

convinced thereby. Attention is called to a series of probabilities relating to the dogmatical contents of the Epistle, the taking for granted the reader's knowledge of Paulinism, the tangible relation in more than one point with Gnosis, the age of the community addressed, the using of a written Gospel and Acts, although it be rather the older *Periodoi Paulou* than Luke,—all of which show the origin of the Epistle to date from a later time than Paul († 64). Attempts made before and since to do away with objections, and to confirm the authenticity, are weighed in the balance and found wanting. Afterwards, it is declared that we may consider the Epistle as a remarkable witness to Paulinism, and an exhibition of the spiritual convictions connected with Paul's name, which we can call shortly and rightly a highly interesting reformation of the old Christianity, *i.e.* the Christianity of the apostles and of those who immediately followed them. As proof of the whole contention, a series of facts are noted which come

into full light if one admits the relatively late origin of Paulinism, or which harmonize perfectly with this supposition.

A fuller account of my book was given by Steck in German: *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung*, 1892, Nos. 34-35, as he had done in the previous year—1891, No. 34—with regard to *Paul I.: The Acts of the Apostles*. A third volume of these Pauline studies—*Paul III.: The Epistles to the Corinthians*—was published November 1896. It is reviewed and rejected by J. R. in the *Inquirer*, 27th February 1897; H. J. Holtzmann bestowed twelve lines on it in *Theol. Jahresh.* xvi. 144; Carl Clemen summarized the contents and criticized it in half a column of the *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, 1897, No. 21. A long review was given by Rud. Steck, *Protest. Monatshefte*, i. 333-342. In this volume the Epistles to the Corinthians are treated in the same way as the Romans in *Paul II.*

(To be concluded.)

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

JOHN xv. 5.

'I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing.'

EXPOSITION.

'I am the vine.'—The first words do not contain a mere repetition. The words which had been formerly spoken generally are now specifically applied to the relation to Christ and His disciples, in order to draw the conclusion that they can bear fruit only in fellowship with Him.—HENGSTENBERG.

'Ye are the branches.'—'I am the vine' was a general truth, with no clear personal application. 'Ye are the branches' brought each individual listener into connexion with it.—MACLAREN.

'He that abideth in Me, and I in him.'—How? Internally and externally. Internally by faith and love, and secret prayer; externally by partaking of the One Bread, and so being in the One Body (1 Co 10¹⁷), and also by continuance in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the common prayers (Ac 2⁴²).—SADLER.

'The same bringeth forth much fruit.'—What is this fruit, because upon so vital a matter there should be no

misconception? The first account of 'much fruit' of Christian works is at the very formation and outset of the Church: 'Fear (the true fear of God) came upon every soul, and all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men . . . and they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God.' This fruit, if it be the fruit of Christ dwelling in us, must be in accordance with His teaching. It must be the fruit of the Beatitudes—humiliation, godly sorrow, meekness, earnest desires after righteousness, mercifulness, peace-making, purity of heart, enduring persecution for righteousness' sake, and for Christ's sake. It must be the fruit set forth in St. Paul's account of charity, in St. Peter's adding of virtue to virtue (2 P 1³), in St. James's government of the tongue (Ja 3).—SADLER.

'Much fruit.'—Though it is not expressed, yet it is clear that the amount of the fruit depends upon the closeness of the adherence, *i.e.* on the strength of the faith and love.—SADLER.

'Apart from Me.'—Not simply without My help, but separated from Me. Cf. Eph 2¹², chap. 1³.—WESTCOTT.

'Do nothing.'—Accomplish nothing, bring out no permanent result. The thought is directly of Christian action, which can only be wrought in Christ. At the same time, the words have a wider application. Nothing that

really 'is' can be done without the Word, whose activity must not be limited when He has not limited it (10¹⁰; 1⁹).
—WESTCOTT.

Contrast with Christ's declaration here Paul's in Ph 4¹³, 'I can do all things through Him (Christ) that strengtheneth me.' No conclusion can be drawn from this utterance respecting the vexed question of the natural ability of the soul to repent of sin and accept Christ by faith. For Christ is here speaking to those who have thus accepted Him, and He declares simply the condition of fruitful Christian activity for all those who are, at least in avowed purpose, already His.—ABBOTT.

METHOD OF TREATMENT.

OUR ABODE IN CHRIST.

By the Rev. George Hill Dick.

To have power, to carry weight, to bear fruit, I must be in connexion with the Source of all power, all fruitfulness. My spirit must be in touch with another Spirit, and keep time therewith.

The connecting link is Faith. A connecting rod may be thick or thin, long or short, old or new; but it must connect. The telegraph wires are of small diameter; but they must not be broken.

Jesus says, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' The R.V. is better, 'I will in nowise fail thee, neither will I forsake thee.' Still more literally, 'I will never leave thee, no; neither will I forsake thee; no, never.' Faith takes that word from Jesus and acts upon it. The connexion is made.

And once made, the connexion must abide. To abide, the faith must be in continual exercise, like the growth of the mustard-seed into a tree. The Lord worked with the apostles, and they worked with the Lord. They were not discouraged. So David encouraged himself *in* the Lord, and his beautiful advice to Solomon is still as true as ever to those who live abreast of it. 'The Lord God, *even my God*, will be with *thee*; He will not fail thee nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.'

ILLUSTRATIONS.

FROM the intimate and enduring nature of this union there follows necessarily and inevitably a quality which distinguishes Christ and His people, as symbolized by the vine and its branches, *viz. mutual resemblance*. If we examine a growing vine very minutely and attentively, we

shall be struck with the remarkable resemblance which exists between all its parts. They all seem to be framed after the same pattern, and to be mere repetitions of each other. Even in the minor part of the tree—the leaf, the flower, the fruit, the seed—we find the same wonderful general likeness.

Each part of the vine, however, though a repetition and miniature of the whole in its general outlines and characteristics, has yet some special peculiarity of its own. No two branches are precisely the same in shape; no two leaves are exactly the same in colour and outline. And so with Christ's people. They all resemble each other in general features; they have a family likeness; they are all alike, so far as they bear the image of the heavenly Adam. Their faith, their aim, their hopes are one. But they have each some special divergence from the general type to prove their individuality.—H. MACMILLAN.

CHRIST in this place makes His simile to consist only in this, that as the vine-branch derives all its vigour and sap for producing grapes from the vine, so likewise must a believer draw from the grace of Christ all the nutriment and power needful for producing supernatural works. But there is this distinction to be drawn, that a man, in that he is a rational being, co-operates with grace, and that freely. This the branch in the vine does not do, because it is but a piece of wood devoid of reason. Now, it is the result of man's free co-operation that a good work is a free and human work, even as it is because of the influx of grace that such a work becomes supernatural, worthy of God, and pleasing to Him.

I confess, however, that the co-operation itself of free will is also of grace, in this sense, that unless free will were prevented, strengthened, and stirred up to co-operation by grace, and unless it had auxiliary or co-operating grace, it could not co-operate or do anything. This is the same reason by which Christ stimulates His disciples to abide in Him.—C. A. LAPIDE.

A YOUNG artist once complained to William Blake that the power of invention had forsaken him. To his astonishment, Blake turned to his wife suddenly and said, 'It is just so with us, is it not, for weeks together, when the visions forsake us? What do we then do?' asked he. 'We kneel down and pray,' said she. This was the same man who penned the lines—

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

—G. H. DICK.

AN illustration may sometimes serve a good turn in keeping truth distinctly before the mind. I therefore offer the following illustration of the mutual relations between Christ, our faith, and Christian ordinances. A woman, like the Samaritan in the Gospel, comes with a pitcher to draw water at a well. Her object is to reach and procure the water; and she does this by letting down the pitcher into

the well, and drawing it up again. It is at once understood that the pitcher is not the same thing as the muscular action, by which it is let down and drawn up. Both must contribute to the result; for without either pitcher or muscular action no water could be obtained, but the pitcher is external to the person, the muscular action a movement of the person. It is also clearly seen that neither pitcher nor muscular action is water—that the arm might put itself forth for ever, and the pitcher be let down continually, but that if it were a dry pit into which the vessel were lowered, no refreshment could be had thereby. The figure is easy of application. Christ is the Well of the Water of Life, from Whom alone can be drawn those streams of grace which refresh and quicken, and fertilize the soul. It is by faith that the soul reaches out after this living water; faith is the soul's muscular action, by which the water is drawn up and brought into use. But faith needs as an implement those means which Christ has appointed, and particularly the mean of means, which He instituted for the conveyance of Himself to faithful souls. These means are the pitcher in which the water is conveyed. Faith is not a Christ; neither are sacraments a Christ; but faith (under all circumstances) and sacraments, where they may be had, are necessary to the appropriation and enjoyment of Christ.—E. M. GOULBURN.

WE know of certain church members who are so completely under the cold shade of the world that the half-dozen sour dwarfish apples they yield are not worth any man's gathering. We know, too, of others so laden that you cannot touch the outermost limb without shaking down a golden pippin or a jargonelle. Such trees make a church or a land beautiful. They are a joy to the pastor who walks through them. Every stooping bough, and every purple cluster, that hangs along the walls, bespeaks the goodness of

the soil; the moisture of the Spirit's dews, and the abundance of God's sunshine. In glorious seasons of revival we realize old Andrew Marvell's description of his garden—

Ripe apples drop about our head;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine.

—T. L. CUYLER.

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The Atonement: Limitations of Theology.

BY THE REV. ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON, M.A., D.D., PRINCIPAL OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

IT is a trite and often repeated story that Bede tells of the conversion of Edwin, King of Northumbria. As he debated with his chiefs whether to receive the new teaching of Paulinus, one of them compared the life of man to the swift flight of a sparrow, flying through the warm, bright banquet-hall in winter, when rain and storms prevail abroad. He flies in at one door and immediately out at another into the dark winter from which he has emerged. 'So this life of man appears for a short space: but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain,

it seems justly to deserve to be followed.' This new doctrine has been ours for twelve centuries since then, but the words are as true and touching, and the challenge they offer to the Christian faith as frank and fair, as when they were first spoken. And if our faith has accepted and satisfied the challenge, if it has lightened for uncounted thousands of Christians the darkness which surrounds our brief life on earth, it has been, I think, first and foremost, not so much by direct and explicit information as to what lies beyond, as by inspiring a joyous and tranquil trustfulness, grounded on the certitude that the destiny of our