

scarcely logical to classify the materials, as Grenfell and Hunt have done, as (1) 'theological' texts (Nos. 1-6), (2) 'new classical' (7-15), (3) fragments of already known classics (16-29, all in Greek like the preceding; 30-32 in Latin), (4) a motley group of non-literary Greek texts of the first four centuries of the Christian era (33-124) and the early Byzantine period (125-158), (5) forty-nine other non-literary papyri which the editors have thought it sufficient to describe without publishing them *verbatim* (159-207).

No. 1 is our old friend the *Δόγμᾶ Ἰησοῦ*, of which so much has been heard. No. 2 will doubtless receive the attention to which it is entitled, especially if it should prove to date, as Grenfell and Hunt are inclined to think, from the end of the third century. This would make it, of course, *the oldest extant remnant of a N.T. writing*. Unfortunately it is only a fragment, including more or less distinctly Mt 1¹⁻⁹. 12. 14-20. It is part of a *book*, not of a *roll*, and exhibits a text akin to that of *κ* and *B*. No. 3 is a fragment of an uncial of the fifth or sixth century, and contains Mk 10^{50f.} and 11^{11f.} in a form of text akin to *A*.

Passing over what Deissmann has to say on the other 'theological' and the 'classical' texts, we note the importance he attaches to the non-literary papyri. He thinks it is a mistake that these have not been published in full, because from several points of view they are of more interest than the classical fragments, except where the latter are quite new. Especially does he prize the non-literary fragments for the light they throw upon the history of the Greek language. He instances the distributive use of a number like the *δύο δύο* of Mk 6⁷, which could hitherto be traced backwards to the LXX of Gn 7¹⁵ (and oft.), as well as to Æschylus, *Persæ* 981 (*μυρία μυρία = κατὰ μυριάδας*). The other end of the line terminated in modern Greek. Between these two extremes we had only the doubtful instances cited by Karl Dieterich from the *Apophth. Patrum* (500 A.D.), but now the missing link is supplied by Papyrus Oxyrh. No. 121 (third century), in which one Isidoros writes to one Aurelios that he is to bind the sticks in bundles of three each (*εἶνα δέσση τρία τρία*).

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Sermonettes on the Golden Texts.

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I.

'So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.'—JOHN iv. 53.

THIS was what might be called an instance of putting two and two together. It is rather a difficult thing sometimes to do, though you may smile at the idea of there being any difficulty about it. You think you are far past that stage in arithmetic now, and you look upon it as the easiest thing imaginable. Yet it would seem to be rather an uncommon accomplishment, for it is regarded as high praise of a man to say of him that he can put two and two together. Not literally, it is true, but the meaning is that there are problems just as easy as that bit of arithmetic, and yet most of us may be wonderfully dense with regard to them. We see the thing after it is done, and it appears so simple then that we wonder we never managed

to do it ourselves. Newton, watching the fall of the apple, rose from that to the grand idea of universal gravitation, and we all see it now, see its truth and beauty; but it needed a Newton, for all that, to think of connecting the two things in the first place. Nansen concluding that there was a current in the northern ice that would take his vessel towards the Pole, and bring him out into open water again beyond, was another instance of a man putting two and two together.

The Bible is full of examples of those who in various ways did this arithmetical sum. You remember, when Jacob's sons came back from Egypt and told him that Joseph was alive and governor over all the land, Jacob could hardly believe it, and no wonder. But, we are told, when he saw the waggons, laden with corn and presents, his heart revived. Suppose they had brought the waggons without any explanation, what a mysterious,

inexplicable thing it would have been! Suppose, on the other hand, the sons had told their story, and brought no proof with them of its truth, we might not wonder at Jacob hesitating to believe. But when he heard their story, and also saw the waggons, he put two and two together, and would have been very foolish to have had further doubts about the matter.

It is possible, however, to make terrible blunders even in what may seem to be very simple problems. Eve, for instance, made a sad mistake in putting two and two together. The serpent said, 'Ye shall not surely die'; and when the woman, we read, saw that the tree was good for food, she took of the fruit thereof. That was a disastrous mistake. The result of her addition was very different from what she thought. From the very beginning she should have doubted the serpent's words, nay, not merely doubted but disbelieved them. They ran counter to the Lord God's statement, and that should have been enough.

It was not a very difficult problem this Capernaum nobleman had to solve. He had, first of all, the distinct word of Jesus, and, later on, he was told of the remarkable recovery of his son. Finding, on inquiry, that he began to recover at the very time when Jesus spoke to him, he put the two things together, and himself believed, we are told, and his whole house.

But what about ourselves? What about ourselves with respect to Christ? We are often very blind to the simplest operations in the spiritual world. Is it not just like putting two and two together, for instance, to connect our sin and need with Christ's remedy? I find in myself a sinfulness that makes me sad, and a weakness in the doing of right that makes me hopeless. But Christ comes and offers forgiveness, and the power to fight against sin. I put these two things together, and find they fit each other as key and lock. I believe in Christ, because He is so truly suited to my needs. I believe in Him as the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Or, again, the Bible says, 'whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' That is certainly true in nature. You can't sow thorns and expect grapes, or plant thistles and look for figs. The reaping will be the same in kind as the sowing. Now, put that alongside the scriptural statement, and you may be perfectly sure from these two

witnesses—Nature and the Bible—that the law holds good for your life. And especially is it worth while to give heed to that law in early years, for we can't live our life twice over to correct mistakes. If things were to be done twice, the proverb says, all would be wise. But may you be made wise from the beginning in the doing of that which you may see now to be a more comprehensive thing than perhaps you thought, viz. the putting of two and two together.

II.

'And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.'—
JOHN iv. 42.

OF all the evangelists we read of, this woman was certainly one of the strangest. She was the means of bringing a large number to Christ, and on the very day she found Christ herself. Faithful servants have laboured for years, and not been so successful. And what was the gospel she preached? A very poor one. 'Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did.' She says nothing of the living water, nothing of that profound statement about worship that has filled with joy so many hearts since then. She was impressed above all by Christ's knowledge of her own past.

Well, it *was* a proof of Christ's real and super-human insight. There are some people—palms-istry professors and such like—who pretend to read the future. We should be inclined to ask them, 'Can you tell the past? Can you read my past history? If you do that rightly, then I shall be readier to believe in your claims to read the future.' He who could do the one could do the other also. Now, both past and future Christ reads. You remember how, in the case of Nathanael, He began by reading his past: 'An Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile,' and 'Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.' And then He went on to speak of the future, and to tell of the greater things that He should yet see.

Jesus abode two days among the Samaritans,—only two days; but, in a deeper sense, let us trust, He never left them again. In those two days they found Him out for themselves. Who could be two days in Christ's company without having their eyes opened to His majesty, and their ears to the

melody of His message? Nothing is told us regarding the nature of Christ's intercourse with them. Did He read *their* past, too? Did He refer to something which no stranger would know of? Or, were they impressed by some of those loftier revelations, whose grandeur the woman seems hardly to have realized? Surely, if a truth, like that about the worship of God, were desecrated for the first time, it would smite 'with a solemn and a sweet surprise,' and thenceforth the whole aspect of the world would be changed to one possessed of such an emancipating thought.

Apart, too, from His words, we may be sure there would be something winning in Christ's manner. There are some people we have difficulty in believing in, however much may seem to be in their favour—

I do not love thee, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell.

There are others, again, we are inclined to believe in, whatever might seem to be against them. The author of *Mark Rutherford* tells of a man accused of theft by his employer. He was not guilty, being the victim of a plot against him by a fellow-workman. He went home and told his wife of the accusation, and said, 'Do *you* believe I did it?' She laughed the idea to scorn. She knew her husband, knew his character, and would not have believed him guilty, whatever the evidence that might have been brought against him. The whole world might be on the one side, but she would stand on the other, even if she stood alone. And so, surely, it would be with any who had the high privilege of Christ's abiding with them two days. They would so know Him, so be drawn to Him, that nothing dubious, nothing inexplicable, would thereafter shake their allegiance. One would like to think it was so with the Samaritans, through all the dark days yet to come—

Whoso hath felt the spirit of the Highest,
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny;
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

Whatever it was that led the people to believe in Jesus, there is no question that they came to the right conclusion when they declared Him to be the Christ, the Saviour of the world. That was a grand conclusion to reach, and a true one,

by whatever steps they arrived at it. And there is one thing in which we ought to be like them; we ought to judge for ourselves. We hear about Jesus, and read about Him; have we lived with Him? Did He ever abide two days with us? If you want to find out what Jesus is, and what He can do, open the heart's door to Him, bid Him welcome from porch to inmost recess, and then you will know from your own experience that He is worthy to receive blessing and honour and glory and power.

III.

'And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.'—JOHN vi. 35.

BREAD, water, rest, life: these were the things Christ offered in His great invitations. Bread to sustain, water to refresh, rest to restore, and life which includes all and much more. Bread is one of the great necessities of life. Daily we must get our supply. The bread-winner is the name sometimes given to the head of a household. In the highest sense Christ is the great Bread-winner for the human race. In and by Him is provision made for our spiritual needs.

For one thing, Christ may be likened to bread in its *universal use*. Bread is on every table. Alike in the prison and the palace bread is needed. And so Christ, as the Bread of Life, is for every heart,—for the learned Nicodemus as truly as for the ignorant woman at the well; for Jairus, the ruler, as well as for the woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment; for the rich man of Arimathæa as well as for the blind beggar of Jericho; for the enlightened and the benighted, for the wise and the simple. The wise must come simply, and the simple are made wise in coming.

Christ may be compared to bread also in its *wholesomeness*. That is the term that St. Paul uses several times in referring to the words of Jesus. He calls them wholesome words, or sound words. And it is worth noting that it is in his later Epistles that he specially does so; that is to say, it is the term that seemed to him, in his ripest Christian experience, to best describe what Jesus was. As we grow in life, we get more particular about wholesome food. In childhood we are apt to have a fondness for fancy things, but, later on, we learn to value plain food, that which leaves no un-

pleasant effects. At forty, it is said, a man is either a fool or a physician. If he has any wisdom at all, he should know by that time what agrees with him. And St. Paul, knowing from his own long experience how wholesome a thing the gospel was, and seeing how much that characteristic of it needed to be realized, emphasizes it in writing to Timothy. In that respect the words of Christ, and of the Bible generally, have been well tested. They alone, in connexion with the spiritual life of man, have proved wholesome, healthy, beneficial.

Again, Christ may be likened to bread in its *price*. It would not do for bread, one of the necessaries of life, to be costly, to be within the reach of only the few. It is very important for a country that its bread be cheap and free from taxation. Let taxes be put on anything rather than upon the common necessary food of the people. In this respect, the Bread of Life is cheaper still; it is the free gift of God, without money and without price. Some, it is true, would fain put heavy taxes upon it. There is the priestly monopolist, for example, who tells you you can only get the genuine article through him. And there is a kind of Calvinist sometimes to be met with, who is hampered by his views of election in giving a free offer of the gospel. And there are some professing handlers of the Bread of Life, whose store of provision lies at the end of an intricate maze; 'tis an ingenious thing to get at it. Away with all such impositions and hindrances! It could hardly be said, in such circumstances, that 'the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread.'

At the same time there is a sense in which the Bread of Life is by no means duty free. If in one sense it is cheaper, in another it is far dearer than bread for the body. As Professor Drummond put it, 'The entry money is nothing, the subscription is all you have.' In new countries free gifts of land are often given to settlers, but on certain conditions, one being that so much of the land is every year to be brought under cultivation. And so is it with God's free gift; we can only receive on condition that we receive to use, and to grow in grace thereby, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. In a word, it is with the Bread of Life as it is with the bread for the body,—we do not live to eat, but we eat to live.

IV.

'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.'—JOHN vii. 37.

It *was* the great day of the feast, in a sense most of His hearers did not understand, when Jesus stood, and cried these words. It was a great invitation that He gave, wide in its scope, bountiful in its offer, and definite in its source of supply. Let these be our points for consideration.

First, *the scope of the invitation*. 'If any man thirst.' No one can imagine himself excluded there. Jesus deals in wide, all-embracing terms in His invitations: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour'; 'Whosoever believeth.' And His command, to those who were to sound the proclamation in His name, was to go into *all* the world and preach the gospel to *every* creature. 'The sound that God sent all about,' is how an old poet quaintly puts it; and it is sent all about, just because it is an invitation, free and full, that is meant for all.

Secondly, *the bountifulness of the offer*. It is here, however, that a limitation comes in. If the invitation is for whosoever heareth, it does not apply to whatsoever the hearer may wish. If it is for any man, it is not an offer of anything. 'If any man thirst,' says Jesus. Does He mean that, if you thirst for freedom from trouble and trial, for a way with no cross on it, for an easy life, a comfortable existence, He will grant according to your desires in these things? Suppose that religion did offer all that, what would be the result? There would be no doubt, certainly, as to its popularity, the whole world would go after it; but what sort of religion would it be? It would be simply a scramble after the Almighty,—a universal scramble,—with nothing more dignified or uplifting about it than the scramble at Klondyke or Johannesburg for the golden dust. We might well say, in such circumstances, 'When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?' No, Jesus does not promise to satisfy every kind of thirst. In some ways you may have all the more trouble through following Him. Your very faithfulness to right may involve hardest trial in relation to worldly things. Christ is a specialist. We believe in specialism in these days. We have specialists for the eye, and for the ear, etc.; and reverently but truly it might be said that Christ is

a specialist for the *heart*. He offers to minister just where the world cannot minister, and to give the one thing—a new heart and a right spirit—that no one else can give.

Has Christ's blessing, then, no reference to our daily life and earthly trials? Oh, yes. There is a blending of heavenly peace with our earthly troubles. They lose their hurtful and oppressive weight. And, again, he who lives by the Spirit of Christ is the one who will be most fit to be trusted in his daily work and duties. He will do these all the more conscientiously and faithfully, and will therefore come to be trusted by his fellow-men. His religion should make him the fitter for the ordinary duties of life, and, as the saying is, 'the stone that is fit for the wall will not be left upon the road.'

Thirdly, *the source of supply*. There can be no

mistaking what Jesus meant as to the source of blessing. He spake with no uncertain sound—'Let him come unto Me.' The only difficulty might be as to what was meant by coming to Him, for many were close enough to Him outwardly, as He spake, and yet, in spirit, very remote. A poor woman touched the hem of His garment, and was blessed, body and spirit, thereby; and yet, as has been said, the Roman soldiers had all His raiment between them, and it did them no particular good. Two persons may be nearer each other, between whom the ocean rolls, than two who may be climbing the same hillside. It is not miles, but sin, that separates from Christ. Faith will bring us near the Saviour, and a perfect trust would mean a complete union. Then would He be with us, renewing day by day, and safely keeping, till the time come at last when we shall be with Him.

The Unity of Deuteronomy.

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III.

(c) Next I raised the question whether the above interchange of singular and plural has analogies *outside Deuteronomy*. In the course of my investigation I have discovered the following:—

(a) Change of address from singular to plural: the 'thou' of Ex 20² stands first for the 'people' (19²⁵), although in the further course of the Decalogue it came to designate every individual member of the people. To the 'we' of 20^{19b} the 'you' of 20²⁰ attached itself, as did the 'ye' of 20^{22b} to the 'children of Israel' (20^{22a}). The 'thou' of 20²⁴ may be individualizing (cf. the sing. 'altar' and 'every place') as in 21² (on the 'thou' of 22¹⁷, see below). Then singular and plural interchange in 'thou shalt never vex a stranger, etc.; for ye were strangers' (Ex 22^{20ab} [Eng. 21^{ab}]). For the individual Israelite of 22^{20a}, who is enjoined in the future to show kindness to the individual stranger, had not himself been a stranger in Egypt. The plural of 22²¹ suits both the preceding sentence and the 'any' (כָּל); but in v. 22 the individualizing singular is introduced, in harmony with the singular object, אִתּוֹ (the 'them'

of the A.V. in v. 23^a is not sufficiently exact). Then singular and plural interchange in 22^{22f, 24ab, 26f}. Specially important is it that the singular is employed all through the section 23^{1-9a}, but the plural in v. 9^b, whereas again the singular is preferred in vv. 10-12, but the plural in v. 13. Next comes again the singular in vv. 14-24, but the plural in v. 25. So the singular is found in 34^{11f}, the plural in v. 13, the singular in vv. 14-26, and yet 34¹⁴ contains the causal proposition, 'for thou shalt worship,' etc., to the preceding 'ye shall destroy,' etc.

(β) Change from plural to singular: 'All the congregation of Israel' and 'the elders of Israel,' who are addressed in Ex 12^{3, 21}, are naturally represented in the first instance by the plural (12^{5-24a}). But in v. 24^b there follows, 'as an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.' If this singular be not individualizing, it is at least strongly parenthetical. This singular is retained also in Sam., Onk., and LXX, and the Pesh. is the first to introduce the levelling אֲנִי וְאַתָּה. Moreover, this fact contains a warning not to