

id, quod dixi, ita non esset, ergo *fili eorum* juxta mentes illorum immundi essent."

(ii.) In Acts ii. 47, Codex Bezae reads, *εχοντες χαριν προς ολον τον κοσμον*. Instead of *κόσμον* the "true" text has *λαόν*. I pointed out that the Bezan reading points to the substitution in a Syriac text of ܠܘܠܐ (the-world) for ܠܘܠܐ (the-people), and that we find instances of this substitution in the Curetonian text of Matt. i. 21 (He shall save *the-world*), and in the Peshitta of Lc. ii. 10 (great joy which shall be to all *the-world*). I would now add that the converse change is found in Jn. xviii. 20 (*ἐγὼ παρῥησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κόσμῳ*), where the Peshitta has "I openly (was) speaking with the-people (ܠܘܠܐ)." In these three passages of the Gospels there is, so far as I know, no authority for the variants except the Syriac texts. Further, in Jno. xii. 19 (*ὁ κόσμος ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ ἀπῆλθεν*) the old Latin *Codex Corbeiensis* (ff²) has "unus [=universus] *populus*"—a striking illustration of the connexion which seems to exist between the old Latin and the Syriac texts.

F. H. CHASE.

THE PENALTY OF PRIVILEGE.

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—*Amos* iii. 2.

At first it seems a glaring *non sequitur*. There seems no logical connection between the fact stated and the conclusion drawn. It comes with the shock of surprise. It would have been natural to expect—You have I known, therefore you can rely on my favour; you have God on your side, and may do with impunity things forbidden to others; I will forgive all your iniquities.

This was evidently the reasoning which the Israelites pursued; for Amos devotes the first two chapters of his prophecy to establish the general truth of God's impartial justice. He illustrates the fact that judgment infallibly follows sin, by predictions against all the nations round about Israel. Judgment is never an isolated thing, but every sentence is pronounced on fixed principles. The doom of Israel is all the greater, by reason of that very favour upon which they were counting for lenient treatment.

Man naturally presumes upon favour. It is hard even yet to

make men believe that God's law is universal, and acts with unerring precision. Deep down in our hearts there lurks the conviction, or at least the hope, that somehow we will be made an honourable exception, that somehow God will deal with us on special terms, and that the particular evil we commit does not affront God's righteous law as ordinary evil does. Responsibility proportions favour. In the last instance there is no respect of persons. If Israel received a special revelation, there was a special condition attached to the choice. Election of any sort carries with it its penalty. All the thought that these Israelites had was that through their election they would escape duty, and the punishment of the breach of duty. But they were not chosen for their own sake, but for the work's sake. God elects a man, or a nation, to a duty, not to a privilege. The privilege is along the line of the duty. A special providence means a special responsibility. The clearer the light you stand in, the denser the shadow you throw. "Because I have known you, *therefore* I will punish you."

The temptation of privilege is to mistake the grounds on which the privilege is bestowed. Men who covet election are ready to forget the penalty of election. This is a heresy specially possible for Evangelicalism. Paul protested often against the wrong conception of grace, which made it of magical efficacy as the sign of God's favour with man, apart from any moral reason for that favour.

But the heresy of Antinomianism is not a mere ecclesiastical curiosity in Church history. It has its roots of temptation in human nature. It is of a piece with many of our lax views of life to-day. How natural it is for a man, who is in any way specially gifted, to assume that he has some particular dispensation to be selfish because of his superior gifts. We hear, for example, about the divine right of genius. The claim has been put forward more than once, sometimes in a subtle form, in the case of the sin of a poet, or artist, or gifted man. Genius often thinks it has liberty to break all social rules, and every canon of taste, and even the moral law. It is not to be tried by the same standard as commonplace endowments. This is a form of the weak, flaccid, presuming on favour, which Amos condemns, and which forgets that a gift carries a price. It is the temptation of the artistic temperament. Genius has no divine right—it has some divine duties. It has a

divine right not to *have* something, but to *be* something. Every privilege is a penalty. Every right is a duty. Every gift is a responsibility.

Through the whole of life the principle runs. Unbelief has sometimes sneered at the Bible view of God's favouritism. The sneer has force, but in a vastly different line. Election, which is a fact of life, is a privilege, and it is therefore a penalty. It is a fearful thing to be God's favourite. To be chosen of God is a terror—and a glory. "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself?"

HUGH BLACK.

THE IMPLICIT PROMISE OF PERFECTION.

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever. Forsake not the work of Thine own hands."—Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

THE chapel of San Lorenzo at Florence contains the monuments which Michael Angelo executed in memory of his princely patrons. On one of these marvellous tombs the sculptor has carved two reclining figures, to represent respectively the Night and the Day. Night is personified as a woman sunk in uneasy slumber. Day is portrayed in the shape of a man, who lifts himself in disturbed awakening. But this latter figure has never been finished. The limbs are partly chiselled, but the head and face are merely blocked out of the marble. Some interruption stayed the master's hand, and he left his work there imperfect and incomplete.

Now that half-finished statue in San Lorenzo is a parable of our human nature. There is the same strange pathetic sense of incompleteness, the same dumb prophecy of a perfection intended and required. The earnest expectation of the sculptor's ideal lies there, waiting to be manifest. That figure, which seems struggling to free itself from its stony shroud, if it could speak, would surely break out with St. Paul's longing: "Ah! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" One could imagine the spirit of the mighty artist to be still haunting the silent chapel, drawn there by some mute reproach from those marble lips, beseeching him to perfect that which concerned them, to forsake not the work of his own hands.