

surrender her imperfect record that she may receive a full explanation. The indirect is to be lost in the immediate; law is to be merged in love; and the words which have hitherto been committed to the prophet and to the angel are to come forth directly and spontaneously from the innermost heart of God.

GEORGE MATHESON.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

CHAPTER II.

Verse 1.—*Thou therefore* (*οὖν* points back to the defection of others, contrasting it with what he is satisfied will prove the faithfulness of Timothy), *my child* (no break has occurred in the filial and paternal relation between these two), *be endowed with strength*,¹ *i.e.*, allow yourself to be strengthened, open your heart to the invigorating influences which may reach you, *in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*, in that heavenly succour, that aid of all kinds which flows from Christ Jesus as its Divine source. He is not only the highest type of Divine grace, but its fountain-head.

Verse 2.—*And the things which thou heardest from me in the presence*² *of many witnesses*:—Mack, Huther, Ellicott, refer this to the act of Timothy's ordination by St. Paul and by the presbyters.³ The aorist favours this interpretation. Still, if the Apostle was now looking back on his own ministry as a completed course,⁴ the aorist might be used to denote the whole testi-

¹ Ἐνδυναμοῦ is passive, not middle, if we may judge from the passive form, which cannot well be confounded with middle, in Acts ix. 22; Rom. iv. 20; Heb. xi. 34.

² This use of δὲ is rather unusual. See Winer and Ellicott's note.

³ 1 Tim. i. 18; iv. 14; vi. 12, 13; 2 Tim. i. 6.

⁴ Cf. iv. 7.

mony which St. Paul's life and word had borne to the facts and philosophy of Christianity. No countenance is given to the idea of esoteric doctrine or tradition, which some have deduced from it:—*entrust thou to faithful men, such as will be fitted to teach others again.* Aptness to teach, coupled with moral faithfulness, constitutes the genuine apostolic succession. Its function aims at no sacramental dignity, but consists of power and fitness to hand on by living word and holy loyalty, the Heaven-sent message of life. Divine truth has not been mended or enlarged by an apostolic tradition, in addition to, or distinct from, the apostolic writings; but it has been exemplified by holy living and persistent utterance of the ever open secret. No order of free-masonic privilege, or priestly assumption of exclusive rights, can be honestly introduced into this passage. Vigorous confirmation of this view arises in the Apostle's choice of illustrations which then follow.

Verse 3.—*Do thou suffer affliction with me:*¹—Thus we find another hint of St. Paul's strong affection for Timothy, and his human craving for the younger man's sympathy in his present deep affliction. The muster-roll of apostolic men contains the sacred list of the martyrs and prisoners of Christ:—*as a good soldier*² *of Christ Jesus.* It is as if he said, "Encounter the difficulties, submit to the restraints, accept the terms, tests, risks, and regimen of a soldier. You and I are not our own. Our Commander-in-chief, our imperial Captain, our heavenly Country claim us as theirs. I do not place before you the honours of a

¹ The Textus Receptus here reads, *σὺ ὀν*, but Tischendorf (8), Meyer, Ellicott, read *συγκακοπάθησον*, with **N**, **A**, **C**^{*}, **D**^{*}, and other MSS. and versions.

² Comp. for this genitive of possession, Eph. i. 1; Rom. i. 1.

general, but the toil and self-abnegation of the 'good soldier.' Some soldiers desert at the hour of peril, tamper with the enemy, and fear to die for their Master. Fulfil the ideal of a soldier by entire self-surrender, by faithfulness and heroism."

Verse 4.—*No one on military service,*¹ no one, i.e., who is taking the part of a soldier, *entangles himself in the businesses of life*.—The soldier may, indeed, have his times of repose from active military service, when the ordinary avocations of life demand his attention; but while the campaign lasts, every other interest or claim is postponed or overborne—in order that he may please him who enrolled him in the army. The Spartan *στρατός* and the Roman *exercitus* consisted of all citizens who, when the object for which the army was organized had been attained, were forthwith disbanded. The illustration includes the idea of a rigidly guarded "order," to which Timothy and his elders belonged. The rank and file of the army rather than the dignity of officers and aristocrats furnish the Apostle with his most potent metaphor.

Verse 5.—Then, taking another illustration, he proceeds, *Again, if any one also strive in the games*² (perform the part of an athlete in the public games of skill) *he is not crowned if he do not strive lawfully, i.e., in harmony with the rules of training and conventional right provided in each case.* Some of these laws are laid down by the master of the ceremonies, and others

¹ *Στρατεύω* is one of a considerable group of verbs in *εω*, which expresses in the middle voice the idea of acting the part, or fulfilling the functions, involved in the action of the verb.

² *Ἀθλεῖν* is more frequently used in this sense, while *ἀθλέω*, the word used here, is confined in Attic Greek to sense of endurance and labour; but Rost and Palm give instances among later Greek writers of this use.

by the physician. The spiritual athlete must attend to all the laws of evangelical conflict. He cannot dispense with self-sacrificing toil. He must be content to undergo long preparation. He should appreciate the difficulty of the strife and the claims of his antagonist. No unfair advantage should be taken of an enemy, be he sinner, idolater, or unbeliever. If the spiritual athlete would win the crown of successful strife with competitors for the same honour, his training and his conduct of the strife must be in harmony with the laws of truth and uprightness. The worse reason is not rhetorically to be made the better, nor must the rotten argument be thought good enough for the fool or the child.

*Verse 6.—It is due to the husbandman who is labouring (unto weariness) to partake first of all the fruits.*¹ The most willing and devoted labourer is the most speedily blessed. Another illustration of ministerial office is now drawn from the handwork of the husbandman. Should the minister of God want the honours of a commander, the ensigns of bravery, the crown of successful conflict, or speedy participation in the fruits of toil, he must acquire the genius of thoroughness, conscientiousness, zeal, self-forgetfulness, enthusiasm. After hinting this, St. Paul, as though he thought he had been speaking in parables which needed interpretation, adds, *Understand (intellectually grasp) the thing which I am saying (under these metaphors), for the Lord will*² *give thee accurate comprehension*³ *in all*

¹ Winer is said to have found transgression of syntax in the reference of the *πρῶτον* to the *μεταλαμβάνειν*, and to have referred it to *κοπιῶντα*; but (p. 696) he states with great respect the translation given above.

² *Δώσει* is preferred on good authority (N, A, C, D, F, &c.) to *δοθή*.

³ *Νοεῖν* is to apprehend, to perceive the details of; *συνίεναι*, to put together the elements of which knowledge is built up.

things. "To him that hath shall be given." "Seek and thou shalt find." The understanding of one parable is often a key to the apprehension of other dark sayings upon the harp.

Verse 8.—Remember Jesus Christ, bear Him in remembrance as one who (has been and) is raised from the dead, of the seed of David according to my gospel. It has been said that this is a clumsy quotation from *Romans* i. 3 by the unknown author of the Epistle. There is no need to make this supposition if another reason can be found for a reference to the earthly birth and Messianic dignity of the risen Christ. Do we not find it in the fact that if Timothy makes a conscience of cherishing this sublime synthesis, this blending of the Divine and human, this linking of the spiritual kingdom with the age-long preparation for it, this union of the seed of David with the unseen and spiritual world, then the young apostle will cast his anchor within the veil and hold fast to the cable, and he will be the brave, humble, honourable, and patient man that St. Paul desires him to be? "My gospel" need not be Luke's gospel, as Jerome in the old time, and recently Baur affirmed; but the glad tidings which it had been St. Paul's privilege to utter, and with which he was entrusted.¹ *In proclaiming which I suffer evil as a malefactor, even up to chains.* Am I not now suffering cruel imprisonment, Roman citizen that I am, riveted to a common soldier as though I were a traitor or a desperado? This term shews how different St. Paul's position was during the second imprisonment from what it had been during the first. In consequence of Nero's change of policy, the charge brought against him now

¹ Cf. 1 Tim. i. 11.

is more serious and perilous, though it is but another testimony to his unconquerable faith :—*but the word of God has not been chained, nor is it now.* St. Paul, who had begotten Onesimus in his former bonds, and had diffused the truth throughout the prætorium and in other places, exults still. He knows that God's truth is too subtle for human malice to arrest its progress or confine its spirit.

Verse 10.—*For this cause I endure all things for the elect's sake.* It is open to question whether the *διὰ τοῦτο* followed by *ἵνα* does not require us to look in the subsequent clause for the reason of his patient endurance. The Vulgate rendered *διὰ τοῦτο* by *ideo*, and Luther by *darum*. Bengel says, *quia me vincto evangelium currit*, and with him Luther agrees; yet there are other illustrations of a similar usage¹ which bid us look further afield for the ground of St. Paul's patient endurance of all things. The endurance (*ὑπομύνα*) is submission to the Divine will, spontaneous acceptance of the position, not a dogged despairing recognition of the inevitable, but a loving harmony of the whole man with the Divine appointment. We have elsewhere see that *ὑπομονή* is the child of hope, not of despair. Now comes St. Paul's sublime and noble hope, *In order that they also (with him) may obtain salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.* The question, doubtless, arises, does St. Paul here, and also in Colossians i. 24, regard his own afflictions as a part of the redemptive suffering by which the elect should receive the gift of Christ's salvation and inherit their eternal glory. This would undoubtedly contradict the whole tenour of his teaching elsewhere.

¹ Cf. 1 Tim. i. 15; Phil. 15.

“Was Paul crucified for you?” rings out (in 1 Cor. i. 13) his own indignant disclaimer of any such position. Still he does assert his hope and conviction that direct and positive advantages may accrue to the elect of God from his own sufferings.

The “salvation” is “in Christ Jesus,” still there are (*ὑστερήματα*) “things lacking” in the (*θλίψεις*) afflictions of the Lord which he and other saints are called upon to supplement (*ἀνταναπληροῦν*), to fill up from another source. They are to be filled up in the persons of the members of Christ’s suffering body. Because these bitter sorrows effectuate or tend to produce a closer resemblance to Christ, because they may lead to a more intense consecration on the part of the elect of God, he willingly endures them all. We take it that these *θλίψεις* of Christ are not his atoning or sacrificial agonies, but all the contumely and repression which He endured for us and with us, and also which He, in sublime sympathy, continues to suffer in his body the Church, and which will not be completed until the last battle has been fought and the last enemy overcome. Thus the Lord dignifies every patiently borne cross, every holy death, as part of his own affliction for the sake of the elect.

Some Protestant theologians have eviscerated these words of their true meaning, in order to escape the conclusion which Romanists have drawn from them. Moreover, other critics have endeavoured to establish by their aid the identity in kind of the sufferings of Christ and of his saints, and to proclaim the atoning value of all suffering; but we desire to take the words as they stand, neither justifying the Romanist doctrine of the supererogatory merit of saints, nor contradic-

ting the Pauline doctrine of redemption. Nevertheless, we distinctly recognize the fact that Paul's patient suffering was part of the process by which the elect of all time will be called into the fellowship of the sufferings and of the life of Christ. The same idea reappears in 2 Corinthians i. 5, 6, where similar phraseology occurs — "Because as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, so our comfort also abounds through Christ. And whether we are afflicted (*θλιβόμεθα*), it is for your comfort and *salvation* (*σωτηρίας*); and whether we be comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the *patient endurance* (*ἐν ὑπομονῇ*) of the same sufferings (*παθημάτων*) which we also suffer."¹

Verse 11. — *Faithful is the saying.* Here, then, emerges another of the prophetic utterances of the early Church, which has passed into current use. The use in this instance may have been found in the service of song. It seems to me that the *γὰρ* has all its necessary force, if it is supposed to introduce a strophe of the then well-known triplet, "*for*"—as you sing² and know to be true,—

*If we died with (Him), we shall also live with Him;
 If we endure with (Him), we shall reign with (Him);
 If we shall deny (Him), He also will deny us;
 If we disbelieve, He abideth faithful, for He cannot deny
 Himself.*

"We (said or sang the ancient Church) were crucified with Him, buried with Him at our baptism; our faith in the crucified ONE slew us, it destroyed the old

¹ Tischendorf Text, eighth edition.

² Mack has ingeniously arranged the words in parallelistic form, each line commencing with *ei*.

man, annihilated the supremacy of the law as the ground of our justification. Our faith was a death with Christ, a process of cruel dying to sin, a burial from the sight and fascination of the world; and it was also a resurrection,"

In one act of faith, the old man died, the new man lived. The future tense is used to express this resurrection-life, and we admit that it points onward to a complete fulfilment in our ultimate resurrection from the deathlike life of our mundane existence. The present tense is used in the next clause. The *ὑπομὴνη* is a continuous process, which in our present resurrection-life brings us into communion with the suffering life of the Son of God. In like manner¹ St. Paul elsewhere adopts the same somewhat puzzling order of spiritual experiences. He would know the power of Christ's resurrection, then fellowship in his sufferings, and after all this, conformableness to his death.

Further, the early Church commemorated in their hymn the awful peril of treachery to the Lord, remembering his own words, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father."² There are many ways of denying Christ, both by word and action. We may take the part of his enemies, or ignore his supreme claim to our allegiance; we may transform Him into a myth, a fairy tale, a subjective principle, or find a substitute in our own life for his grace; and we may assume that He is not the ground of our reconciliation, nor the Giver of salvation, nor the sole Head of his Church. If so, we may reasonably fear, lest He should refuse to acknowledge us when upon his approval our eternal destiny will turn.

¹ Phil. iii. 8 ff.

² Matt. x. 32, 33.

This faithful saying concludes in still sterner tone, and utters a sublime challenge to the apostate. "If we disbelieve," holding to no reality, estranging ourselves from the life-giving force of faith, relinquishing the truth about Him, this will make no difference whatsoever as to the reality of the Christ, or the certainty of his inviolable word. "He cannot deny himself." What He was, He is. The *Zeitgeist*, the spirit of literature, the parliaments of nations, the councils of Churches, nay, the federation of a world, cannot in the faintest respect alter his nature. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Verse 14. — *These things*, thus enumerated as a faithful saying, *recall*, my son Timothy, to (*their*) *minds*,¹ *solemnly enjoining them before the Lord not to wrangle*² *about words*:—This "logomachy" referred to³ is a continuous temptation of the Church. Men have substituted "words" for "things," and then stipulated for the words to the disparagement of the things or the ideas expressed by them. So long as "words" connote things of importance, it is just and wise to contend for them. For "death and life may then be in the power of the tongue;" but as soon as words cease to convey their own proper meaning to those who use them, or become mere battle-cries or watch-words, and are made the occasion of conflict between those who are actually meaning the same thing by different words, or different things by the same word, logomachy becomes the curse of the Church. When parties either stickle for, or loudly condemn, forms or phrases,

¹ Cf. Titus iii. 1; John xiv. 26.

² That *λογομαχεῖν* is infinitive, and not imperative, is now accepted by most critics. This justifies the general use of New Testament as to the construction of the verb *διαμαρτυρόμενος*.

³ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

rites or formulæ, without intelligence, under the mere force of tradition or the sway of association, an amount of insincerity is engendered which threatens the life of men. This logomachy is *a course*¹ or thing *profitable for nothing*, and what is worse, *leading to the ruin of those that hear* the windy conflict. Many can swear by a shibboleth or an orthodox phrase, or draw their sword to fight for it, without apprehending its meaning. Let the golden rule of St. Paul be remembered, "In Christ Jesus there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but faith working by love."

Verse 15.—*Give diligence to present*² *thyself to God approved, i.e., as one who has passed the (δοκιμασία) test of trial and sorrow and received the Divine approval, an unshamed*³ *workman, who has no occasion to blush, rightly dividing the word of the truth.* Many attempts have been made to interpret this word "rightly dividing." Beza referred it to the process of dividing the sacrifice according to rule; Calvin, the rightful dividing of the bread of a household. Theodore supposed that the action of the labourer in cutting straight furrows in the field suggested the image. These interpretations have given place to the idea of accurate or straight cutting of a road.⁴ In favour of this, Proverbs iii. 6, *ἵνα ὀρθοτομή τὰς ὁδοὺς σου*—"that she may make straight (rightly direct) thy ways"—is often quoted. But since *κανοτομεῖν* means to endeavour new things, rather than "cut out new ways," it may be possible that the etymology sinks out of view in the

¹ *Χρήσιμον* is ἀπ. λεγ. in New Testament.

² Ellicott defends the simple meaning of *παραστήσαι. exhibere Deo, Vulg.; erzeigen, Luther.*

³ The classical usage of *ἀνεπαίσχυντος* is "shameless;" it is ἀπ. λεγ. in New Testament.

⁴ See Palm and Rost.

usage. The Syriac Version translated it, "rightly proclaiming the word of truth." This view has been practically accepted by Deyling,¹ Huther, Alford, Fairbairn, and this is far better than forcing a doubtful etymology into the text. St. Paul summons Timothy to a right straightforward method of dealing with the Divine word. He would have him set out clear lines for the intellect, a plain path for the feet, a just appeal to the emotions, a true stimulant of the conscience. Let Timothy, and let all his successors, aim to set forth God's truth in such a way before the understanding that honest assent may be rational and life-giving. This expression is the knell of party politics, the protest against all dishonest interpretations of Scripture, all illusive teaching, all drawing forth from God's word what we have first put into it, and all that morbid exaggeration of half-truths, or of one side only of a Divine revelation, which makes the truth of God into a lie. Some have so preached the unity of God, that they have lost those distinctions in his ineffable substance on which his moral nature really turns and rests. Some have laid such emphasis on the distinctions in his essence that they have practically introduced polytheism into the centre of Divine revelation. Some have laid such emphasis on the Divine righteousness, that they have ceased to believe in God's love. And so on, through the whole range of Christian revelation. Occasionally a side view, a possible truth, an accessory revelation, has been lifted into prime importance, and allowed to hide from view the primal and essential verities. Thus, the double resurrection, the premillennial advent, the

¹ *Observ. Sacra.*, vol. iv:

present fortunes of the lost tribes, certain methods of Church government, or of Church action, the shape of a vesture, or the mode of conducting an ordinance, have been made essential to Church-fellowship, or regarded as indispensable tests of Christian experience. Against all this St. Paul warns Timothy.

Verses 16, 17.—*But stand off* with loathing *from the profane*¹ *babblings*, the worthless empty voices, of the false teachers, which elsewhere² the writer has identified with the chatter and fiction of imbecile old women, and with the cumbrous antitheses of falsely called science (*gnosis*); *for they* (not exactly the voices, but the men who utter them³) *will advance*⁴ *to more of ungodliness*. The tendency of this vain, frivolous talk is away from God; *and their word will consume*, will eat up, *like a gangrene*. The phrase is remarkable (*νομὴν ἔξει*): “Their word will obtain pasture, like a gangrene or cancer.” *Νομή* is the medical word used for the action of a mortifying disease; and we might suppose from the etymology that the ancient physicians had some hint of the germ theory of certain diseases. “Unless,” says Hippocrates, “a person is rapidly by sharp processes healed of gangrene, the suffering portion will readily perish: it will lay hold of the surrounding parts, and kill the man.” This is very unlike the worldly temporizing involved in the advice given by Gamaliel to the Sanhedrin, words which are often made to do service for God’s truth. The growth

¹ *Βεβήλος*, that which pertains to *βήλος*, or the threshold rather than the interior of home or temple; hence common, unconsecrated, profane.

² *Cf.* Titus iii. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 7 and vi. 20.

³ This is evident from the next Verse, “their word” (*ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν*).

⁴ *Προκόπτω*, Galatians i. 14; also chap. iii. 9, 13. Used in classics for cutting down trees for the advance of an army.

of certain low forms of life at the expense of the higher organism is seen, not only in zymotic diseases, in blight, intrusive insect or vegetable growth, but in the rapidity with which a vile passion will sometimes grow in a community, consuming its higher life, and degrading it past recognition. *Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus.* We know nothing of these men. If Hymenæus be identified with a person of the same name, whom the Apostle excommunicated from the Church (1 Tim. i. 20), the effect of that "delivery to Satan" by apostolic judgment had not been salutary. If the Alexander also mentioned (*l.c.*) were a follower of the views of Hymenæus on the earlier occasion, he has now yet another disciple, and his influence and spirit are worse than ever.¹ Timothy is advised to adopt a policy of isolation. This view is quite as "rational" and "scientific" as to argue that the epistle before us was the *first* letter to Timothy, penned either by the Apostle (Schleiermacher) or by a *falsarius* (the Tübingen school), and that the composer of the First Epistle (written afterwards) blundered over the name, giving by mistake a later rather than an earlier stage of the history of this imaginary personage. Church censure and exclusion often drive the subject of it into more thorough antagonism alike to the truth and to the Church. *Who as concerning the truth missed their aim* (they were in the right line, but have "turned aside," gone out of their way), *saying that the resurrection has already taken place; and they overthrow the faith of some.* Numerous speculations have been indulged in as to the precise significance of the doctrinal error of Hymenæus.

¹ See note on chap. iv. 14.

Thus some have supposed that he taught that the *ἀνάστασις* took place at the death of Christ; but this would have been true so far as it goes:¹ others that it referred to the resurrection of the Jewish nationality, and therefore had already taken place. This view, however, would have been a half-truth, and one, moreover, which these Ephesian Gnostics would be very unlikely to have espoused. Probably they confined the idea of the *ἀνάστασις* to a spiritual emergence from the death of sin to a new life. They had exaggerated certain Pauline teachings, forgetting that St. Paul taught a full "redemption of the body" at the coming of Christ. The resurrection of the body was indeed assailed by Dualistic and Gnostic views touching the incurable evil of "matter" and of "the body." Tertullian shews that Marcion went to this extreme, desiring nothing better for the body than its final annihilation. But Christianity turns on the rectification and sanctification of the body, on the certainty of a holy, perfect, and eternal communion with God in and through the work of his hands. Christianity promises a spiritual body to the redeemed man, and encourages him to hope that he will be "clothed upon with a house from heaven." It does not teach us to expect or desire a naked unembodied state, but a heavenly tabernacle, an enduring temple, a body resembling that of the glorified Lord. Of this consummation the resurrection of Christ is the significant type, the assurance to all men, the condition and occasion, just as He Himself is the causal agency by which this glorious change will be wrought.

Verse 19.—*Nevertheless* (we should give full force

¹ Matt. xxvii. 52.

to the μέντοι.¹ If the spirit of the Apostle was perturbed with vain babblings, or cruel mortification, or the spread of plausible or perilous theories, he required to fall back upon great and deep principles), *the firm foundation of God standeth*—the foundation laid in Zion, with its glorious corner-stone, the foundation of the spiritual temple, of the Church of all elect souls, standeth—*seeing that it has this seal*, this divine impression or inscription upon it.² The solemn inscription is twofold in its bearing. The terms of it are taken from the narrative in Numbers xvi. 5.³ *The Lord knoweth*⁴ *those that are his* (οὐν). “I know,” said Christ, “my sheep, and am known of mine.” The Lord’s eye rests on “his own,” though they may be misapprehended or excommunicated by men, or even be fraternizing with those who vainly claim a position to which, in his sight, they can prefer no title. This foundation-stone bears another inscription of a practical kind, drawn probably from the same narrative. In the evolution of the fearful drama of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, the command went forth, “Separate yourselves from the tents of these wicked men.”⁵ This was in the Apostle’s memory when he proceeded, *and let every one who nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity* or unrighteousness. God’s thought and purpose concerning them are not infallibly communicated to those who are nevertheless “known of Him.” Neither inward monitions, nor ecclesiastical absolution, nor assurance of hope, will meet the whole case; and

¹ “It unites both confirmation (μεν) and restriction (τοι), and involves an opposition to the preceding clause, and meets a possible objection.”—*Ellicott*.

² Cf. Rev. xxi. 14.

³ The only deviation is that κύριος takes the place of θεός in LXX. St. Paul, in this respect, makes a closer approach to the Hebrew.

⁴ The Hebrew יָדַע may be Hiphil, and mean “cause to know,” or “show,” or it may be present participle, Kal, and mean “know.”

⁵ Numb. xvi. 26.

these supposed guarantees of a supernatural fact will fail utterly should those who fancy themselves to be God's own people not depart from unrighteousness. Here at least the stringent test applies. The secret dealings of infinite Love and Knowledge do not dispense with spontaneous obedience and moral purity. Admit the heavenly calling, but recognize the imperative demand involved in it for a departure—sudden, sweeping, heart-rending, it may be—from all iniquity. This blending of Divine grace with human responsibility discloses a grand hall-mark of New Testament theology.

Verse 20.—*But in a great house*, in the erection reared upon this foundation, in all the sacred and new associations which spring up in the household of faith, in the new life of family and of society thus created, in all the blessed fellowship sometimes called the “visible Church,” amid the numerous relations which have thus been powerfully affected by the regeneration of those who are united to Christ—*in a great house there are not only golden and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen vessels*—vessels, *i. e.*, of very different value, but all of some value—precious faculties, great powers, some beautiful in themselves, others devoted to sacred uses; some used on state occasions, others consigned to humble and daily, but less conspicuous, less honourable, service. The wooden bowl or earthen cup may yet be of greater use than the silver chalice or the golden goblet. Moreover, in a great house some of its most costly treasures may be delicately carved wood, or exquisitely shaped pottery:—*and there are some vessels destined to honour and some to dishonour*. These phrases are not, as is commonly supposed, co-extensive with the two classes of vessels previously enumerated. It would be contrary to the spirit of the New Testa-

ment and wrong to suppose the "gold and silver vessels" were those reserved for honour, while the wood and porcelain vessels alone were irrevocably destined to dishonour. The Master Himself might prefer the earthen vessel for some of his highest ends, and into it He might pour the most fragrant and sacred essences of his love. The gold and silver of the great house might be associated in the past with licentiousness and idolatry, while temperance, utility, life-giving service might be associated with the work of the potter.¹ Consequently, the ἀπὸ τούτων of Verse 21 does not surely refer to the vessels of wood and earth which are devoted to less honourable or to mean uses. Some stronger word would have been used if the Apostle was comparing them with "profane babblings," or the "gangrene" of the earlier verses. Surely he refers to *these* very evil things. For a moment he drops the figure of the house and the foundation, to take it up again in the remaining portion of the sentence. Purification from vessels would be a very incongruous figure. What St. Paul says is—

Verse 21.—If therefore any man shall have purged himself from these evil associations or corrupting ideas, from persons whose words are like the deadly poison of a contagious gangrene, then he will be a vessel unto honour, whether his faculties cause him to resemble the golden goblet or the silver lamp, the wooden bowl or the porcelain vase; if pure and conscientious, faithful and good, he will be consecrated to noblest uses, serviceable to the Master of the house, and prepared for every good work. The advice may strike some as prudish and narrow-minded. But it amounts to this, "Avoid the crotchety, the frivolous, the profane; give a wide

¹ See particularly Rom. ix. 21.

berth to the chatterers, the conceited, the babblers, who can with light heart dispense with most sacred truth, and bid you sacrifice everything most dear to you on the altar of *their* intellectual whim. Take care of your company, your friendship, your habits." This explains perhaps, the startling Verse which follows.

Verse 22.—*Moreover, flee the passions of youth.* Timothy was no longer a young man,¹ but he was still in the strength of his manhood, when he might easily suffer from desires and passions which are comparatively venial in a youth. Flee *juvenilia desideria*, the immoderate hilarity, the irregular longings of the flesh and mind, the rashness of judgment, the self-indulgence, the love of admiration, which are the weakness and failure of youth, not its beauty nor its charm: *and pursue righteousness*, right relations with God, those which arise out of a free acceptance of Divine mercy. Pursue *faith*, which is the human condition of this "righteousness," and *love*, which is its moral and spiritual result. "Love" connotes the new life of the spirit, the self-abnegation which springs from the force of a new affection—love to God and love to man. And, lastly, "follow after *peace with all who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*"² The advice is not a mere complimentary association of Timothy's mind in these exercises with all who call on the name of the Lord (Heydenreich), but an indication of the breadth and applicability of Christian charity.³ "Seek after peace with all who are calling upon the name of the Lord." This is to be set over against the abstention demanded from profane

¹ If, as we have said in a previous paper, Timothy was sixteen or seventeen years of age in the year of his conversion (A. D. 51), and if Paul is writing to him A. D. 68, he need not be more than thirty-four or thirty-five years of age—"a boy" to Paul the aged.

² Cf. Heb. xii. 14.

³ The *μετὰ τῶν ἑπικαλ.* is associated with *εἰρήνην*, not with *διώκε*.—*Iuther.*

word-mongering and mere lip-service. Elsewhere the Apostle suggests that it requires an *effort* to live peaceably with all men, though some may be godly and good.

Verse 23.—*But on the other hand avoid the foolish and ill-considered,*¹ ignorant, irrelevant discussions. Almost all the synonyms of ἀπαιδευτος are more appropriately applied to persons than to questions. There are irrelevant, ignorant questions that any fool can ask, which shew how little the grave questions affecting the faith of Christ have ever entered into the breast of the questioner. It would be easy to enumerate a long string of the questions which have done duty for the quibbler from the days of Celsus to Tom Paine, and others which have harassed and discomposed the tempers of Christian people generation after generation:—*knowing*, as thou dost² (Ellicott), *that they may engender strifes, fights, conflicts.*

Verse 24.—*But (the) servant of the Lord must not strive, or fight.* Let Titus i. 1 and James i. 1 be compared for this use of the great term “the servant, or slave, of the Lord,” one who occupies a high position among Christian labourers, workers, soldiers, or husbandmen. There is an obvious reason why he should not strive nor cry nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets. He must be the peacemaker, and be conciliatory. Let him avoid the very topics which have no other issue than to reveal irreconcilable differences about trifles. *He must be gentle,*³ patient, silver-

¹ Ἀπαιδευτος is an ἀπ. λεγ. in the New Testament, though it often occurs in the LXX. of the Old Testament, and as the translation of words meaning folly and ignorance. In the Apocrypha it means stupid, impious. A scholiast on Aristophanes makes it equivalent to ἀμαθης and ἄωδης.—*Schleusner* in V.T., s.v.

² “Denn du weisst” (Luther), “Da oder weil du weisst” (Huther). The participle in an imperative sentence conveys the ground of the injunction.

³ The word ἡπιος is found here, and in Tischendorf’s reading, 1 Thess. ii. 7, for ῥήπιος. Its primary meaning is “healing by the voice, by incantation;” it is translated (Vulgate) by *mansuetum esse*.

tongued *towards all men*. St. Paul never said a harder thing, or indicated a more difficult duty. *Apt in teaching*; i.e., at once ready and able to teach. Some are ready, even eager, who are not able; and many are able who are not willing or ready to teach. This characteristic differs profoundly from the possession of prophetic fire, and it cannot be restricted to the pedagogic insistence on elementary truths, but suggests a mental and moral fitness for imparting and impressing truth. *Patient of wrong*. In illustrating these words, most Commentators refer to the celebrated passage in Wisdom ii. 19, where the writer puts into the lips of the wilful enemies of the good man the words, "With insolence and torture let us put him to the test, that we may know his (ἐπιείκεια) 'sweet reasonableness,' and put to the proof his ἀνεξικακία, his patient endurance of wrong." Endurance of malicious detraction is one of the victories of grace.

Verse 25.—*In meekness correcting those that put themselves in opposition, if perchance God may give them repentance to the full acknowledgment of the truth.* The phrase is difficult as it stands. Strictly translated, it would be, "lest at any time;"¹ but this would be out of harmony with the whole strain of the passage. Grave doubt is expressed, but hope is not extinguished. God is the giver of repentance. Scherlitz, quoted by Fairbairn, suggests, "whether God may not still give repentance." Here is expression of the thought that there is room and necessity for the operation of the Spirit of God, over and above the normal action of the truth upon the understanding.

¹ Μή ποτε δῶη. Winer, p. 631. The dubitative μή, coupled with ποτε, in the sense of indefinite time. Dr. Moulton gives it "whether haply." Green (Gk. Gram.), "The Apostle set out with the dubitative force of μή, but subjoined a mood corresponding with the prevailing thought, which certainly involves hope, not despair."

Verse 26.—*And that they may return to sobriety* from the benumbing intoxication of false philosophy and bad habits, here represented as a snare of the devil, in which, though held captive, they were not yet killed :—*out of the snare of the devil, being made living¹ captives of by him.* So far there is no difficulty, but the last clause, *according to the will of Him* (ὑπ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ἐκείνου θέλημα), leaves the reader in doubt as to its meaning, since two pronouns are used which generally, if not universally, refer to two different subjects. De Wette, Huther, and Davidson disregard² the difference of the pronouns, and make them both refer to the devil. But the contrast of the two pronouns is remarkable, and the sense of the passage very obscure, the “will of the devil” being an otiose addition, unless it be translated, as by Davidson, “to do his will.” If ἐκείνου refers to the more remote antecedent, then “God’s will” is suggested as the gracious accompaniment and occasion of this gift of repentance, or as the exposition of the state of new life, into which such penitents may be brought. The passage will read as follows : *Whether haply God would grant them repentance, and also whether haply they may return to sobriety, into (harmony with) his will, out of the snare of the devil, seeing they have been made living captives by him.*³

This view of the evil in the world, and of the peril assailing the Asiatic Churches, betrays the melancholy outlook which the Apostle at that moment entertained. Nor is this tone of mind peculiar to the Pastoral

¹ Ζωγρεῖν has the same sense in Luke v. 10.

² A passage is quoted from Plato’s *Cratylus*, which is said to involve the same usage : Δείξαι αὐτῷ ἂν μὲν τύχη ἐκείνου εἰκόνα.

³ This principle of translation is adopted by Grotius and Ellicott. Others have referred the αὐτοῦ to the “Servant of the Lord,” and the ἐκείνου to God ; and it is by no means certain that this is not the meaning of the passage. Ellicott thinks that this suggestion “does not seem to require notice.”

Epistles. We find the same anticipations overshadowing his earliest letters, those to the Thessalonians. In his Epistle to the Galatians he gave a sad list of the works of the flesh. In Philippians iii. 18-22 he saw the ways and the doom of the enemies of the cross of Christ. As he drew near his end, he prophesied the apparent triumph of evil, and we need not be surprised to find here in these last words a weird and sombre prevision of the hard and perilous times which would accompany the development and consummation of Messiah's kingdom.

H. R. REYNOLDS.

ECCLESIASTES.

CHAPTER II. VERSES 4-11.¹

HENGSTENBERG has remarked that the first two Verses of this Chapter form the germ of the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke xii. 16-21. As here the soul is addressed, "delight thyself in pleasure" (look upon good), so there, *ἔχεις πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ* : as here, "I will prove thee with joy," so there, *εὐφραίνου* : as here, "it is mad," so there, *ἄφρων* ; Verse 12 and Verse 19 here having also their counterpart in the *ἀ δὲ ἡτοίμασας τίνι λογῶναι* there.

The parallel, indeed, applies, so far as it applies at all, to the whole of this section, and not merely to the first two Verses ; but the future here is very different from the future of the parable. The sense of the "folly" here is awakened by the unsatisfying nature of earthly enjoyment ; the "folly" there is only seen in the light of death and the judgment.

The passage that follows is, as Reuss has remarked, one of the most picturesque in the Book. It is Solo-

¹ The translation of these Verses will be found in the September number of THE EXPOSITOR.