæmic Christianity and one that pulsates with freshness, vigour and energy. It is unfortunately only too possible for us to have merely a little warmth or a little heat when we ought to be thoroughly energized, and it is only too possible to be just saved instead of having the enjoyment of Christ's abundant salvation.

10. *The Condition.* In two successive chapters Christ teaches the solemn yet blessed lesson that life is possible only through death. In connection with Lazarus, Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life (xi. 25). And, when the Greeks came to see Him, He at once spoke of the grain of wheat dying in order that it might produce life and fruit. So, even though Christ was to be put to death, the raising of Lazarus showed that He had the power to guarantee victory ; and in the same way, even though the disciple of Christ loses his life in this world, he finds and preserves it unto life eternal (xii. 25).

11. *The Outcome.* While the message about abiding and fruitfulness (chap. xv.) does not specifically mention life, the thought is there all through, implying that only as we are united in life to

Christ can we produce fruit that will abide. Then in the great prayer our Lord seems to sum up everything by the thought of the Father having given Him authority to give eternal life to all believers, a life that is defined as knowing God and Jesus Christ (xvii. 3). This constitutes the essential glory of life, that we are one with Christ and one with the Father in Him. There is nothing higher, truer, nobler than this thought of union with God in Christ (xvii. 21-23).

12. *The Secret.* The Apostle reminds us in the statement of his purpose that this life is possible only "in His Name" (xx. 31). The "name" always stands for the revealed character, and "in" inevitably and invariably means union. So that our "life" is found in fellowship through believing. Faith links us to Christ and thereby produces that union, the outcome of which is communion, which necessarily lasts for ever and ever.

V. THE TEACHING ON "FAITH." We have already seen that the whole Gospel is intended to elicit faith, and the mere occurrence of the word "believe" shows the importance of the material of the Gospel in this respect. In Matthew we find the word eleven times; in Mark fifteen; in Luke nine; while in John it occurs about a hundred times. A great American teacher, the late Dr. Dwight, of Yale, used to base his exposition of St. John on the discovery that the main purpose of the Gospel was to create faith, and yet more faith in the hearts of the disciples. One of his disciples recently remarked that Dr. Dwight showed how successive passages end with sentences recording the growth of faith in the little band around our Lord: "His disciples believed on Him" (ii. 11). "Many believe on His Name" (ii. 23). "Many of the Samaritans believed on Him" (iv. 39). "The man believed" (iv. 50, 53). "Many believed on Him there" (x. 42). This is seen in one way or another to the very end. But it is important to try to analyse this faith by looking at some of its features as here recorded.

1. *Its Source* (i. 36, 37). It was elicited through personal contact with Jesus Christ based on testimony.

2. *Its Elements.* These may be said to be two, marking the stages of growth: (a) believing the message (v. 47); and (b) trusting the Person (xiv. 11).

3. *Its Manifestation.* This is seen in two ways. First, by devotion to Christ (i. 49), and then by confession of Him (vi. 69).

This is only a little of the wonderful wealth in this Gospel in connection with faith, and special attention should be given to the personal types of faith here recorded. From the very outset to the close men and women are seen exercising a faith and manifesting it in a wonderful and beautiful variety of ways.

VI. THE TEACHING ON UNBELIEF. We have already observed how the revelation of Christ invariably led to a twofold attitude being taken up, the one involving reception through faith, and the other expressing itself in an exactly opposite direction. It is this contrast between belief and unbelief that constitutes one of the most vital and impressive features of this remarkable Gospel. Here again we must endeavour to analyse unbelief and see what it really means.

1. *Its Nature.* It consists in one simple but all embracing fact, the rejection of Christ. Whatever may have been the causes or explanation, unbelief is simply the unwillingness to recognize and receive Christ in His claim to be Saviour and God.

2. *Its Phases.* As we study the Gospel we notice the gradual development of this unbelief. (a) It commences with murmuring at something that Christ said or did (ii. 18). (b) Then follows hatred as the outcome of this murmuring (v. 16; vi. 41). (c) The culminating point was hostility (vii. 1). It is always so with the attitude of unbelief. It starts with some objection involved in the claim of Christ, and if this unwillingness to surrender continues, animosity and deadly opposition are the inevitable outcome.

3. *Its Destiny.* The outcome of unbelief is death, understood as separation from God, just as the outcome of faith is life, understood as union with God (xvii. 3).

As the Gospel is studied carefully for the various elements of unbelief, it is important to look at the record of personal types like Caiaphas, Pilate and others. All of them united in rejection of Christ though they reached their goal by various ways. It may perhaps be asked why so much space is given to this topic, and the answer is probably that the revelation of Christ could not be understood historically in any other way. Thus, unbelief leading to rejection may be said to solve the problem of the Jewish attitude

to Christ which was such a stumbling block to the early Church. It shows that they were unreasonable and wicked and had no excuse (v. 39, 40). Their rejection was hostility to light (iii. 20); enmity to truth (viii. 45) and at heart, hatred of God (xv. 24).

VII. THE MIRACLES. These constitute a special feature of St. John's Gospel and demand the closest attention.

1. They are always called "signs," that is, tokens of something higher than themselves. In the other Gospels they are described as "wonders," expressive of the effect on the beholders, and as "powers," indicative of the conclusion that those who saw them came to as they endeavoured to account for them. But John goes higher still in speaking of them as "signs," that is, symbols, proofs, messages, object lessons of spiritual truths, embodied in the works themselves.

2. There are eight recorded, seven before and one after the Resurrection.

3. Each one should be studied with all possible care for its revelation of some specific manifestation of the glory of Christ (ii. 11).

VIII. OTHER STUDIES. The Gospel is so varied in its material that it is only possible to touch in the briefest way on some of the other topics included. Perhaps the following may be suggestive both on their own account and also of other elements to be found in this remarkable portion of Scripture.

1. The teaching on sin: its nature, aspects and end.

2. The seven conversions recorded: Each with its aspect of Christ's revelation and the corresponding response.

3. Some characteristic and important words like: "Witness," "truth," "judge," "darkness," "light," "glory," "world," "death," "My Word," "in that day." As an illustration of what can be derived from a study of these and similar words we may concentrate on the term "witness," which is found some fifty times. In v. 31-50, there are four witnesses, one human and three Divine (verses 33, 36, 37, 39). Then Christ Himself is spoken of as a witness, and these, with the witness of the Holy Spirit and believers (xv. 26, 27), constitute the sevenfold testimony which is intended to elicit and assure faith.

Other ideas, words and phrases can easily be found like "mani-

fested," "I am," "world," "verily, verily," and the various present participles in the Greek. These characteristic expressions are all the more remarkable because of the comparative absence of other words found frequently elsewhere. Thus "repentance," and "repent," are found in the three Synoptic Gospels, but not once here; and "righteousness" and "righteous" found nineteen times in Matthew, twice in Mark, and eleven in Luke, are only found three times here. On the other hand, the Divine Fatherhood is referred to in Matthew forty-four times; in Mark five times; in Luke twenty times; and in John a hundred and twenty-one times. The proportion in regard to such terms as "world," "truth," "light," and "love," is also noteworthy. Thus in Matthew "world" occurs nine times, in Mark, three; in Luke three; in John seventy-nine. In Matthew "truth" occurs once, in Mark three times; in Luke three times; in John twenty-five. "Light" is found in Matthew seven times; in Mark once; in Luke six; in John twenty-two. And "love," is seen in Matthew seven times; in Mark four times; in Luke six times; and in John thirty-six. In view of the bitter hostility of the Jews, as recorded in this Gospel, these figures are also noteworthy. Matthew mentions the Jew five times; Mark seven; Luke five; and John seventy-one.

4. The sevenfold gifts in the one gift in iii. 16. Christ Himself is said to be God's gift, and He Himself then gives in turn His flesh (vi. 27), His life (x. 28), His example (xiii. 15), the Comforter (xiv. 16), His peace (xiv. 27), His word (xvii. 8), and His glory (xvii. 22).

5. The five manifestations of Christ to the Jews as seen at various times and under various circumstances in chapters i.-xii.

6. The relation of the Gospel and the Epistle. The one intended to lead to faith (xx. 30, 31), and the other to knowledge (1 John v. 13).

As we review these outline Studies of the Gospel according to St. John it is only too clear that the merest fringe of the subject has been touched. Reference has already been made to that great scholar and true-hearted Christian, Dr. Timothy Dwight, who felt that in the Fourth Gospel we have an absolutely trustworthy reflection of the experiences of an immediate follower of Jesus Christ, and he never swerved from the conviction that the mind of the

disciple named John was the creative mind behind this book. One day when discussing the incident of Mary's anointing the feet of our Lord, he pointed with evident satisfaction to the little mark of authenticity found in the third verse of the twelfth chapter which says, "and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." One who was present said that looking round the class with a characteristic twinkle in his eye, he remarked "myths don't smell that way." On another occasion when his class was lingering on that significant verse, "he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life," Dr. Dwight said quietly, "Gentlemen, the Lord's Supper will in time convert the world." He was not thinking of the Sacrament itself but of the steady power of the life and death of Christ as they are received in the disciples and expressed through them.

Some utterances of another scholar, Professor Riggs, of Auburn, New York, may fitly close our consideration.

"Our study of this noble Gospel has come to an end. To that study which makes experience, life the chief interpreter, there can never be an end. It calls us to go on to know the Lord through all the profound realities of communion and obedience which involve the ultimate depths of life. The deeper we go by this way of interpretation the surer shall we be that this is no fabricated portrait of the Master. It is rather the picture of one who saw not merely the scenery of Galilee and Judea, nor simply the external forms of that memorable group now known as Master and Disciples, but whose profoundly religious spirit, touched, illumined, guided by the Spirit of Truth, grasped the eternal significance of Him to whom His life had been given. Is there a subjective element in John? Of course there is, but it is the subjectivism of one whose insight was directed to the inner, eternal meanings of Jesus. Rightly has it been said that John saw Jesus and His truth *sub specie Eternitatis*. Does that make the Gospel less true? Evidence enough there is of its historicity. No other Gospel is more faithful to historical situations; no other Gospel is more keenly alive to psychological presentations. Its portraiture of Jesus, different as is its setting from that of the Synoptics, is thoroughly consistent with theirs. What they exhibit constantly in action and now and then by word is here completely interpreted in that blaze of glory which casts a noon-day clearness upon the person and character of the Messiah."

W. H. GRIFFITH THOMAS.



"International Christian Meeting."

THE proposal to hold an "International Christian Meeting" is familiar to our readers. It emanated from the Scandinavian Lutherans, and was discussed by a British Council. It is expected that the meeting will be held this month in some neutral country, but we should imagine that the British representation will be extremely small in number and insignificant in position. Some of the reasons which make it difficult for British Christians, with a sense of responsibility, to attend the meeting are forcibly set out in the following letter which the Rev. H. J. R. Marston, Rector of Lydford-on-Fosse, Somerset, has addressed to Miss M. E. Ellis, Honorary Secretary of the British Council:—

The Rectory, Lydford-on-Fosse, Somerset.

July 20, 1918.

Miss Marian E. Ellis.

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to thank you for your courtesy in sending me the Report of speeches delivered last March in London, with reference to a proposal to hold an International Christian Meeting next September; as also a Circular Letter from the British Council inviting expressions of opinion thereon.

The doctrine of the Lordship of CHRIST in human affairs forms what may be called the text of the speeches and circular. This doctrine has no necessary connection with the proposal to hold the meeting. The two points may be treated separately. An International Christian Meeting may assemble and achieve nothing, or may achieve very little, towards practical pacification. This would be regrettable, but may be inevitable, owing to conditions over which the promoters have no control.

To assert in the most challenging manner possible that JESUS is Lord of all is both a permanent duty and would at the present time be a source of immense advantage to the cause of human liberty; for it involves consequences fundamental and vital in the operation on all life. I feel, in fact, no doubt that unless His Lordship and Leadership be asserted and acted on, a chaos of blood, fury and misery will probably overwhelm all human things. Allow me, therefore, to offer a few observations on each of the points separately.

An International Christian Meeting would at present labour under inevitable disadvantages.

First : It could not meet in such numbers, with such freedom for debate, or with such calmness of temper, as to be really representative either of International or Christian sentiment and conviction. Most people will feel this to be the case.

Second : It would be impossible to secure such a meeting against the working of secret influences, or at least against the suspicion that secret influences were at work. It will be really impossible to prevent such influences being set to work.

Third : I must confess that such a meeting would imply a sort of betrayal of the men who have died in defence of righteousness, in the very entry into the Council Chamber, on equal terms, with persons who uphold the Prussian War-lords and their accomplices of Austria and Turkey. By the very joining with representatives of leaders who have launched upon the world a war unexampled in its criminal defiance of human law, we should become, to some extent, participators of that crime. Personally I could not consent to hold as it were in solution and abeyance the principles of war enunciated and defended by Bernhardt and Freytag, and discuss ways of pacification as if those principles had never been preached and as if the inevitable consequences of that preaching had never occurred. I could not discuss pacifics in the abstract, while I remember the massacre of the Armenians by Turkey, the ally of Prussia and Austria, or the piratical sinking by Germany of the *Lusitania* and of many hospital ships. And I know that the French Protestant Churches have declined the invitation to the International Christian Meeting on this very ground.

For these reasons I am sorrowfully forced to conclude that the proposed International Christian Meeting would be both useless and actually provocative of more bitterness and misunderstanding. I am accordingly unable to associate myself with those who promote the said meeting.

There are two conditions which, if carried through, might alter my attitude. The first would be that the meeting should pass a solemn decree of excommunication against the German Emperor. The second would be that the meeting should pass a solemn decree of censure against the Papacy for moral complicity in the crimes of the Central Powers, because it has failed to denounce those crimes.

Under these two conditions, many Christian people might approve the meeting, even if they thought it would do but little good. I have, however, only to write down these conditions, to feel that they have no chance of being carried out.

Let me now offer a few observations on the second point.

Most Christians do in general terms avow the Lordship of CHRIST in all human things. They would profess the desire that His Lordship and His Leadership should be acted on in practice. But in practice many Christians hold views about Christianity which prevent them from applying this doctrine to the larger spheres of life. In this way the testimony to it is lopped and mutilated. There are also many persons who ignore the doctrine altogether; many more who are indifferent to it; and many more who are hostile to it. These melancholy facts do but enhance the duty of asserting the doctrine which is incumbent on all who really hold it.

I specially agree with two of the speakers at your Council. We must leave room for the action of the Spirit of GOD. We ought to endeavour to create an atmosphere which shall promote His blessed action.

I cherish no illusions as to the effects of the political proclamation of Peace. That proclamation will not necessarily entail the return of good-will among men; nay, it may be only the signal for an outbreak of fresh sorrows. The only solid ground for hoping for a peace fruitful in good-will and mutual helpfulness consists in the unity of Christians resolved and prepared to resist anything that is incompatible with the principles of the Christian religion in all parts of human life. This is the true outcome of the belief in the Communion of the Saints.

I trust that what I have written at some length will not be irksome reading, but that it may serve in some degree to illuminate the situation which confronts us all with dreary and menacing proportions. The gloom and the threatening is relieved very much by the resolve of Christians to rally to CHRIST'S cause under the shelter and the banner of the Cross.

I beg to remain, yours most faithfully,

(Signed) HERBERT J. R. MARSTON.



An Exposition of Isaiah xxiv—xxvii

IV

SONGS OF THE DAY (CHAPS. XXV. 9—XXVI. 6).

THE Earth which was emptied of those who destroyed it has been filled with light and love and law. Light streams from Mount Zion into all the world ; all hearts love and turn to the light, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob ; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths. Law goes out from Zion, and the word of power from Jerusalem. Judgments are delivered and decisions are made there, the last argument of war is needless. In this mountain is seen Jesus, the Christ ; here in the risen and glorified saints is tangible demonstration of the life that is life indeed.

Shall not Earth break forth into singing ?

For, lo, the winter is past ;
 The rain is over and gone ;
 The flowers appear on the earth ;
 The time of the singing of birds is come,
 And the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land ;
 The fig-tree ripeneth her green figs,
 And the vines are in blossom ;
 They give forth their fragrance.

Songs there shall be. Of one song it is said " In that day shall the song be sung in the land of Judah," but for the other no locality is defined.

And here we must pause to notice an important new element in the prophet's message. Hitherto he has been shewn the wide earth, the peoples and the nations ; and his message has been of it and of them. Lately he has been led to predict that Jehovah will rule the world from Mount Zion and Jerusalem, and that in this mountain the feast for the nations will be spread, and the veil that covers their eyes removed. Now we are to hear of *the land of Judah*, and of the thoughts and aspirations, the confessions and the testimony, of those who live there. In Isaiah's day the land of Judah was still the land of the Jews ; it is therefore evident that we are to understand that among the songs of the renewed earth the song of the Jews will be special and unique.

This is always to be remembered. Our Lord Jesus " said that He was King of the Jews," and in saying this He was neither deceiver

nor deceived. The message to His mother straight from the eternal throne declared that "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." The aged Simeon foretold that He should be not only "a light for revelation to the Gentiles," but in due time also "the glory of God's people Israel." And St. Paul was commissioned to endorse the predictions of the earlier prophets, and to tell that the hardening of heart of Israel was not for ever, but that in due time "there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; and this is the covenant of God to them when He shall take away their sins." The day is yet to come when Jerusalem shall see Jesus, and shall acclaim Him Blessed; and when He, and no other, in the Father's appointed time, shall restore the Kingdom to Israel. And so St. Peter, commissioned by Jesus Christ Himself, taught and controlled by the Holy Spirit of truth, preached that the times of refreshing for Israel are to be when Jesus Christ comes from heaven, and that those will be the times of the restoration of all things, of which God has continually spoken by the prophets. When "the fulness of the Gentiles" comes in, Israel shall be saved; when "the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled," Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the nations no more.¹ So Jerusalem shall become the throne of Jehovah, and Israel shall be the people of Jehovah, and in the land of Judah shall be sung a special song of Jehovah.

But now we return to Earth's songs in her day of restoration. The Song of Those who Waited.

*And it shall be said in that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him,
And He will save us.
This is Jehovah; we have waited for Him,
We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.*

Waiting has ever been characteristic of God's people. Abraham and Isaac were taught to wait. Nearly all Jacob's troubles came from his natural inability to wait. Yet even he learns this lesson at the end, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Jehovah." Israel had to wait long for the Christ. Through nearly two millenniums His Church has waited for Him to come again from Heaven. Our Lord Jesus summed up Christian experience as "enduring to the end."

¹ Luke i. 32, 33, ii. 29-32; Rom. xi. 25-27; Matt. xxiii. 38, 39; Acts i. 6, 7, iii. 17-21; Rom. xi. 25; Luke xxi. 24.

We walk by faith, and in hope, and not by sight. But in that day it shall be said, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us ; this is Jehovah, the Lord of the Promise, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

It is to be noticed exactly what the salvation is which is here anticipated, and upon the enjoyment of which these glad singers are about to enter. It is not their personal salvation as individuals, for at the time of which the prophet speaks this has already been perfected. Already they have received their adoption, death for them has been swallowed up for ever. The long-expected Saviour had already come for them from heaven, and their bodies of humiliation had been already conformed to the Body of His glory.¹ But even before this happy consummation, and much more so after its blissful experience, they will have become conformed to the heart and mind of their Lord. Long ago they learned to expect with Him the time when all things shall be put under His feet. The primeval promise, they knew, covered more than the salvation of an elect people ; it had led them to look for the bruising of the serpent's head, for the deliverance of the human race, for the triumph of good over evil, for the vindication of the ways of God in the world ; and for this they had waited, and now the long-looked-for day had dawned ; for this their Lord had brought them back to their old home, the scene of their former testimony and tears, and brought them to it with a deepened sense of the unity of the whole human family ; Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us, our whole race and ancient home ; this is Jehovah, the promised *Saviour of the World* ; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation, as He spreads His feast for all nations, strips the covering from their eyes, wipes tears from off all faces, makes the whole world His people and His home.

For in this mountain will the Hand of Jehovah rest ; and Moab shall be trodden down in his place, even as straw is trodden down in the water of the dunghill. And He shall spread forth His hands in the midst thereof, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim ; and He ² will lay low his pride together with the craft of his hands. And the high fortress of thy walls hath He brought down, laid low, and brought to the ground, even to the dust.

¹ Rom. viii. 23 ; Phil. iii. 20, 21.

² Following the A.V., for it seems better to regard Jehovah Himself as the swimmer. The Amer. Standard Version has "*but Jehovah,*" taking the preceding clause to refer to Moab ; but A.V. and English R.V. "*and He shall.*"

The Kingdom will not come until the strong Hand of Jehovah has been laid upon the world. It shall rear in Mount Zion, notably at its first exhibition of power,¹ and thereafter as its central home. There will be a treading down as straw is trodden in the dunghill, a scattering as water yields to the powerful strokes of the swimmer, a laying low of pride and of contrivance. The high-raised fortress towers shake and fall, they lower their proud crests, they come ruining to the ground, they lie prostrate in the dust.

Moab shall be trodden down. In such a context as this it seems necessary to take this name as symbolical. It is clear that in some at least of the preceding prophecies, notably the burden of Babylon and the burden of Tyre, which precede and close the series, the prophet's words pass from the literal town or kingdom to that which it symbolizes. In those burdens however the literal and the symbolic, although connected, are without difficulty separated; but in the present prophecy, besides the mention of Zion and Jerusalem and the land of Judah, there is no specific local reference. The prophet's words throughout refer to the world at large, with the sole exception of this mention of Moab, and of Egypt and Assyria at its close. We shall see later that Egypt and Assyria in that connection seem to be representative, and in the present case we think that Moab must be taken in the same sense.

Three things are asserted of Moab here, his pride, the craft of his hands, and the high fortress of his walls. Moab stands for the "pride" of man, which essays to do without God. "The craft of his hands" marks man's extraordinary development of mechanical contrivance, and skilful use of the powers of nature. "The high fortress of his walls" denotes the towering social or political structures which he raises. Moab is fitly chosen to be the symbol of these things, for Isaiah writes of Moab in his day, "We have heard of the pride of Moab, that he is very proud; even of his arrogancy, and his pride, and his wrath." And at a later date the prophet Zephaniah marks "their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of Jehovah of hosts"; and Jeremiah quotes and amplifies the words of his great predecessor, "We have heard of the pride of Moab, that he is very proud; his loftiness, and his pride, and his arrogancy, and the haughtiness of his heart;"²

¹ xxix. 1-8; Ezek. xxxviii.; Zech. xiv.; Matt. xxiv. 15-30.

² xvi. 6; Zeph. ii. 8, 10; Jer. xlvi. 29, 30.

while Mesba himself betrays the national character by the inscription on his famous stone.

So then, before the Kingdom comes, "Jehovah hath purposed to stain the pride of all glory, to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth." "The lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day."¹

The Song in the Land of Judah.

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah ;

We have a strong city ;

Salvation will He appoint for walls and bulwarks.

Open ye the gates,

That the righteous nation which keepeth faith may enter in.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on Thee ;

Because he trusteth in Thee.

Trust ye in Jehovah for ever ;

For in Jehovah, even Jehovah, is an everlasting rock.

At length Israel is at peace, firm on the everlasting Rock. For long years they stumbled at Jesus Christ, the Stone of Stumbling, but now they know that he that rests on It, he that believes on Him, shall not be ashamed. They went about to establish their own righteousness, now they take refuge in a city, whose walls are free salvation. Those who once would close the door of faith to the Gentiles now become the messengers of this Gospel to the world, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in Jehovah for ever, for in Jehovah, even Jehovah is an everlasting rock."

For Jehovah hath brought down them that dwell on high, the lofty city ; He layeth it low, He layeth it low, even to the ground ; He bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down ; even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.

The Jews will not have escaped the sin of the world. They will have taken their full share in the building of the lofty city, the pride, the craft of hand, the high fortress-walls of human endeavour divorced from God. And they will have seen its overthrow, laid low, to the ground, to the dust ; and the poor and needy, who knew no confidence but God, erect upon its ruins.

A PRAYING WORLD (CHAP. XXVI. 7-16.)

The Apostle Peter has told us that the prophets, when borne by the Holy Spirit, and becoming the mouthpiece of that Spirit as He

¹ xxiii. 9 ; ii. 11.

bore His witness to the sufferings and glories of the Christ, were not so carried away or so possessed by Him as to lose their own consciousness. While the stream of enlightenment and of prediction flowed through them, not by their will, but by the will of God, all the time their mind was awake and their thought busy. They prophesied, when the Hand of the Lord was upon them, and at the same time they searched and inquired into the message they were uttering.

The present prophecy affords illustrations of this fact. The majestic stream of prediction flows from the prophet's lips, but he is awake and intent, conscious and feeling. Does the Spirit testify that the remnant in every land shall lift up their voice and shout, and from all places overseas applaud the majesty of Jehovah? The man of God is quick to point the lesson, and call the world of his own day to glorify Jehovah.¹ Does the Spirit let him hear already the songs of that day when there shall be glory to the righteous? This does not annul the pain of the present; "But I said, I pine away, I pine away, woe is me! the treacherous dealers deal treacherously."²

He tells in rapt vision of the overthrow of the lofty, and the glory of Jehovah's Kingdom, but he is ready at once with his own worshipping praise, "O Jehovah, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy Name."³

And now, when through the prophet has flowed the melody of that song in the land of Judah, he adds his own Amen.

*The way of the righteous is a right way; the path of the righteous Thou directest aright.*⁴

The righteous way is bound in the end to be the right way; and the reason for this is found in the fact of the over-ruling Hand of Jehovah. This is the thought of the prophet's Amen, and it answers to the very heart of the song of Judah. Our strong city, so those singers sang, is not built by craft of hands; but it is ramparted with the salvation of Jehovah. The stranger to God can find no admission, but its gates stand open wide to the righteous nation which keeps faith with Him. Those who are heart-loyal to His precepts, who remain sure that He is, and that He is the rewarder of those who obey Him, who through all *trust Him*, committing their whole

¹ xxiv. 15.

² *Ib.* 16.

³ xxv. 1.

⁴ We here follow the marginal rendering of the R.V., which gives a clear and definite sense. The word translated "righteous" is in the original the same as in v. 2.

way to Him, these are kept in perfect peace, these rest firm on a Rock of Ages. Even so, says the prophet, so is it, so shall it be, the way of the righteous is a right way; the path of the righteous Thou directest aright.

Then, in the same strain of reverent acquiescence in the revealed purposes of God, the prophet continues, speaking still to the great Revealer, into whose secrets He is being admitted.¹

Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for Thee; to Thy Name, even to Thy Memorial Name, is the desire of our soul.

The prophet sees that the pride of man must first be laid low, and his lofty city brought to the ground, to the very dust, before these songs are sung in a new world; and he sees that it is Jehovah Himself who must do this thing. He acquiesces in the revelation; he confesses that this is the immemorial witness and faith of the prophets. They looked for the personal intervention of Jehovah, "we have waited for Thee"; they expected His manifestation in judgments, "in the way of Thy judgments have we waited for Thee." "To Thy Name, even to Thy Memorial Name, is the desire of our soul." The memorial name is JEHOVAH. From the very beginning this Name seems to have been associated with the Promise of the Woman's Seed.² From earliest days men called upon this Name and waited for the salvation of Jehovah.³ It was in this Name that judgments fell upon Egypt, and Israel came out from bondage⁴; on this Name they were taught for evermore to hope; to this Name through all the centuries all waiting souls had turned.⁵

Not only traditional faith, however, but sad experience also, had taught the prophet to hope only for Jehovah, and in the way of His judgments to wait for His salvation. In a long ministry he had found out how hardly the inhabitants of the world learned righteousness, and how little the prophetic messages availed to turn a nation's heart to God. The messages of grace, the example of a God-fearing king, produced no general reform. Judgments alone seemed able to awake the slumbering conscience of the nation, and too often even the uplifting of Jehovah's hand to smite passed still unheeded.⁶ So the prophet returns to his hope in the coming of Jehovah.

¹ Amos iii. 7.

² Gen. iv. 1. Did Eve indeed say, "I have gotten a man, even Jehovah?"

³ Ib. iv. 26, xlix. 18.

⁴ Exod. iii. 13-22, vi. 2-8.

⁵ Ps. xxx. 4, xcvi. 12; cii. 12; cxxxv. 13; Isa. xxv. 9; Hos. xii. 5.

⁶ xxii. 11.

With my soul have I desired Thee in the night, for it is still night in the prophet's world; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee earnestly; for when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of Jehovah. Jehovah, Thy hand is lifted up, yet they see not; but they shall see Thy zeal for the people, and be put to shame; yea, fire shall devour Thine adversaries. Jehovah, Thou wilt ordain peace for us; for Thou hast also wrought all our works for us.

The experience of Isaiah, thus recorded, is prophetic. It is the experience of all ages to the end. "The people" of Jehovah and "the inhabitants of the world" are ever contrasted. There is a perpetual conflict of ideals between them. The one part keep faith with God, the other part will not acknowledge His law, and learn righteousness in the fear of Him. The Gospel call is sounded; political, economic, social conditions are made favourable; religious aids are provided; but by a strange perversity men will not behold the majesty of Jehovah. Jehovah lifts His hand again and again to show that the way of righteousness is the right way, and that wrongdoing is ruin, but still they cannot see. "The people" are still peculiar in the world, the mass remain in opposition. Where shall we turn but where Isaiah, moved by the Spirit, turned for hope? Jehovah, Thou wilt ordain peace for us; for Thou hast also wrought all our works for us. Jehovah Jesus, throned above! Who hast procured for us salvation, perseverance, resurrection, glory; Thou hast laid upon us to labour for righteousness, and we find not peace but a sword; but Thou wilt ordain peace for us, for Thou hast wrought all our works for us, and this work too shalt be Thine.

For hearken, the prophet is speaking again, but not now in his own person and of his own time. The Spirit is speaking through him once more with voices of the days to come. It is the heart-cry of a world that has learned righteousness at last, and at length has come to walk humbly with its God. Jehovah has ordained peace for His people, Jehovah has done for them the work they could not do; lo! the inhabitants of the world have themselves become the people of Jehovah, listen to the world at prayer.

O Jehovah our God, other lords besides Thee have had dominion over us; but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy Name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all remembrance of them to perish.¹

¹ Cf. ii. 18-22; viii. 19, 20; Jer. x. 11; xvi. 19, 20; I Cor. viii. 5.

Jehovah was known as the God of Israel, now He is acknowledged as God of all the earth. In Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, in the land of Judah and amongst His ancient people, He has been made known in the sight of all the nations, and they are acknowledging it now :—

*Thou hast increased The Nation, O Jehovah, Thou hast increased The Nation ; Thou art glorified ; Thou hast enlarged all the borders of the land.*¹

Not that Israel had more righteousness than other nations, or possessed any peculiar instinct for monotheism or natural understanding of spiritual truth more than other races ; but they have had their special visitation ; and they have become broken in spirit ;

Jehovah, in trouble have they visited Thee ; they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them.

Gentile and Jew are lifting hands of prayer, and so

*“ the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”*

W. S. MOULE.

¹ Or, *Thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.*

(To be continued.)



The Irish Church Missions.

PRINCIPLES AND WORK.

THE Irish Church Missions stand forth as having for their primary objects the Evangelization of the Roman Catholics. And through recent Amalgamations the I.C.M. is now the one recognized agency of the Church of Ireland doing that important work.

The Irish Church Colportage Missions, sending its travelling colporteurs to all parts of Roman Catholic Ireland; the Irish Society, teaching the people in Irish-speaking districts to read the Word of God in their own loved tongue—the Scripture Readers' Society with its godly readers working in the populous parishes in the North; all these are now one, incorporated in the greater Irish Church Missions. They have flowed as tributaries into the one greater stream—they seek one common object, and the result is unity in direction, fellowship in work, and economy in administration.

The primary object remains—the Evangelization of Roman Catholics—but while this is so, the United Society readily takes part when needed in efforts among Protestants. Such is, to a large extent, the work of many Scripture Readers; and such is much of the work amongst British soldiers.

The principles of the I.C.M. are to-day what they were when the Society was founded more than sixty-nine years ago.

They may be summed up thus:

- (1) Spiritual workers for spiritual work.
- (2) Unwavering faith in the authority and power of the Word of God.
- (3) The preaching of Jesus Christ as the one only priest, sacrifice and Saviour.
- (4) The faithful pointing out of the differences between the teachings of Rome and the truth of God.
- (5) Intense love for every man, woman and child for whom Christ died.
- (6) Entire dependence on the Holy Spirit, by whose power alone those dead in sin can be made alive unto God.

Holding such principles the I.C.M. sends forth her missionaries, and in the School House and Mission Church, in the country market and Dublin thoroughfare, in tenement house and on cottage doorstep, in medical mission, and in soldiers' hut, in Sabbath School and Bible Class, in Children's Home and out-door school, they are giving the message and making known salvation full and free through Jesus only.

There are many signs of God's blessing on the work, and for these we thank God, and take courage.

(1) The increasing circulation of God's Word. The sale of Scriptures during the past year by the Colporteur Staff has been more than double that in the previous year, nearly all the purchasers being Roman Catholics. In one thoroughly R.C. district on the west coast two men in three days sold 200 Scriptures.

(2) The certainty that many still bearing the Roman name are coming to simple faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour. We think of one often attending gospel meetings in a slum district in Dublin. She never became a Protestant. Recently she died; but visited on her death-bed she gave every evidence that she was on the rock.

Or we think of a patient at the Limerick Dispensary. She had always worn the medal of "The little Flower." One day it was missing. The

doctor noticed this and spoke of it. "I used to think" she replied, "that wearing the medal and praying to the 'Little Flower' would be the means of my salvation. I don't think so now. Now I know that salvation is through trust in Jesus alone. I learned that in this waiting-room."

(3) Public Reception of adult converts. Many of those recently received are most interesting and the genuine Christianity seen in their lives most cheering.

Amongst these we think of a man who two years ago as an armed *Sinn Feiner* fought upon the streets of Dublin against the Empire. A missionary visitor shortly afterwards came upon him. The man's talk was of the rebellion. His walls were decorated with the pictures of Sinn Fein leaders who had been shot for treason. The missionary spoke of Jesus Christ. Again and again he went with the same message. Soon the man accepted an invitation to come to the Adult Sunday School. He joined a class, learned God's Word, attended Gospel Meetings, and *found Christ*. That man is regular at worship, comes to the Lord's Table, and stands by mission workers when they preach the Gospel in the open air. His *Sinn Feinism* is gone. Upon his wall the picture of King William of Orange takes the place of the Dublin rebels.

(4) The good work going on amongst the children in Mission Schools and Homes is another, and a constant cause of encouragement. In one home the working of God's Spirit has been of late especially manifest in early decisions for Christ. A little child not five years old in an out-door school has become quite of her own accord a little missionary. For she taught a little R.C. boy living next door to her John xiv. 6; Matthew xi. 28-30; Mark x. 13, 14, and others of the well-known and much-blessed 100 texts.

(5) One of the most encouraging things is the coming across in many and various places of abiding fruits of work faithfully done in years gone by. Some such fruits you find in the Army—about 500 names of home boys are upon the Roll of Honour on the door of the Dublin Mission Church, as serving in the Navy or Army. Thirty-eight are known to have died in their country's service.

The loyalty of many is entirely owing to the scriptural training. We have never yet heard of a roll of honour on the door of any R.C. chapel in Ireland.

But it is better still to think of the many from the schools now good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Amongst them we recall the good Bishop of a Colonial Diocese, the Rectors of parishes in England and Ireland, a Missionary in South Africa, the matron of a Children's Home, and many others, some serving God on earth and some in the glory.

The fruits of work amongst adults are no less cheering. We meet a bright earnest Christian in a Women's Bible Class in London. She was found by her Saviour through the Dublin open-air meetings. We see a brave soldier in a Canadian contingent, who when the war broke out was studying for the ministry at Emmanuel College, Saskatoon. His eyes were opened to the truth, and he was led into the light through the I.C.M. some years ago. We find an English Vicar thanking God for the blessing the I.C.M. had been to his own soul, and we think of the visit years back of two simple lay evangelists to the country parish in Ireland where that Vicar was then Curate. They went with their simple message to the Roman Catholics—God blessed that message to another heart. A minister's life and ministry became transformed. We remember the bright Christian face, behind which there is a no less bright Christian life, of a man in Lancashire, once the cruel persecutor of his daughter because she went to the Limerick Medical Mission, now the head of a whole family who have renounced Rome, and are living for Christ. Not least we thank God for the many soldiers at the Front and elsewhere, who when in

camp or barracks in Ireland came across some I.C.M. workers amongst the troops and were led to enlist in the Army of Christ.

The transforming power of the Gospel is seldom more clearly seen than it was a few days ago in Dublin, when at a Conference of Mission Workers three earnest clergymen spoke in succession one after another. They were heart to heart messages, deeply spiritual. Those three men have been Romanists. To-day they are absolutely loyal, and they not only know, but preach the Gospel.

Statesmen have failed to find a panacea for the woes of Ireland. But where politics have failed the Gospel has succeeded. The condition of the country calls loudly for the application of the true remedy to-day. The prayerful and generous co-operation of all who would win their fellow-countrymen from superstition and bondage to the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free is earnestly sought. To win Ireland for Christ : we know no higher form of National Service than this.

ARTHUR E. HUGHES.



The Devotional Reading of Holy Scripture.

AD CLERUM.

IN venturing to address this article to the Clergy may I say at the outset that *mutatis mutandis* the subject of the Devotional Reading of Holy Scripture is generally applicable to all Christians, and specially to Diocesan and Parochial Readers, Bible Class and Sunday School Teachers—to all in fact who are called upon to teach. It closely touches the spiritual life not only of the Clergy, but also of all who are called “unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. iv. 12, R.V.). But while such may find the subject not inappropriate I propose to address myself specially to the Clergy.

At the most solemn moment in their lives those about to be ordained are asked “Will you be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, and such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?” to which the answer was given, “I will endeavour myself so to do, the Lord being my helper.” The Cleric is therefore pledged to be a student of God’s Word.

If we may enlarge St. Paul’s charge to Timothy, “Give heed to reading” (1 Tim. iv. 13), applying it to reading and study in general, it goes without saying that the Clergy must be readers and students of current literature. We ought to know what our people are reading and thinking about, if we are to be any help to them amid the perplexities of modern thought. It would, of course, be a mistake to be always obtruding our knowledge of these things upon our people; but I venture to think that we do need the knowledge for ourselves, that we may be able when occasion seems to call for it to bring forth out of our treasures things “new” as well as “old.” It would also, I conceive, be a mistake to be always preaching (as some appear to do) on literary, scientific or social topics, for the special business of the Clergy is to “preach the Gospel”; but on the other hand I think we lose much by ignoring what is occupying men’s minds or what is occurring in the daily life of the nation or parish. For example, I heard of a preacher who, delivering more than one sermon each week, in the first two or more years of the present war,

only made one or two passing illusions to it, leaving the impression on some of his hearers that the sermons were prepared long before the war! If we act in this way we incur the charge of "other worldliness" so often brought against the preachers of the Gospel. Our Lord surely set us an example here, as when he referred to the accident at Siloam and Pilate's massacre of the Galileans, and to local incidents which appear to underlie some at least of His parables. We cannot go far wrong if we follow His guidance in this as in other respects.

Nor can we neglect the special study of the Bible and of books which throw light upon it, in connexion with the particular passage on which we propose to preach, while we do well to avoid what has been called "Text Theology"—that is, practically taking a text as a "motto," without any or little regard to its context and imparting to it some imaginary interpretation of our own. This surely would be a violation of the canon, "No prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation" (2 Peter i. 20). We are called upon to teach as well as to exhort—to build up our people "in their most holy faith" and in the life of godliness. We are entrusted with a Divine message, as God's Ambassadors, and we must study the records which God has given us. One of the charges brought against the preaching of the present day is that it is not expository. To avoid this charge, we must "search the Scriptures." While it is true that a critical study of the Bible is needful in these days, it is well for us to avoid approaching the Holy Scriptures in such a manner as to forget that in them "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). We must strive to live up to the high standard set forth by Shakespeare, when he puts into the mouth of Prince John the words:—¹

"Who hath not heard it spoken,
How deep you were within the books of God?
To us, the speaker in his parliament;
To us, the imagin'd voice of Heaven itself;
The very opener and intelligencer,
Between the grace, the sanctities of heaven,
And our dull workings."

But apart altogether from the study of the Bible for sermons, it is essential that we should cultivate the habit of daily reading the Scriptures devotionally for our own soul's growth. It is so easy—

¹ Shakespeare, *Henry IVth*, Part II, Scene II.

who has not realized it?—to allow the desire of helping others to interfere with our own spiritual needs. If the purpose of Holy Scripture be “That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work,” then—if we are in a special sense “men of God”—a daily partaking of the heavenly food of the Scriptures is absolutely necessary; our own minds must be thoroughly steeped in God’s Word, and we must know its precious truths first as God’s message to ourselves—for the sustentation of our own spiritual lives—before we can hope effectually to dispense them to others. We must receive the Bread of Life ourselves before we can distribute it to others.

It is, of course, very easy to say this but in the face of all the difficulties of our positions to-day, it is not so easy to carry out.

Shall we recall some of the OBSTACLES in the way of our devotional study of the Holy Scriptures—which, after all, are reasons why we should definitely set apart some time each day for this purpose?

Apart altogether from the war and its constant and almost overwhelming calls upon the Clergy, there are the endless claims upon our time—the multiplied services, the letters to reply to, the committees to attend, the accounts to keep (where Laymen cannot be secured to undertake them), the preparation of the Parish Magazine (which occupies so many hours each month)—many of which our forefathers were free from. These have to be heeded, and they break into the daily routine, and in some cases at least tend to put personal prayer and the devotional study of the Bible in a secondary place. Much of our time is taken up with what one has called “hurdle making,” which often prevents our feeding our own souls as we should.

The late Canon Wynne writes:—

“Besides our general study of Scripture as students, with the help of commentaries and critical apparatus; besides our study as Teachers, preparing for our expositions, and storing our minds with the treasures we are to impart to others, we should have our little sacred seasons when, as weak and ignorant children, we come ourselves to the Father of Lights to hear what He has to say to our souls.”¹

The danger of over-familiarity with the Bible has to be guarded against, as the late Dean Vaughan pointed out, in words which the Clergy may apply with special force to themselves:—

“The evil of over-acquaintance must be grappled with. . . . We must seize the fugitive word as it escapes from us; we must grasp it, we must hold,

¹Wynne, *Joy of the Ministry*, p. 71.

we must question it and not let it go except it answer us. We must say, What art thou to me? Speak not to the world, but speak to me. What dost thou say to me from my Maker? and what must I do in consequence of thee? Tell me anything—ever so little, ever so obvious—only tell it to me by myself, none else hearing, none else observing.”¹

Then is there another danger arising from being so immersed in the mere critical study of the Bible almost to the point of forgetting that it is the inspired Word of God. Whatever our views on inspiration may be, at least they place the Bible in a supreme position. The devotional reading of Holy Scripture cannot but be a corrective, and will help to check this danger. We must feel its living power as it speaks to our own souls; and this it does most effectively when we read it in the secrecy of our own chamber or on our knees.

But it may be asked, how is this devotional reading of the Bible to be accomplished? How are we to find time for it, and what method should we employ?

The late Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, in addressing his Ordination candidates on the “Vow of Diligence in the study of Holy Scripture,” said:—

“To a life of prayer must be added a deep, constant study of God’s Word for our own spiritual growth. It is not a superficial reading of it for the sake of others which will do. If we limit ourselves to this, we shall but defeat our own purpose; we shall grow shallow, self-repeating and unreal. Our own souls must be continually bathed in those living streams if we would keep them apt and ready for heavenly visitations. Thus only will our ministry have that breadth and compass, and our doctrine (the) just harmony of several truths in their due proportions and relations. . . . No substitute will do here. The very best books are separated by an impassable gulf from the book of God. It is only by daily ‘reading and weighing of the Scriptures’ under the ‘heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost that we can wax riper and stronger in our ministry’; it is only by studying God’s Word for ourselves, and not merely to teach out of it, that our faculties for teaching can be in any measure perfected. On the great deep of Holy Scripture we float away from our prejudices and preconceptions and, afar from the creeping mists and rocky barriers of the narrowing coast, and alone with God, can see in open vision the vastness of all His loving purposes. They who haunt these mighty tides see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.”²

In these striking words the Bishop sets forth the need for and the blessedness of the devotional reading of God’s Word: they appeal to us with all the authority and power of one who was a “Master in Israel.”

¹ Vaughan, *The Book and the Life*.

² Wilberforce, *Ordination Addresses*.

But how are we to carry out these recommendations? I suggest a few ways, mostly gathered from those who are qualified to advise on this subject.

Dr. Girdlestone writes, "Our first duty is to meditate," and "meditation is a matter of habit"¹—it needs to be cultivated. For this we must find time. The rush and stress of clerical life—already referred to—demand that we should have opportunities for quiet thought. Can we not find this necessary time by rising a little earlier than we have been accustomed to? This is what some of the greatest saints have done; at all events, if we would walk in their footsteps we ought to set apart some time each day for this purpose, apart altogether from that devoted to sermon preparation or critical study.

Another suggestion of Dr. Girdlestone is that we should turn Scripture into Prayer and Praise; not only the definite Prayers and Praises—of which there are so many in the Bible—but every Promise and Precept. "Every Precept," he says, "may be turned into prayer and every Promise into praise." We may find something in almost "every passage which comes before us both to pray over and to thank God over."² I may instance Bishop Andrewes' "Devotions"—in which nearly all the prayers are in the language of Scripture—as a striking example of how to do this.

Then, if the Scripture is to be to us "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path," we must apply its statements to our own daily lives, as well as to the lives of our people. In the charge at the Ordination of priests the candidates are bidden to "consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures and in framing the manners both of yourselves and of them that specially pertain unto you, according to the rule of the same Scriptures: and for this self-same cause, how ye ought to forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies." There is nothing so helpful to the cultivation of this unworldly life as the habitual devotional reading of Holy Scripture.

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce remarks, in his addresses to his Ordination candidates, in the chapter on "Being Ensamples to the Flock," that "The secret influences of a holy life steal upon them as the early dews of morning or the fragrance of incense coming they

¹ Girdlestone, *How to read the English Bible*, ch. 7.

² *Ibid.*

know not whence, and seizing upon the open sense before it has time to close itself against them." He goes on to say that those who would be teachers of others have "no privacy. Their life is ever teaching one way or the other, far more eloquently than their direct words or formal exhortations." He quotes George Herbert's words, that "the virtuous life of a Clergyman is the most powerful eloquence to persuade all that see it to reverence and love, and, at least, to desire to live like him."¹ We can only live this virtuous life as our souls feed at the fountain-head of God's truth, as we read the Holy Scriptures devotionally and apply its principles to our own lives.

The writers of the Bible set us an example of personally heeding the messages they are bidden to communicate to others. Not only do they charge their readers "not to be barren nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter i. 8); not only do they urge them to "long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (1 Peter ii. 2); not only did they charge the Christian Minister to "Hold fast the faithful word," but they themselves seem to have felt the need of a personal feeding upon that Word. We see this especially in the Psalms. I cull the following from Psalm cxix. as illustrations of this.

"Thy word have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against Thee" (ver. 11).

"I will delight myself in Thy statutes" (ver. 16).

"O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (ver. 97).

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste. Yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth" (ver. 103).

The whole psalm is indeed an illustration of the truth that a personal feeding upon the Word of Life is necessary for all who are the leaders of others be they men and women or children. If we need any stimulus to the devotional reading of the Scriptures we surely have it here.

I will only add the suggestion that it would be well if we select for our devotional reading one of the calendar lessons for the day. This will be easier and probably more profitable, than having to select some other passage. Moreover, it may lead to the charge being better observed, that "All Priests and Deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, not being let by sickness, or some other urgent cause."

¹ Wilberforce, *Ordination Addresses*.

To conclude, let me say that it is only as we know the value of the Holy Scriptures for ourselves that we shall be able to make them appreciated by our people. If we would avoid the charge—

“The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,”

let us see to it that we know from personal experience the blessedness given utterance to by the Psalmist in the Shepherd Psalm (xxiii. 2)—“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ; He leadeth me beside the still waters.” Thus only can we escape the self-condemnation of the writer of the Song of Solomon—“They made me keeper of the vineyards : but mine own vineyard have I not kept ” (Cant. i. 6).

ROBERT R. RESKER.



Reviews of Books.

DR. PLUMMER'S THESSALONIANS.

A COMMENTARY ON ST. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS. By Alfred Plummer M.A., D.D. London: *Robert Scott*. 4s. 6d. net.

A new and scholarly commentary on 1 Thessalonians is sure of a welcome. Not that Dr. Plummer's labours will supersede the work of others in the same field; but it is an invaluable supplement. By clearness of the notes, by spiritual insight, and by copious references, an aid is given to the study of this epistle which will be useful to all. The student who has access to a good library is directed not only to the great standard authorities, but to an immense amount of good work which lies buried in the almost forgotten pages of periodical publications. Others are assured that no position is maintained without ample thought, while the opinions of differing commentators are plainly stated. In a book which demands a reader's acquaintance with Greek, it seems a pity to print the translation of the A.V. It is no disparagement of that rendering to say that the study of the Greek text is better. Without this the author's masterly paraphrase of St. Paul's language cannot be appreciated. The example of his own commentary on St. Matthew might well have been followed. This gives neither; but if either is to be provided, it should surely be the Greek. But so small a matter does not seriously detract from the true merit of an able and suggestive exposition of the earliest of the Pauline epistles.

"THE SEPTUAGINT FALLACY."

THE SEPTUAGINT FALLACY: AN INDICTMENT OF MODERN CRITICISM. By the Rev. W. I. Phillips, M.A. With a Foreword by Prebendary Denison. London: *Robert Scott*. 3s. 6d. net.

Conservative criticism owes Mr. Phillips a debt of gratitude for this little book, the value of which is out of all proportion to its size. Mr. Denison's vigorous attack on German criticism, too, is both clever and "cutting." At the outset we are told that the book has been written for the confirmation of those Church people "who believe *ex animo* in the great standing miracle of an inspiration worthy the name, and taken in its technical sense." The author bravely but ably challenges Dr. Swete's dictum that "In the LXX (the student) has before him a version of an early text which has often differed materially from the text of the pointed Hebrew Bible and of all existing Hebrew texts," and he maintains that these variations are actually "nothing but the mistakes and blunders of a very bad translation of the one and only original Hebrew text ('one and only' because it is not proven and perhaps is quite unprovable that any other text ever existed)."

Taking Dr. Swete's "Introduction" he shows that the LXX is—in Dr. Kirkpatrick's words—"a very heterogeneous bit of work," and we certainly think that he makes good his case. He discusses the verdict of history concerning the LXX briefly but forcefully, shows that the alleged importance of the LXX is quite a modern notion on which recent destructive criticism is really built, and defends the Massoretic text by arguments from which we believe there is no escape. He quotes a "present-day Jew" who says that orthodox Jews "believe that the stories in the Old Covenant book from the very first letter in Genesis to the last in Malachi, without any exception, are real truth, real history of facts that happened just as they are described," and who declares that "it is impossible to admit the slightest difference

between the Hebrew text of to-day and that of twenty-four centuries ago." There is a needed warning against the numerous small text-books which profess to give "the assured results of criticism," and Mr. Phillips instances Adney and Bennett's manual in Jack's *People's Books* series, which we thought particularly mischievous. Our only regret is that the price may prejudice the sale of Mr. Phillips' book, although it is well worth the money to the Bible student.

S. R. CAMBIE.

TWO WAR BOOKS.

WITH OUR HEROES IN KHAKE. By the Rev. Edward Sellers. London: R.T.S. 3s. 6d.

This is one of the most fascinating war books we have seen. It is in a sense a continuation of Mr. Sellers' former work, *With our Fighting Men*, which dealt mainly with the work of the Chaplains, while the present book gives "greater prominence to the experience and work of the Christian men in the ranks and brings the story down to the summer of 1917." Many of the stories so graphically told in these pages are an inspiration to read, and from first to last there is not a dull page or paragraph. It is an encouragement to those who are praying and striving to secure unity among Christian people to read that "ecclesiastical labels disappear at the Front," and to hear of a Communion Service which was conducted by a minister of the United Free Church of Scotland and at which the elements were distributed by a minister of the Established Church of Scotland and a clergyman of the Church of England. Of course it goes without saying that many of the incidents recorded are pathetic in the extreme, and the man or woman who could read this book from cover to cover without being moved must be made of unsympathetic materials. Naturally there is a good deal said about the Y.M.C.A. and other organizations which are doing all they can for England's sons, and it is not surprising to learn that the work of the Y.M.C.A. alone is costing upwards of £600 a day. If there be anywhere a doubting Thomas who wonders if such an expenditure is really worth while, let him read this splendid record of self-sacrificing labour on the part of those who have gone out to do "their bit" for the heroes in khaki.

THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITAL AT THE FRENCH ABBEY OF ROYAUMONT.
By Antonio De Navarro. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.

Mr. De Navarro (who if we mistake not is the husband of Miss Mary Anderson, the gifted actress who left the stage on her marriage, now twenty-five years ago) has done two things in this attractively got up volume. He has in the first place compiled a history of the Abbey of Royaumont which was founded, as the result of the dying wish of his father, by the Crusader Louis IX in 1228. Although the dying monarch wished it to be the home of the Order of St. Victor, his executors established the Cistercian Order in the buildings which the pious Louis and his brothers assisted to erect with their own hands. Some of the beautiful buildings remain, though the great Abbey Church was demolished by order of the Commune in 1791. The history of the intervening years—years both of prosperity and adversity—is graphically told, and the buildings are described as well as illustrated.

Then Mr. De Navarro tells us how his work in connection with the Red Cross brought him into touch with the hospital of 400 beds which has been housed in these historic buildings almost from the beginning of the war. Not the least interesting part of the book is this in which he tells the story of the establishment of the Scottish Women's Hospital and describes the working

of the only hospital in France run entirely by women. It is a story of difficulties bravely faced and of loving service rendered by devoted women whose enterprise well deserves to be recorded.

BIBLE READINGS.

IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST. By Bertha Fennell. London : *Marshall Brothers, Ltd.* 1s. 6d. net.

Another volume of Miss Fennell's charming and deeply spiritual Bible Readings. There are twelve in all, and each is marked by freshness and originality. The writer has evidently no small knowledge of scientific facts, and this knowledge in a striking and attractive manner is made to throw light upon the spiritual truths which this little volume sets forth. Here is a specimen : " It has been beautifully suggested that the tender harmonies of the Divine Tones produced the exquisite gradations of colour and design in things created. It is a well-known scientific fact that certain sands are peculiarly sensitive to the sound-waves passing over them. When a certain note is struck on a musical instrument in their vicinity, the particles of sand, previously sprinkled on a board for demonstration, will instantly resolve themselves into a symmetrical design, entirely differing from that produced by some other note, but always the same design in unison with the same note. If even sand in the inanimate creation will respond to the sway of musical harmony, may it not well be believed that the glories of the painted butterflies, the colour-gradations of the more sober raiment of the commonest moth, the delicate shadings of the feathers of birds and the fur of animals, and all the beauty of design and colouring worked out in the tiniest shells and molluscs and floral wonders, owe their being to the far-reaching tender harmonies of their Creator's Voice. He commanded and they were created. Instinctively they worked out His wonderful designs with no thought of resultant beauty for themselves : their one aim to fulfil His plan, and, like Moses, they wist not that they shone with His reflected loveliness. ' God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good ' (Gen. i. 31)." From the chapter on " The Voice of God."

In the chapter on " The Adversary," Miss Fennell well says : " No wonder that Satan's aim in these latter days is to hide the Cross of Calvary—to obliterate the thought of any need of a Mediator—to transform himself into an angel of light and learning and ideal aspiration, if only he can cast into oblivion the remembrance of the precious Blood, the one effectual weapon for his overthrow."

The whole book is a mine of solid gold. We trust it may be widely read and pondered.

LIBERAL THEOLOGY.

A LIVING CHRISTIANITY. By Emma Marie Caillard. London : *John Murray* 3s. 6d. net.

This book deals with such topics as Scientific Method, Miracles, Sin and Redemption, Atonement, Christian Society, and the Life to Come from the standpoint of reverent liberal Churchmanship.

" Christian Theology," we are told, " is the science of Christianity." For all other branches of science we recognize development. " A science which could not develop would be dead." But the Christian Church possesses definite and ancient Creeds, which in the present stage of Christian feeling cannot be revised. How then can they be developed ? The author says :

" Under the circumstances it seems obvious that the best expedient is to

retain the old formulæ, but to allow without accusation of heresy or dishonesty, as wide and various an interpretation of them as is compatible with a sincere recognition that Christ was absolutely unique in His relation alike to God and to man" (p. 50).

Of the doctrine of Justification by Faith, she quotes with approval Dr. Rashdall's words to the effect that "men are justified by Christ when Christ's influence makes them better men" (p. 75).

Any theory of the Atonement which regards it as a substitution of the innocent for the guilty, is described as impossible and immoral. "It was not the physical death, but the perfect obedience of Christ which gave that sacrifice its atoning value." "Our Lord's Sacrifice is not *instead* of ours, it is the perfect expression and acknowledgment of what ours ought to be, of what in the spirit and strength of Christ, and through the faith which He inspires, which His life on earth perfectly and uniquely exemplifies, they will eventually become" (p. 82).

This is a reverent and honest attempt to re-interpret or re-express the Christian faith in terms which may be acceptable to modern liberal Churchmen. We believe, however, that Miss Caillard's ascription of the supposed non-fulfilment of our Lord's eschatological words to His human limitation is too hasty. Further, her rejection of all vicarious aspect of the Atonement fails to do justice to the plain teaching of the Bible and disregards the new light that the present war has thrown on the subject.

KHODADAD E. KEITH.

DR. FORSYTH AND IMMORTALITY.

THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT. By P. T. Forsyth, M.A., D.D. London: *Macmillan & Co.* 4s. net.

Dr. Forsyth tells us that he does not propose "to speak about the grounds in this life of a belief in another, but about the reaction of that belief upon this life."

To the critics who say that a passion for immortality "magnifies our egoism," the author replies that the Christian idea of the other life "is not happiness and it is not power, but it is perfection—which is the growth of God's image and glory as our destiny" (p. 128). "Our real and great hope is not that one day we shall die to the world, but that this day we live to others and to God" (p. 25).

Of the patriot who has made the supreme sacrifice of his life, we are told that although his sacrifice does not save him, "yet it may be a moment of his conversion." "We may be quite sure that, if a cup of cold water to a disciple do not lose its reward, so an act of sacrifice for a righteous cause cannot go without its moral value for God, and a corresponding effect on the soul" (p. 42).

It is somewhat singular to find the principal of Hackney College, a Non-conformist Theological College, advocating prayers for the dead. "Prayer," he says, "is our supreme link with the unseen—with which otherwise we have no practical relations" (p. 43).

"It would never have been lost but for the abuses of purgatory, masses and the commerce which the Church made of a magical influence on another world" (p. 46).

Dr. Forsyth does not tell us how such abuses could be prevented if prayers for the departed were to be introduced into the public worship of the Reformed Churches.

This little book is thoughtful and abounds with epigrammatic sayings, but the style is somewhat heavy.

K. E. K.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

DIVINE HUMANITY. By Alexander Pym. London: *Robert Scott*. 3s. 6d. net.

The author is a layman who has had a good scientific and philosophical training, and exhibits a wide knowledge of modern standard works on Theology. He is also well acquainted with the intellectual difficulties which some educated laymen experience in accepting the claims of Christ. He has written this book to show the reasonableness of Christian faith as an explanation of life. Some of the topics discussed are: the reality and supremacy of the spiritual; the problem of sin and suffering; death and beyond; the world waiting for Christ; the coming of Christ; and the strength and weakness of the Church to-day. All these subjects are handled with such freshness of treatment, cogency of reasoning and felicity of diction that they cannot fail to charm the reader. This is one of the most stimulating books we have read for a long time. The younger clergy will do well to read this volume and to lend it to educated members of their congregations who are perplexed with the critical problems of our time. We have space to give only one quotation and we choose the last paragraph in the book:—

“With Christ as Guide there can be no uncertainty at the parting of the ways, no discouragement in the face of difficulty and disappointment. With unwavering steps we shall pass through raging torrents, across plains and barren wastes, until in the golden glow of sunset our eyes behold the flashing pinnacles of the city of God. There, in the presence of our Master, perplexities will be answered and harsh dissonances resolved. For we ourselves shall have come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

K. E. K.

THE WOOLWICH CRUSADE.

THE WOOLWICH CRUSADE. September 2 to 16, 1917. Issued by the Southwark Diocesan Council for Munition Areas. With a preface by the Bishop of Southwark. London: *S.P.C.K.* 1s. 3d. net.

It was perhaps just as well that there should be a complete and permanent record of what was attempted in the Woolwich Crusade. Only the names of the clergy actually in charge of the eight “stations” are given us. There may be a misprint, but one of the names does not appear in Crockford. So far as the rest are concerned we have Churchmen of such varied types as “Father” Paul Bull, Rev. J. A. Douglas and Revs. F. C. Davies and H. Foster Pegg, and on the whole “Central Churchmanship” seems to have been fairly well represented. The chapters, entitled respectively “Impressions” and “Lessons,” are not inspiring. In the latter there is this candid admission, “We came to Woolwich for the Crusade to give a message to the workers there. We discovered that we had not yet found the message. The Church does not yet know how to present the Christian truth so as to make it plain and real to the working man and woman. We found also that part of our failure was due to the fact that we did not understand their attitude towards us.” Those who move and minister among the masses will read this record of a serious effort with the deepest interest, and it is to be hoped that the experiences here recorded will be some help to them in their difficult task. What was aimed at and done serves at least to demonstrate the fact that our Church and her leaders are not asleep in this time of testing.

