

The lord of the vineyard claims to have done the bargaining men "no wrong." And so far, the ordinary view may suffice to acquit him of injustice. But it will not acquit him of the far graver charge of wronging those that trusted him. For as these men, on entering the vineyard, were promised "whatsoever was right," so are they called at the evening time to receive their "hire." The trustful as well as the bargaining are to be paid for their *work*. As between the first and the last, it is undoubtedly just that the employer should deal with the one according to agreement, and with the other according to his own more generous estimate. But it is not consistent with justice, that the payment of those who all alike laboured trustfully should be irrespective of the amount of their toil. Their trustfulness gives them the advantage of the Householder's more liberal standard; but their labour entitles them still to its proportionate value.

By setting the conduct of the Householder in the clear light of principle, our view vindicates his *justice* (ver. 4). Enough has been said to show in how high a degree it enhances his *generosity*. It abundantly justifies his claim to be acknowledged "good" (ver. 15).

5. Lastly. *This view vindicates the consistency of Christ's Teaching*. That all shall receive according to their works is everywhere declared to be the principle whereby the awards of Christian service shall be ruled. Why should we, by a quite gratuitous assumption, make this principle to appear in distorted shape in a parable that treats of this very theme?

The inference, that it matters not when we begin to work for God, lies so obviously on the surface of the view, that assigns to all labourers an equal recompense, that all expositors find it needful to discredit so fatal an idea. But to show that it is false in the spiritual sphere is not enough to defend the parable, unless it can be shown to be unreasonable as an inference. Now, on the common view, it is not unreasonable. We must deny the assumption on which it rests. He who spoke the parable has Himself provided against so ruinous an inference. For the story, as we have read it anew, not only affords no ground for this

idea, but indicates how very greatly the reckoning will be affected by delaying to enter on the service of our Lord.

The parable thus presents, in beautiful harmony, the working of man and the generosity of God. Here is a Pisgah height, whence we may behold, in one far-reaching prospect, the fair heritage of grace, and the rewards of human effort. The goodness of the lord of the vineyard blends with the worth of the labourer's faithful toil. The teaching of Paul and the teaching of James meet in the parable of Christ.

If it be asked how it comes to pass that the recompense of these labourers has always been assumed to be, in every case, the same, we reply that this idea is a remnant from an older view concerning the main purpose of the parable. Time was when the chief lesson of the parable was supposed to be stamped on the penny. The penny was Salvation, and the bearing of the parable was to show that as the chief of sinners might be saved, so the holiest and the best could not be more than saved. In this interpretation, it was, of course, inevitable that the recompense should be held to be the same for all. This view survives also in the application that is sometimes made of the thought of the "Eleventh Hour." There is no need to show how foreign this view is to the spirit of both the parable and the context. It never arose from the exposition of Scripture; it was a doctrinal key believed to fit every lock, and very confidently applied to this. The doctrine may be true, but as an exposition of the parable it has long been set aside. Our Lord is speaking not about Salvation, but about Service; not about entering into peace with God, but about entering into work; and about the spirit that brings work into relation to the exceeding generosity of heaven.

The more careful Exegesis of modern times has placed the penny in a quite subordinate place. It lays stress on the contrast between the bargaining of the first and the faith of the last. But the "equal penny," received by tradition from our fathers, has hitherto obscured the generosity of the Householder, and the truth and the beauty of the parable.

The Religious Literature of the Month.

BOOKS.

DR. STALKER has prepared a new edition of his *Life of Jesus Christ*, one of the Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, crown 8vo, pp. 155, 1s. 6d.). We are thankful to see that he has not altered the text. A vivid picturesque style is the one thing

which never grows old or loses its charm. The notes have been carefully revised and brought up to date, the best literature which has appeared since its first issue being skilfully noted. This new edition should be got and placed beside the old. It is one of the few books of which we may afford to have two copies.

DR. SANDAY has also issued a new edition of *The Oracles of God* (London: Longmans & Co., crown 8vo, pp. xvi, 156, 4s.). It may never attain to Dr. Stalker's "thirty-fourth thousand," but no one will be surprised at the demand for a second edition in so short a time. While the whole book is carefully revised, the only important addition is a supplement to the first Appendix, the joint contribution of Dr. Driver and Dr. Sanday. Cursory readers of the work need not heed it, but the careful reader will perceive the value of it. Its bearing is upon the date of the Psalter, *questio vexatissima* at this particular time.

Romans Dissected: A Critical Analysis of the Epistle to the Romans. By E. D. M'Realsham (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, crown 8vo, pp. 76, 2s.). It has always been reckoned a great joy that when Baur and Tübingen cut away all the rest of the Pauline letters, they left the first four to Paul and us. Much has been made out of the concession. Many feeble knees have been stayed, and sometimes even bold unbelievers triumphantly answered. But it was a concession which could not always be given. The wonder is that it has been left us so long. Already some ripples have been seen upon the German Ocean. But, strange to say, it is across the Atlantic that the remorseless wave has come to devour and spare not.

Our hope is in the name. There is something suspiciously friendly in the Mac. And, then, trying the letters another way, the result is both surprising and reassuring.

The Christian Home: Its Foundation and Duties. By W. J. Knox Little, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Worcester, and Vicar of Hoar Cross (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., crown 8vo, pp. xiv, 287, 6s. 6d.). *The Christian Home*, which is dedicated to the Lord Bishop of London, contains the substance of three courses of lectures delivered last year in London, Oxford, and Worcester. There are thirteen in all—Love and Courtship, Marriage, Parent and Child, Unhappy Homes, The Home beyond the Grave, are some of the titles—and two Appendices on Marriage and Divorce, and on Marriage with the Sister of a Deceased Wife. Throughout the book Canon Knox Little maintains an irreconcilable opposition to the modern tendency to loosen the ties of marriage and tamper with the sanctities of home life. It is an earnest plea for the Christian sacredness of the family and the home, a plea which gradually gathers strength with the accumulation of instance and appeal till it seems as if it could not be resisted.

Alresford Essays for the Times. By Rev. W. O. Newnham, M.A., late Rector of Alresford (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., crown 8vo, pp. x, 292, 6s.). It will be perceived that there is no mystery or forgotten allusion in the title *Alresford Essays*. The parishioners of Alresford heard these Essays ("though in a different guise") from the pulpit, and Mr. Newnham was wise to add a name so unfor-

gettable (when once mastered) to his otherwise quite commonplace title. There are seven essays—The Bible Story of Creation, Eternal Punishment, After Death, Miracles, Eden, the Deluge, and the Resurrection of the Body. The order is puzzling. But so, in a measure, are the essays themselves. The first is conservative, and strange and new are the arguments Conservatism here lies down with. One begins to fear that the first book of the Bible is to become as mysterious and mystifying in its various interpretations as the last. The second essay is not what we have been wont to consider the mark of Conservatism, for it is a clever and telling argument against everlasting punishment. But the whole work is clever, and sometimes surprisingly convincing, even where one least expects or hopes to be convinced.

MAGAZINES.

The Century (Fisher Unwin, 1s. 4d.) has amongst other articles that are valuable, one of peculiar interest on "Fetichism in Congo Land," by Mr. E. J. Glave, one of Stanley's pioneer officers. The account of that mysterious rite, that Eleusinian mystery of the Congo, called the Nkimba, is quite fascinating. A boy, being captured, is carried to the hidden dwelling of the Nganga or Fetichman, where he is kept sometimes for two years. His body is chalked entirely white, and a strange dress of straight dry grass fronds is put upon him. He sees no relative, and dare not look on the face of any woman. He learns the mystical language of the Nkimba, and is initiated into the mysterious rites; but what they are, or what the language is, no white man has yet been able to discover. Meantime the lad is dead to the outer world; and when he returns to his people at the end of his probation, this idea is strictly carried out both by him and them; he is understood to have returned from the grave, the dead come to life again. Can it be, as Mr. Glave thinks, that it is a perverted recollection of Roman Catholic teaching, a relic of the Portuguese discovery of the Congo?

The Young Man (Partridge & Co., 3d.) has an article by the Rev. F. Ballard, M.A., on "The Bible and Science." "Let us mark at the outset," he says most opportunely, "that the terms 'Bible' and 'Science' are not correlatives. It is of decided importance to see that no opposition between these two can be logically affirmed. For they are not antithetical, and therefore cannot clash. So far is this from being a mere verbal quibble, that it would be quite true to say that the heart of the whole difficulty we are dealing with is in this distinction. The real correlatives are the Bible and Nature, Theology and Science. The former, in every case, is the matter to be examined. In the latter, we have the method of examination. What, therefore, Nature is to Science, that the Bible is to Theology."

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