

heart'—what science dares to say that? But with that a gospel begins; if it should end too with that, small loss perhaps! That is at any rate the gospel's heart of heart—the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ; the authoritative declaration of God's mind and purpose towards us. Do not let the word 'authoritative' be misconstrued! It is not the authority of a Church, or a Bible, or even of an official mediator, that is spoken of; but the personal authority with which a personality, in heaven or on earth, interprets himself. If there are scraps of this in the lower religions, we praise God for these scraps too, but they are chiefly His affairs, or theirs—the souls who had only lower religions to live by. None the less, upon a general view, 'natural theology' is the laborious spelling out of God's impersonal word. It is worth spelling over: all that comes from God is sacred. But we have a personal word from God. For us *the word became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory*. Discovery is revelation? Why, yes; but this central revelation

is the nail which drives all home and from which all others hang.

One does not wish to quote the old grudging disparagement of Revelation in contrast to redemption. A spiritual religion must be capable of being read off in terms of mind. We only stupefy ourselves if we insist upon a single monotonous set of phrases or ideas. 'He hath declared Him' is Scripture, no less than 'peace by the blood of His cross.' Yet the thought of God's (one) personal word has to lead us on to the thought of God's (one) personal deed. Can it be pretended, in any Christian camp, that the Redemption, too, is only the best phase of the perpetual redemptive function of the God of nature? It is through the name of Christ that the universal purpose of love works its achievement—in any race, or in any world.

Does this seem to mean less of science, or of reason? Let us look twice! Let us make sure! Yet (if we must) we shall do with less of science, with less of reason. For our first loyalty is to Christ, and our one supreme need is God.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. LUKE.

LUKE VII. 47.

'Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' (R.V.).

EXPOSITION.

'Wherefore I say unto thee.'—Our Lord gives the reason for His *saying* that she is forgiven, not for the forgiveness itself. The latter sense is ungrammatical, as well as out of keeping with the parable.—SCHAFF.

'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.'—Jesus did not ignore or make light of sin in forgiving it. This woman had lived in a state of depravity, accumulating guilt and shame.—ADENEY.

'For she loved much.'—We have to choose between two possible interpretations. 1. 'For which reason, I say to thee, her many sins have been forgiven, because she loved much.' . . . Her sins have been forgiven for the reason that her love was great; or her love won forgiveness. This is the interpretation of Roman Catholic commentators, and the doctrine of *contritio caritate formata* is built upon it. But it is quite at variance (a) with the parable which precedes; (b) with the second half of the verse, which ought in that case to run, 'but he who loveth little, wins little forgiveness'; (c) with v.⁵⁰, which states that it was *faith*, not love,

which had been the means of salvation; a doctrine which runs through the whole of the N.T. This cannot be correct. 2. 'For which reason I say to thee, her many sins have been forgiven (and I say this to thee), because she loved much'; i.e. *λέγω σου* is not parenthetical, but is the main sentence. This statement, that her many sins have been forgiven, is rightly made to Simon, because he knew of her great sinfulness, he had witnessed her loving reverence, and he had admitted the principle that the forgiveness of much produces much love. This interpretation is quite in harmony with the parable, with the second half of the verse, and with v.⁵⁰.—PLUMMER.

'But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.'—This is the other side of the truth, as it applied to Simon: little (conscious) sin, little love. The doctrine here enunciated is another very original element in this story. It and the words in Lk 5³¹ and 15⁷ form together a complete apology for Christ's relation with the sinful.—BRUCE.

THE SERMON.

Little Forgiveness, Little Love.

By the Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D.D.

They were a strange trio, our Lord, Simon, and the woman—Simon barely courteous, scandalized at her intrusion, and her vehement tokens of love,

and our Lord's acceptance of them. Then, in her defence, Christ told him the parable of the two debtors, with their respective debts, and proportional love. It laid down two principles: forgiveness precedes and is the cause of love; the measure of forgiveness is the measure of love.

Christ speaks here of little sins, little forgiveness, and little love.

I. *Little sins.*—Christ recognizes the distinction between Simon and the profligate woman. Much harm has been done by insisting on the equality in God's sight of all varieties of conduct without faith in Christ. It is *not* the same whether a man breaks all the rules of morality and propriety, or keeps within them. There *are* great and little sins. Further, 'little' here applies also to the difference between men's estimates of their transgressions. There is objective difference in the sins, subjective difference in men's consciousness of them. God has a finer balance than those by which we weigh conduct, and an act which, by our standard, is a great transgression, may be less tainted with sin than many acts of highly respectable people. There are great and small sins, but the difference cannot be estimated from the outside. And, properly speaking, no sin is small, since it affects wrongly our relation to God. We have only to go beneath the surface of our own hearts and realize what is there, to give up the delusion that we are respectable, little sinners.

II. *Little forgiveness.*—Simon did not know how much he needed pardon. He owned to a debt of fifty pence, and for this he was forgiven. He is a type of Christians who never see their true condition, and therefore are only capable of receiving partial forgiveness. Its measure is settled by the measure of our recognition of our sinfulness, and of our repentance.

III. *Little love.*—Our Lord seems to limit real love to God to men who have experienced pardon. Nothing so brings the soul to self-surrendering love to God. The principle is a true one, though it must not be pushed to extremes, that the greatest sinners do often make the most fervent saints. A man's sense of forgiveness is the measure of his love. This explains the tepidity of forms of Christianity which make light of sin, and the coldness of many nominal Christians. Our guilt must be measured by the law: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.

And when we realize it and the price paid for our forgiveness, our hearts will be touched with a passion of love unattainable by any other means.

Some Results of a Great Forgiveness.

By the Rev. S. W. Chambers, B.A.

We have here the intuitions of love. One of the remarkable features of the incident is that the woman says nothing. So far as we know, she spoke not a single word. She does not explain herself; and there is no need,—the loving, searching eye of Jesus will see and understand. She asks nothing. And yet she gets what she most longed for. The whole conduct of the woman in Simon's house shows that she came to Jesus knowing she would not be spurned away, and assured that He would pronounce the word of forgiveness. *It is the intuition of love on both sides.* A world of meaning may be cast into a look; and from the first glance she had of the Saviour's eye, the woman knew that He understood her and forgave her—whence her acts of devotion in washing and anointing His feet. This mute, though passionate, homage exhibits some results of the great forgiveness.

1. *The Delicacy of the Forgiven.*—The woman came to Jesus to lay bare her soul, to unburden its woeful, joyful contents; and though she succeeded in doing it voicelessly, yet the manner of doing it involved a disregard of the conventional. But Simon need not have been scandalized. The broken heart has no respect for forms and appearances; but it is never presumptuous or offensive. True humility is unaffected. Love cannot wait, but its haste is never unholy.

'Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water,' etc. Her quick eye notices the discourteous omissions of Simon; and she seizes the opportunity of rendering these services to Jesus, knowing they will convey far better than could words her self-abasement, love, devotion. One of the most beautiful things in the world is a chastened spirit. It may be wrought out by pain, by great sorrow, by shame, but most effectively by penitence and pardon at Christ's feet. There is no experience that approaches this one in refining power; none that makes us think and feel and act so delicately and tenderly; none that makes us so gentle in touch and sympathy. Thus is the stony heart replaced by the heart of flesh. Thus are we saved

from being coarsened, hardened, crustified by the selfishness of sin.

2. *The Tears of the Forgiven.*—‘And she stood at Jesus’ feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears.’ This was an hour of grace for her. However much she deplored her sins before coming, she must have hated and loathed them most as she stood there in presence of the Lamb of God. What a contrast she was to Him! Sin never seemed so black, gross, fatal as in that moment. These, then, are *tears of penitence*.

But if she sees compassion and forgiveness in Christ’s eye, why do not the tears cease to flow? It is a great forgiveness, and is the time not one for gladness and song? The heart, indeed, must be full—full to overflowing. Truly, these are also *tears of joy*. Gladness and gratitude can flow forth as purely and as fully in this way as in any other.

Israel returned from the long Captivity ‘going and weeping.’ The more earnest and more strenuous Christian life becomes,—the more confessions, crosses, battles, victories there are in it,—the fuller will it be of these tears of a double significance. Our exaltations and our humiliations shall alike keep our hearts melted at the feet of Jesus.

3. *The Sacrifices of the Forgiven.*—‘And behold a woman . . . brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet.’ Her dignity, in its artificial sense, was laid aside utterly. The costly ointment was poured out freely. The forgiveness was great, and the sacrifices must be great. The sacrifices of the forgiven are always a matter of proportion. Abraham could offer his son; Job could part with his possessions, and David with his child. They gave in the ratio that God had forgiven.

4. *The Renewal of the Forgiven.*—‘Thy sins are forgiven thee’; ‘Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.’ A broken life, but a mended soul. Whatever her record may have been, she left Simon’s house a new woman with a new future—with purer emotions surging in her breast, and paths of nobler service dawning upon her view. She had, what many long to have, another start. The prime value of forgiveness is its power to awaken, to restore, to renew—to give the golden chance of beginning life again at the beginning.

Simon is the ugly background throwing into stronger relief the heaven-born qualities of his humble visitor. The delicacy, the tears, the sacri-

fices, the hopes that transfigured her pathetic form were altogether beyond him;—and beyond him, because he had been convicted of little, forgiven little, and therefore loved little.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

So great Love.

A Christian minister who was visiting various mission fields a few years ago heard the native converts at a mission station in Ceylon sing with great enthusiasm and many gesticulations a hymn in the native language. On asking the missionary what the words were, he replied that one verse ran: ‘Through the love of God Carey brought the gospel to our land’; another, ‘Through the love of God Moody and Sankey preached the gospel’; while the last verse was to this effect, ‘Through the love of God the murderer of thirty was forgiven.’ The chorus was, ‘O there are heaps of love at the foot of the Cross,’ which was sung as they lifted their hands on high. On asking what the last verse about the ‘murderer of thirty’ referred to, he was told the following incident that had happened there.

There was a notorious band of robbers in the mountains years ago, who were the terror of the country and murdered many travellers. One day, however, the leader of the band was caught, and it was decided to sell him as a slave rather than put him to death. The man who bought him, however, could do nothing with him, as he was surly and refused to work. He sold him to another, with the same result. Several times he changed owners, but no one wanted the robber slave. It was then that a missionary heard of him. He took him and treated him kindly, but his surliness and obstinacy continued. However, the man of God did not despair. Often he had him in his study, spoke to him about his sin and the great love of God, and prayed with him, at the same time wrestling with God for his soul. This continued for a long time. One day the ex-robber came of his own accord to the missionary’s study and sat down without saying a word. After a while he asked the missionary abruptly: ‘Is the love of your God great enough to forgive a man who has murdered some one?’ He was assured that it was. ‘But is His love great enough to forgive a murderer of two people?’ Again the reply was, ‘Yes, certainly.’ He was silent a moment. ‘But what about a murderer of five men?’ ‘God’s love,’ replied the missionary, ‘is great enough to forgive even a murderer of five.’ The man sat thinking a little while, and then, looking up, asked: ‘And can God forgive a man who has murdered ten?’ ‘Even so great a sinner God can forgive, because Christ has died for sinners.’ The robber was not yet satisfied. He seemed afraid to say more, but after a long silence he asked, ‘Just one more question, sir. Is the love of your God so great that He could forgive the sins of a murderer of thirty?’ The missionary explained that there was no limit to the love of God, and that the greatest sinner in the world who repented would be forgiven. ‘Is that true, sir,’ exclaimed the man eagerly; ‘I am a murderer of thirty people, will God forgive me?’ ‘If you repent and believe in Jesus, then God has forgiven you even if you are a murderer of thirty.’ Thereupon the man leapt to his feet and rushed out

shouting with joy. People thought he was mad, but he soon proved that he was possessed with a passionate love for the God who had forgiven him so much. He ultimately went to the mountains to preach the love of God to his former friends, and before his death he was the means of gathering about 2000 souls into the Kingdom. His great love to the God who had forgiven him so much never grew cold.

A. C. MURRAY.

Parsonage, Heidelberg, Cape Colony.

Forgiveness and Love.

'A LAD named Sydney, having reached the age of ten, considered he ought to be paid for various little services rendered to his mother in the home. Hearing a conversation concerning certain bills that had to be paid, he conceived the idea of making out a bill for what he had done, and the next morning he quietly laid on his mother's plate the following statement:—'Mother owes Sydney: For getting coal six times, 6d. For fetching logs of wood lots of times, 6d. For going an errand twice, 4d. For being a good boy, 2d. Total, one shilling and sixpence.' The mother examined the bill, but said nothing. That evening Sydney found it lying on his own plate, with the eightpence as payment; but accompanying it was another bill, which read as follows:—'Sydney owes Mother: For his happy home for ten years—*nothing*. For all his food—*nothing*. For nursing him through his illness last year—*nothing*. For his last new suit of clothes—*nothing*. For being good to him—*nothing*. Total—*nothing*.' When the lad had looked at this for a moment, his eyes were dim and his lips quivering. Presently he took the eightpence out of his pocket, and, unable to control his emotion, he rushed to his mother, flung his arms round her neck and exclaimed, 'Mother, dear! I was a mean wretch to give you that bill! Please forgive me, and let me do lots of things for you still!' The mother's forgiveness of the debt awakened and increased the boy's love.

FRANK COX.

Muswell Hill, N.

AFTER the war was over, General Longstreet was encouraged to hope that he would be amnestied, although he had been so prominent in the Confederate army. President Johnson, however, said to him, 'There are three men in this country who can never enjoy the benefits of amnesty, Jeff Davis, R. E. Lee, and yourself.' Telling the story, General Longstreet says: 'I said to him, "Mr. President, those who are forgiven most love the most." With that I went back to my home in Georgia. A year after a petition for me went up, and General Grant and General Pope went in my behalf to see it through, and they did. I felt that I had not loved the Union before as I did then, and again I said, "Those who are forgiven most love the most."'

SHE sat and wept beside His feet. The weight Of sin oppressed her heart; for all the blame And the poor malice of the worldly shame To her were past, extinct, and out of date; Only the sin remained—the leprous state. She would be melted by the heat of love, By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove And purge the silver ore adulterate.

She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blest to touch;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much.

COLERIDGE.

THE story of Jean Valjean as told by Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables* illustrates this text. Convicted of stealing a loaf for the hungry children of his sister, he was imprisoned for two years. Having tried to escape, the imprisonment was spun out to nineteen years. He had entered prison a simple-hearted youth, with no criminal intentions. Nineteen years of punishment had turned him into a social Ishmael. Every man's hand was against him: his should be against every man. Finding hospitality, the first night of his release, only in the home of the good Bishop Bienvenu, by whom he was received and treated as an honoured guest, he rewarded the kindness in the basest way. Rising in the dead of night, he took from a cupboard above the sleeping bishop's head the silver candlesticks which had been placed out in his honour at supper, and decamped. Caught and brought back next morning by the gendarmierie, he was confronted by the bishop, who forgave him, giving him the candlesticks. The forgiveness came in such a way that the man's whole life was changed from that morning. Gradually the remembrance of that noble pardon permeated his conscience and his heart, until he was transformed into the beneficent citizen and the man of love. To trace the influence of that forgiveness on the man's life is fascinating, is inspiring; and in doing so, we are able better to understand that he to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much.

THERE is an exquisite picture of the contrition of a soiled soul in *Robert Falconer*. Falconer is reading the story of the Magdalene to a company of sinners. 'Some one sobbed again. It was a young slender girl, with a face disfigured by smallpox, and save for the tearful look it wore, poor and expressionless. Falconer said something gentle to her. "Will He ever come again?" she sobbed. "Who?" said Falconer. "Him—Jesus Christ. I've heard tell, I think, that He was to come again some day." "Why do you ask?" "Because," she said, with a fresh burst of tears, which rendered the words that followed unintelligible. But she recovered herself in a few moments, and, as if finishing her sentence, put her hand up to her poor, thin, colourless hair, and said, "*My hair ain't long enough to wipe His feet.*"'

ALSO I ask, but ever from the praying

Shrinks my soul backward, eager and afraid,

Point me the sum and shame of my betraying,

Show me, O Love, Thy wounds which I have made.

Yes, Thou forgivest, but with all forgiving

Canst not renew mine innocence again;

Make Thou, O Christ, a dying of my living,

Purge from the sin but never from the pain.

So shall all speech of now and of to-morrow,

All He hath shown me or shall show me yet,

Spring from an infinite and tender sorrow,

Burst from a burning passion of regret.

Standing afar, I summon you anigh Him,
 Yea, to the multitudes I call and say,
 'This is my King! I preach and I deny Him,
 Christ! whom I crucify anew to-day.'

F. W. H. MEYERS, *St. Paul.*

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Recent Foreign Theology.

Max Reischle.¹

THIS book has evidently been a labour of love to the editors. They have done their work admirably. The reader who knew nothing of Reischle when they opened the book will carry away with him a clear impression of the man, of the place he filled in his time, of the influences which moulded him, and the work he did. The fine portrait of Reischle which stands opposite the title-page makes a good impression on the reader and predisposes him to read eagerly and kindly. Then we open the book and read first the preface, and then the biographical introduction. Here there is nothing superfluous, and there is nothing lacking needed for the appreciation of the man and his work. It is a fine bit of work, done in a beautiful spirit, and with admirable literary skill. Then we have seven papers from the pen of M. Reischle, dealing with important questions, enough to show the reader where the author stood, and what kind of work proceeded from his pen. These papers deal with living and burning questions, and deal with them in a living way. The first is a sermon, the second asks the question, Do we know the deep things of God? the third deals with faith in historical fact, the fourth discusses the question of the bodily resurrection of Christ, and so on. The standpoint of the author is very much that of

¹ *Aufsätze und Vorträge von Max Reischle.* Herausgegeben und mit einer biographischen Einleitung versehen von Theodor Haring und Friedrich Loofs, mit einem Bild von Max Reischle. Price M. 3.

Professor Kähler. He would give to science all that science can legitimately claim, while he vindicates for faith its rightful position. There is a chronological list of all the publications of Max Reischle appended to the volume.

JAMES IVERACH.

Aberdeen.

Bernhard Duhm on Habakkuk.²

DUHM opens an entirely new vista in the exposition of Habakkuk. Since Giesebrecht's suggestion in 1890, that vv.⁵⁻¹¹ of chap. 1 were out of place, critics have generally agreed either to follow him or to find, as Budde, a place for the suspected verses in chap. 2. Marti, on these lines, leaves to the seventh-century author only some ten verses of chap. 1. Duhm caustically remarks that Marti 'deals with the book not much more gently than, in 3¹³, does Jahweh with the house of the wicked.' In fact, Marti's results are really a *reductio ad absurdum* of the presuppositions with which he started. Duhm says that if Marti is logical he must go farther still, and at last will have nothing left but the words, 'For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans'; nothing else is appropriate.

The fundamental error in such expositions Duhm holds to be the retention of the word 'Chaldeans' in v.⁶. So long as this is treated as genuine, no advance is possible. Accord-

² *Das Buch Habakuk*, pp. 101. Tübingen: Mohr, 1906. Price M. 2.80.