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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

WHY WALK IN DARKNESS?

Why walk in darkness? Has the clear light
vanished,
That gave us joy and day?
Has the great sun departed? Has sin ban-
ished
His life-begetting ray?
Light of the world! forever, ever shining,
There is no change in Thee;
True Light of life, all joy and health en-
shrining,
Thou canst not fade nor flee!
Thou hast arisen; but Thou descendest
never.
To-day shines as the past;
All that Thou wast, Thou art, and shalt be
ever—
Brightness from first to last.
Night visits not Thy sky, nor storm, nor
sadness;
Day fills up all its blue;
Unfailing beauty, and unflinching gladness,
And love, forever new.
Why walk in darkness? Our true light
still shineth;
It is not night, but day.
All healing and all peace His light enshrin-
eth;
Why shun His loving ray?
Are night and shadows better, truer, dearer,
Than day, and joy, and love?
Do tremblings and mistrustings bring us
nearer
To the great God of love?
Light of the world! undimmed and unsetting,
O, shine each mist away;
Banish the fear, the falsehood, and the
fretting,
By an unchanging day!
—H. Bonar.

Religions.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

A LECTURE-ROOM TALK BY REV. HENRY
WARD BEECHER, FRIDAY EVENING,
FEB. 24TH, 1871.

When you read the literature of the Church, the prayers, homilies, and hymns, in which the sufferings of Christ are set forth, and then go back to the gospels, I suppose you cannot fail to be struck by the contrast with the modesty and reserve of Scripture on the subject. The sufferings have been illustrated with a materialistic anatomy, dissection, and detail that pass belief. The crucifixion of Christ alone as represented in Moravian hymns is enough to drive one almost wild who has been educated in the more fastidious taste which modern religion has developed. The life of Christ, comprehensively, if you leave out the last few weeks, was not one of suffering, but one of joy and eminent tranquillity.

Of his youth we know nothing; for a time he disappears, and does not come again till at the age of thirty. In the first few years we see him as a child. He seems to have hid himself for months together. After he began his ministrations until the last year of his life, nine times in ten he is spoken of as one in high bodily health. There is not a word of one day lost. He labored, so he had not time to eat or sleep, and that is not considered a hardship for one here to be so bested. He had the affection of the common people, but was opposed by the religious party of the Jews, though there was no penalty in their opposition. The gleam of his eye flashed joy, every heart-beat caused joy. Was such a being unhappy? As I read his life, it seems to me he went in a kind of noble joy all the way through. It is sufficient for us to know he had those deep moods of inward suffering. But it was only for a few days that he was under fire. There were more days of joy. Jerusalem had two gates, and the antithesis of his departure from the one with "Crucify him! crucify him!" was the entrance to the city by the other with "Hosannas! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" The times of marked suffering were Gethsemane, the trial, and the cross.

For a few hours he was brought under extreme suffering. Nevertheless, you are to interpret it by the Scripture, and that says: "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." There were hours unilluminated when he cried: "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" In the main, his life was lighted from the other side. A luminous joy, a great beam of light came to his heart from on high.

Now, as to our use of the sufferings of Christ. They are not a theme in the Gospel in any such sense that we are to bend to that side or stain ourselves through with sorrow on account of them. I do not find a gloomy form of sympathy with Christ, as in the medieval Church. Many set apart times to think of the sufferings of Christ to make themselves feel; but it seems so far back to them, it does not seem real. While we can make every part of the Bible nutriment to us, some may draw food from one side and not from another, and when the time comes that we need the other side, we shall be led to want it. The attempt to feel sorry on account of the sufferings of Christ eighteen hundred years ago is not a wise one.

But when we are under the shadow and need sympathy, it comes with unsurpassable balm that we have a friend, tried in all points as we are; then those sufferings come home. If you are where you derive love, joy, and peace from Christ's character, and are mournful because you do not draw any influence from his sufferings, be assured your time will come; you will need them first or last.

How abundant the supply of food, of grain, and fruit! Yet one man eats meat of one kind, and another man takes a different kind; and so of grain and fruit. And in the Bible, some men prefer the Psalms, some the Epistles; and in the Gospel some men will draw from one side of Christ's example, and some from another. Every one of you is permitted to take what your character needs; and you need not seek out the sad and mournful. To attempt to turn a period of weeks and months of joy into the minor key of the soul is not necessary. If congenial to your wants, then it is a duty, but not otherwise. For myself, I should as soon think of going under water to Europe as to go down under that that experience. I do have times of sympathy with Christ in his sufferings, and without them I never should have known the sympathy of God. But joy was the greatest power; they were the undertones. The melody was far above them.

A Brother.—If I think Christ suffered but little, does it not diminish the value I put upon his atonement?
Mr. Beecher.—If you think I under-value the sufferings of Christ when they did come, you are mistaken. One week was enough for Christ to suffer for you. The sick and suffering child recovering sees an angel with its mother's face, that cares for it day and night, through watching and weariness; with this willingness to endure, was not one week enough?

And in the sufferings of Christ in Gethsemane, that stir the imagination, the agony on the cross that passed all words, it is like looking at the sun—you don't see a millionth part; but it blinds you, and you do not want to see all the rest.

A Brother.—Does not that view oppose the thoughts conveyed in "garments washed in blood," and other words? Is it not inconsistent?

Mr. Beecher.—It would not be true if it was not. The thoughts are like spokes in a wheel—opposite, yet in harmony. We are told to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations"—"to rejoice in infirmity." There are times of sufferings that are most luminous. So the aurora borealis seems most glorious in the night.

Some things seem contradictory, and yet are true. We can mount up out of the lower plane where suffering inheres to the higher plane where joy abounds.

A Stranger.—I came over from New York this evening to hear and participate in your service. I had supposed

joy was the exception and not the rule in Christ's life; "that he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" that the shadow rested upon him in his life, and our joy was wrung from his grief and endurance. Then they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, and these affections and passions die a lingering death. Brother Beecher tells us, and thousands of others, that his experiences are not a criterion; the colored pane of glass gives its own hue to the snow. I rejoice. I am glad we have such forces thrown in to show the bright side.

Mr. Beecher.—I assent to very much of that. All the signs of the narrative are that Christ was a healthy man. He did not do or experience anything that was unmanly. He foresaw the great catastrophe. But only once or twice is it alluded to, and we are not at liberty to extend it. In his childhood, we know of no suffering; in his youth, he followed his father's calling probably; he then disappears until the close of life.

We find him going to John for baptism. Then, the forty days of temptation, having been combatted and overthrown, at the next step we find him at a wedding, supplying many gallons of wine to help on the festivities; and he appeared like a guest at the feast. He was a perfect Jew; a man given to sympathy, called out to teach as in the Christian Church was common. He did not impress the crowd that he was a sufferer. They thronged about him as to a victorious man; they crowned him and wanted to make him king. Little children ran for him; they don't run for your suffering, bowed-down men. As I read, I find him in a blessed work, fulfilling the law of love perfectly. I believe true religion makes a man happy. I believe Christ was the most tranquil, loving, joy-producing man that ever lived. That such a man should have more than human power of suffering is not strange. God put his hand upon him, and he was willing to suffer to show how much he loved the poor and needy.

REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE LATEST BLUNDER OF THE BISHOPS.

A majority of the bishops of the Province of Canterbury have just edited the Church and the world by a most unusual display of Irish penitence. Last summer they helped to inaugurate a good work in a good spirit, but now they have repented of their wisdom and liberality, and have made a very successful effort to mar the beauty of their former handiwork. They agreed that, in the proposed endeavour to revise the authorized version of the Holy Scriptures, the Committee of Convocation should "be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong." This resolution breathed a refreshingly liberal spirit, and indicated a perfect appreciation of the nature of the work to be done and of the proper way of doing it. A revised translation of the Bible for general use ought to be above all suspicion of sectarian bias, and therefore it was in the highest degree expedient not only to welcome the light of great learning from all quarters, but also to let each section of Christendom have its representative amongst the revisers. For this reason there was intense satisfaction when it was known that the committee appointed by Convocation had freely used the freedom granted to them, and had invited the co-operation of Roman Catholic and Protestant, Churchman and Non-conformist, Trinitarian and Unitarian. It was hoped that the result would be a revised translation as perfect as existing scholarship could make it—the work of no one sect alone, but the joint production of the ablest men of all parties.

The appointment of Mr. Vance Smith, a Unitarian, gave great offence to the narrow men in the High Church and Evangelical section of the Episcopal community. The Bishop of Winchester acted as their leader and representative in Convocation last week, and carried a

resolution for the expulsion of Mr. Smith from the body he had joined, not at his own request, but at the solicitation of others. Both Dr. Wilberforce and the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol laid stress upon the alleged fact that they had the sympathy of eminent Non-conformists in the action they were taking to prevent any Unitarian scholar, however able and devout, having a place amongst the revisers. We trust their lordships were mistaken in this, and that no eminent Evangelical Dissenter has sanctioned a movement which is not only a violation of courtesy and a breach of good faith, but must also bring discredit upon the orthodoxy it is meant to honour and to serve.

It is to be hoped that the action of the Lower House will in some measure check the mischievous consequences of the blunder the bishops have made. The disposition to doubt the truth concerning Christ is always strong enough, and in this age especially it needs no help. The Unitarians will have a powerful weapon to use if they are able to say that the orthodox Christians are afraid to have one of their number present at a revision of the authorized version of the Bible. The expulsion of Mr. Vance Smith may be otherwise explained by the bishops who have sought to accomplish it; but, despite all their explanations, the impression on the minds of thousands will be that Trinitarians have some good reason to fear the light the Unitarian scholar and divine could bring. We know how utterly false this impression will be, and, therefore, we earnestly repudiate all sympathy with that Episcopal blunder which will assuredly produce it. "The word of the Lord is a tried word." It has passed through too many fires for us to be now fearful of its safety. A timid trembling faith in it is an infectious disease from which the leaders in the churches should, above all men, seek to be free. The bishops would have better served the truth they and we hold and love if they had displayed the bold faith which says, "Let those who doubt or reject the great Christian verity be as ably represented as possible. We have no fear of the issue."—London Freeman.

THE RATIONALISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

has recently received a shock in the judgment pronounced in the case of the Rev. Charles Voysey. The London Freeman in referring to this matter says:

THE VOYSEY JUDGMENT.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council have pronounced the final sentence on the Rev. Charles Voysey, of "Sling and Stone" notoriety. With a courage worthy of a better cause, Mr. Voysey had pursued the principles of a Rationalistic (thought eminently unreasonable) interpretation of the Holy Scriptures to some of their remote logical consequences, and so had incurred the charge of heresy, which the judge of the Chancery Court of the Province of York declared to be established. On an appeal to her Majesty, the Lord Chancellor, after hearing Mr. Voysey and the opposing counsel, delivered judgment, and the author of "The Sling and the Stone" is adjudged disqualified for the office of a clergyman, and he will consequently, be deprived of that office, unless, indeed, he should within a week, not later than next Saturday morning, "expressly and unreservedly retract the several errors of which he has been found guilty."

These errors consist in a denial of the true and proper Deity of the Son of God, as that belief is laid down in the Articles of Religion; in the denial of the authority and truth of certain specified portions of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament; and in the denial of the statement that the Son, by his sacrifice and suffering, reconciled the Father to man. The indictment against Mr. Voysey contained thirteen counts, but these three denials constitute his chief offence against Church of England orthodoxy.

This is the first serious defeat the Broad Church party has sustained. Will the success of the Evangelicals against Mr. Voysey be the first of a series of victories? The stress laid in the judgment upon the denial of the doctrine that the Son, by His sacrifice and suffering, reconciled the Father to man, make the position of Mr. Maurice somewhat doubtful. There are many books, beside "The Sling and the Stone" which will not bear the test of Lord Hatherley's rules. What will be done with them? And, as Mr. Voysey pleaded, if he, a Rationalist, may not indulge his opinions, why should a Ritualist or an Evangelical be tolerated? That the Ritualist should be more favoured than the Rationalist is a violation of the principle of religious equality. But this is involved in the establishment of a church. A State should treat all men alike and give them equal rights and privileges, irrespective of creed, while a Church is founded on some dogmatic truth and can only embrace those who believe in its beliefs. A State Church therefore necessarily does violence either to the citizen or to the Christian. If it gives office, and honour, and pay to one religionist and denies them to another, it wrongs the citizen. Should it treat all citizens alike, whether they be Romanists, Rationalists, or Atheists, allowing them to be ministers in the church, it wrongs the truth. The only possible escape from the dilemma is in the separation of Church and State.

The same paper in an editorial note says:

The judgment in Mr. Voysey's case only accords with the common sense of all who have noticed either his published opinions or his mode of showing that they are consistent with the articles of the Church to which he has subscribed. In almost extravagant language he denied the Deity of Christ and the doctrines of the Trinity, of the Atonement, and of reconciliation to God by Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, and the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures. The details of passages have no further interest than arises from their animated and vivid denunciation of the undoubted teaching of the articles from the standpoint of an English clergyman. Indeed the language is so strong that to most ears it must sound profane. Yet the man has a defence! He is not liable to censure, he says, unless he in explicit words denies the doctrines of the article. He may show it to be erroneous, false, revolting, and so forth, but so long as *totidem verbis* he does not deny it, he is not guilty, judged by the articles of heretical teaching! The Court unanimously repudiated such a defence. The Lord Chancellor pointed out the frequency of devotional addresses to our Lord in the Liturgy, and very properly added, "It would be as contrary to morality as to law to direct the professors at any religion daily to offer prayers to one in whose Divine power they have no faith, or to address as God one whom they believed to be only man." Mr. Voysey is allowed a week to recant, which, of course, he will not do, and is, therefore, deprived of his position as a clergyman, and very properly saddled with costs. But what are we to think of holding a man fit to be a clergyman if he recants under such circumstances? It is in the same spirit that an immoral clergyman is often deemed fit, after being silenced for a year or two, to resume the cure of souls.

PERFECTION.—A friend called on Michael Angelo, who was finishing a statue. Some time afterward he called again; the sculptor was still at his work. His friend, looking at the figure, exclaimed: "You have been idle since I saw you last."

"By no means," replied the sculptor, "I have retouched this part and polished that; I have softened this feature and brought out this muscle; I have given more expression to this lip, and more energy to this limb."