

For the Christian Messenger. Fundamental Truths of Christianity.

LUTHARDT'S APOLOGETICAL DISCOURSES. Eighth Discourse, translated from the German by Prof. D. M. Welton.

THE HISTORY OF REVELATION. Paganism and Judaism.

VII.

For several years Israel was moved by the most earnest religious questions. In Jesus of Nazareth a prophet had arisen, who declared himself to be the promised Messiah, and by the power of his word and the sublimity of his entire manifestation, he stirred a great part of the people with the greatest enthusiasm; another part, however, and above all the higher classes he provoked to a more and more violent opposition, till this conflict came to an open outbreak and brought him to the cross as a blasphemer and deceiver of a people.

Soon after this, however, his disciples—at his death like sheep frightened by a wolf, but now heroes that defy a world—went forth with the announcement that Jesus, had risen from the dead, had ascended to the right hand of the throne of God, and that, as he himself had promised, he would come again to judge the world. But Israel refused this message, excluded the disciples of Jesus, and from that time onward has lived an enigmatical existence; the nation of opposition to christianity, which since that time has been conquering the world. Over their land and city broke a catastrophe in the terrible drama of the destruction of Jerusalem, such as the world had not seen; a million men perished, nearly 90,000 were sold as slaves, the sun saw a horror, the recital of which benumbs the heart.

A prediction of Jesus had announced this judgment, the Christians remembering this saved themselves beforehand, the Jews held out defiantly till the ruins of the burning temple buried them. And when the emperor Julian, who is called the Apostate, some three hundred years later, in order to bring the word of Jesus into contempt, ordered the rebuilding of the temple, then, so it is related by both heathen and christian writers, there was a quaking of the earth, and flames of fire burst forth which destroyed the works and drove away the workers, since which time it lies in ruins and Israel sits mourning in the dust, and wails over the departed glory. In all lands the sons of Israel are scattered, over all the earth their fugitive feet have carried them. Everywhere they have built themselves tabernacles, but everywhere they remain strangers and carry the stamp of their origin in their countenance and in their spirit. With a tenacity without parallel they hold to the old traditions, although their worship perished with the temple and became impossible, and they can no longer observe the law. Without a king, without a priesthood, without sacrifices, without a central point, they yet hold together, although torn into atoms, and live so far as they have not lost themselves in the menial services of the day, upon the memory of the past and upon the hope of the future, although the family of David no more exists and the priestly family of Aaron can no more be referred to—an enigma in history, for which there is but one solution, which is this: the old prophecy concerning Israel has been fulfilled in Jesus the son of Mary and Israel, the great national ruin, from which Israel has set out, is the monument and witness of that fulfilled prediction. Christianity is the solution of the enigma which Israel is.

When, however, I say Christianity, I virtually say, Jesus Christ. Christianity has come into the world not as a philosophy, not as an ethical system, but as an historical fact—the fact of the person Jesus Christ. On Him all depends. Christianity stands and falls with Him. It cannot be dissociated from Him. What the crisis in Israel called for, was not dogmas concerning Him, but His Person and His witness of Himself. Hereby also at the present time the character of Christianity is determined, in that it is Himself and His witness of Himself. He has made His entire cause, to rest upon His Person. We cannot dissociate it from Him. Rationalism has attempted to disconnect it from Him and to reduce Christianity to simple morality. But this is found to be impossible. Jesus Christ stands not to Christianity as Mahomet to Mahometanism, or as the founder of any other religion to that religion, but he is himself Christianity. To speak of Christianity is not to speak of doctrines and rules of life, but of Jesus Christ. Indeed, Christianity is a sum of truths, a new doctrine; a new philosophy if one will, a new method of contemplating the world, a new apprehension of history, a new method of divine worship, a new morality, a new regulation of the life, &c. It is all this, because it is a fact for universal human life. But all this rests on the Person of Jesus Christ, is given with His Person and determined by it, stands and falls with it. Accordingly when we consider the place and significance of Christianity in the history of humanity, it is the same as considering the historical place and significance of Jesus Christ himself therein. This we shall next consider.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

Rev. John McLaurin writes encouragingly to the Link in reference to the building now going up at Simulcotta for a Theological Training School. This is about nine miles northwest from Cocanada. He says:—

Hindoo ideas, work, and honor, and honesty make it necessary that I should be on the ground. So we come out every Tuesday morning and return on Saturday night, spending the Sabbath at Cocanada. While here, we occupy a bungalow owned by the Pittapora Rajah, but only live in a kind of picnic style. We had hoped to have had the house covered in before the June rains set in; but alas, the supplies ran short, and the working staff had to be reduced. Now, here are the rains, and the roof is not half on.

But, like most things in this country, though slowly, the end will come. The house will be finished, the students will come, and the school will begin. Things move so slowly that we are often impatient. So many mistakes are done at the builder—so many things are done at the wrong time and must be done over again—no foresight and no plan—all haphazard and guesswork. The Missionary must be carpenter, mason, black smith and architect all in one—else there will be much loss. Still, maybe the work is as good as the pay. My head carpenter gets \$5.00 a month; the head mason \$4.50; and the head boss of all masons \$4.00. Masons and carpenters get 1.50 per day each; while able-bodied Coolies (men) get 7.5c; while women and boys get just the half of the latter. Are you amazed that they exist on that? Let us see—a hardworking man eats one seer of rice a day, it costs two cents. Add one cent for some kind of relish, and you have three cents for one man's food per day. Suppose a family to consist of five persons, father, mother and three children, two boys and a younger sister, between the ages of twelve and six years respectively. The father will earn 75 cents, and the mother and son the same, while the second son may get 1 cent per day running errands, etc. Their total income will be sixteen cents per day, if they all have work which is seldom the case, or if they are inclined to work all the time, which is more seldom the case. Now for expenditure. The family will eat, in flush times four seers of rice a day, costing two cents a seer—eight cents—add three cents for condiments, and we have for food eleven cents; put down 1 cent for tobacco and cullu (whiskey) for the family, and we have a total of 12 cents for food, etc. This would leave 4 cents for clothing and house repairs, which would be ample, especially as the two younger ones would wear no clothing, and the elder next to nothing.

Mr. Craig also writes. He says respecting his "April Touring":— In Malikhomammedpuram four were baptized, two of whom were related to each other as grandmother and granddaughter. Both the old woman and young girl gave evidence of a genuine faith. In that village I met a very intelligent, well disposed Malia, but the obstacle in his way lies in the fact that he has two wives, and does not like the idea of giving up one of them. By the time we reached the Malapilly it was quite dark. First the Christians there were assembled and we had worship. I also inquired about each member individually. One or two had to be excluded. Afterwards we preached in the street for quite a time. When we reached the tent it was midnight—quite a day's work from 5 till 12.

Rev. G. F. Currie, also writes, May, 18th:— On Sunday last three candidates were baptized at Tuni, one of whom, a lad about twelve years, was the son of Hannah, our Bible woman at Durmasagrum. Two others asked for baptism at the same time, but we thought it best they should wait until they obtain clearer knowledge of the truth. In four or five different villages there are persons who have declared their faith in Christ, and their intention to be baptized, but have thus far been hindered from coming to receive the ordinance. I hope most of these will unite with us sooner or later. A good work seems to be going on in various sections where we have traveled of late, but we must have patience, though the desired results may not appear so soon, or in such abundance as we may wish.

The Missionary Review for July and August devotes several pages to the discussion of the proposition which has been advanced for evangelizing the world in twenty years. It intends to 'keep the proposal before the minds and press it upon the hearts of its readers.' Quoting from E. P. M., it says: 'The annual interest on the value of jewels worn by women professing godliness cannot be less than three or four millions of dollars; and if we add the cost of vain and pernicious fashions, and of wines and tobacco, we have more than we need for this grand enterprise. Let it be fully known that the Church of God to-day has ample means in men and money for the thorough evangelization of the whole world, within ten years without sacrificing any of the necessities or comforts of life or crippling the work at home. May God move us to do it.'

Important steps in favor of religious liberty have recently been taken in Austria. It has been decided in the highest court of the empire that parents have a right to determine the religious status of their children, and the Romish Church can no longer insist that the children of Protestants shall be baptized by Romish priests.

A SIDE WORK.—A recent visit with Mrs. Ingalls at Thongzai gave opportunity to learn of an important work for railway employees, in which this whole-hearted lady is engaged. Without diminishing in the least her earnest and effective labor among the Burmans, she has been successful in furnishing healthful Christian reading to the more than 250 men at work upon the railway between Rangoon and Prome, the larger portion of whom are Eurasians. As the employees are constantly changing, the good influences of this work reach a wide circle.

After the railway was opened, Mrs. Ingalls began a systematic distribution of tracts to the hundreds of Burman passengers going over the line daily, many of whom were from upper Burma. Not only was a native preacher regularly employed for this purpose, but Mrs. Ingalls herself frequently went on board the trains to talk with the people and scatter the little Jesus Christ books. During one of these visits, a young railway man said: "There are many who do for us." The remark touched her sympathetic Christian heart, and led her to make an attempt to gather a library for the railway employees, and also to furnish them with some of the newspapers and periodicals of the day. The beginning was small, a few volumes in a small case made by a station master who sympathized with the movement. The library was placed in one of the refreshment-rooms of the railroad station, by permission of the Superintendent of the railway, who gave Mrs. Ingalls a hearty support, and afforded her all the facilities that he could. The salary of a clerk was guaranteed and (better) supplied. Friends in England and elsewhere have furnished books until the library now numbers 500 volumes, and there is quite a variety of papers and monthlies.

Impressed with the success of the effort, the railway officials are erecting a separate building for the library, to be under Mrs. Ingalls' control. This will furnish every convenience for a reading-room and lectures as well as for library, and at the same time be free from the inevitable noise and discomforts of a refreshment-room. Popular biographies and histories are very much needed.

From Ongele.

Mrs. Clough, wife of our honored missionary, John E. Clough, D. D., writes to Dr. G. J. Johnson, from Kalamazoo, Mich., Aug. 29.

I have good news from Mr. Clough to-day. He is fairly well, and they are planning about the new stations, and were about to make a tour of inspection. The Sabbath before, they baptized twelve people, ten of whom were school-girls. The other two were very interesting people, one being a very old woman and the other a converted male priest. The priest brought in his idols, eight or ten in number, and gave them to Mr. Clough. He had been the priest in twenty villages, and had persecuted the Christians in a petty manner in many places. His wife and family were expected the next Sunday. Two weeks before that, 92 were baptized in Ongele at the quarterly meeting.

Low Foo, a Chinaman, when converted, at Canton, sold himself as a slave in order that he might go to Demerara and preach the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen there. And this he has done so successfully that he now has a church of two hundred converted Chinamen who are supporting missionaries among their own people.

One of the most encouraging facts connected with missions, says the Presbyterian, is the great increase of the native ministry as compared with that of missionaries sent from Christian lands. While the number of ordained missionaries of the American Presbyterian Board had in ten years increased only 19, the number of native preachers and helpers had risen from 41 to 300.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Spurgeon's Treasury of David.

SECOND ARTICLE.—GEMS.

The Treasury abounds in gems. "Apples of gold in pictures of silver," priceless garments of righteousness, myrrh and frankincense, and "all the chief spices," "fair jewels," and "precious stones," are heaped together here. So great is the profusion, indeed, that we find difficulty in selecting a few.

Ps. xxii.—"Concerning the Hind of the morning." Out Lord Jesus is so often compared to a hind, and his cruel huntings are so pathetically described in this most affecting psalm that we cannot but believe that the tide indicates the Lord Jesus under a well-known poetical metaphor: Jesus is the Hind of the morning of whom David here sings. . . . This is beyond all others the PSALM OF THE CROSS. It may have been actually repeated word by word by our Lord when hanging on the tree. It begins with "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and ends, according to some, in the original with "It is finished." It is the photograph of our Lord's saddest hours, the record of his dying words, the lachrymatory of his last tears, the memorial of his expiring joys. David and his afflictions may be here in a very modified sense, but, as the stars concealed by the light of the sun, he who sees Jesus will probably neither see, nor care to see, David. . . . Oh for grace to draw near and see this great sight! If there be holy ground anywhere in Scripture it is in this Psalm.

Vs. 1.—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was the startling cry of Golgotha: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani. . . . Let us gaze with holy wonder, and mark the flashes of light amid the awful darkness, of that mid-day mid-night. First our Lord's faith beams forth and deserves our reverent imitation; he keeps his hold upon his God with both hands, and cries twice, "My God, my God." The spirit of adoption was strong within the suffering Son of Man, and he felt no doubt about his interest in God. . . . Nor does the sufferer distrust the power of God to sustain him. . . . for El signifies strength, and is the name of the Almighty God. . . . He would fain know why he is left, he raises that question and repeats it, but neither the power nor the faithfulness of God does he mistrust. . . . "Why hast thou forsaken me?" "Why?" What is the great cause of such a strange fact as for God to leave his own Son at such a time and in such a plight? . . . "Hast": it is done, and the Saviour is feeling its dread effect as he asks the question. . . . It was no threatening of forsaking. . . . he endured that forsaking in very deed. "Thou": I can understand why traitorous Judas and timid Peter should be gone, but thou, my God. . . . how canst thou leave me? . . . Hell itself has for its fiercest flame the separation of the soul from God. "Forsaken": if thou hadst chastened I might bear it, for thy face would shine; but to forsake me utterly, oh! why is this? "Me": thine innocent, obedient, suffering Son, why leavest thou me to perish? A sight of self seen by penitence, and of Jesus on the cross seen by faith, will best expound this question. Jesus is forsaken because our sins had separated between us and God.

Vs. 6.—"But I am a worm, and no man." This verse is a miracle in language. How could the Lord of glory be brought to such debasement as to be not only lower than the angels, but even lower than man! What a contrast between I AM and I am a worm! yet such a double nature was found in the person of our Lord Jesus when bleeding on the tree.

Vs. 11.—"Be not far from me." A lively sense of the divine presence is a mighty stay to the heart in times of distress. "For trouble is near, for there is none to help." There are two knocks at mercy's gate; that is a powerful prayer which is full of holy reasons and thoughtful arguments.

Vs. 14.—"My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." Excessive debility and intense pain

made his inmost life to feel like wax melted in the heart. The Greek Liturgy uses the expression, "thine unknown sufferings," and well it may. The fire of Almighty wrath would have consumed our souls forever in hell; it was no light work to bear as a substitute the heat of an anger so justly terrible. Dr. Gill wisely observes, "if the heart of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, melted at it, what heart can endure, or hands be strong, when God deals with them in his wrath?" . . . "Vs. 31.—They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Sovereign grace shall bring out from among men the blood-bought ones. . . . None of the people who shall be brought to God by the irresistible attractions of the cross shall be dumb, they shall be able to tell forth the righteousness of the Lord, so that future generations shall know the truth . . . the burden of the story always being "that he hath done this," or, "It is finished." Salvation's glorious work is done, there is peace on earth and glory in the highest. "It is finished," these are the expiring words of the Lord Jesus, as they are the last words of this psalm. May we by living faith be enabled to see our salvation finished by the death of Jesus. . . . "If there were no hell for other men, there ought to be one for those who question the justice of it." . . . "If a man extols me to my face, he only shows me one side of his heart, and the other side is black with contempt for me, or foul with intent to cheat me." Flattery is the sign of the tavern where duplicity is the host. . . . "One generally imagines that flatterers are such mean parasites. . . . that they cannot be proud; but the wile will tell you that while all pride is true meanness, there is in the very lowest meanness no small degree of pride. . . . The mat on which the Emperor wiped his boots boasts vainly, "I cleaned the Emperor's boots!" None are so detestably domineering as the little creatures who creep into office by cringing to the great. . . . "Fools can raise more objections in an hour than a wise man can answer in seven years." Let the preacher aim at the heart, and preach the all-conquering love of Jesus, and he will by God's grace win more doubters to the faith of the best reasoners who only direct their arguments to the head. . . . "God's house is a house for workers, not a hive for drones." . . . "We must be careful that the heart be really fixed and settled in principle, for tenderness of conscience toward truthfulness, like the bloom on a peach, needs gentle handling, and once lost it were hard to regain it." . . . "If an imperfect father (Adam) fell how shall an imperfect son dare to boast?" . . . "One may trip over an ordinance as well as over a temptation." . . . "God first gives us holiness, and then rewards us for it." . . . "A man who does not hate evil terribly, does not love good heartily." . . . "Let each reader see well to his company, for such as we keep in this world we are likely to keep in the next." . . . "It brings the scalding tear upon one's cheek to hear sermons in which the honor of God is so far from being the preacher's object, that one might almost imagine that the preacher worshipped the dignity of manhood, and thought more of it, than of the Infinite Majesty of God." . . . "Desires are seeds which must be sown in the good soil of activity, or they will yield no harvest." . . . "Activity is found with the wicked, even if it be lacking to the righteous." . . . "We stretch out empty hands, for we are beggars; we lift them up, for we seek heavenly supplies; we lift them towards the mercy-seat of Jesus, for there our expectation dwells." . . . "Where angels wonder, carnal men despise." . . . "The heavenly experience of one believer is a pattern of the life of all. To all the militant church, without exception, Jehovah is the same as he was to David." . . . "Many a vessel founders in a calm. No temptation is so bad as tranquility." . . . "The next best thing to basking in the light of God's countenance is to be thoroughly unhappy when that bliss is denied us." . . . "These cutting bits of affliction show how hard moods we are. We would not be treated like mules if there were not so much of the ass about us." . . . "Praise is not comely from unprofessional singers; it is like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout." . . . "To be quiet in expectation, patient in hope, single in confidence, is one of the bright attainments of a Christian." . . . "There is life, light, liberty, love, everything in fact, in a look at the Crucified One." . . . "Malice has but one eye; it is blind to all virtue in its enemy." . . . "To smooth over one's own conduct to one's conscience, is to smooth over one's own path to hell." . . . "He hath the devil for his bedfellow who lies abed and schemes how to sin." . . . "Clear sky is evermore above, and mercy calmly shines above the din and smoke of this poor world." . . . "Right across the path of every unholy man who dreams of heaven stand the towering Andes of divine righteousness, which no unregenerate sinner can ever climb." . . . "We never see Jesus by the light of self, but self by the light of Jesus." . . . "Stormy weather may curdle even the cream of humanity." . . . "Unguardedly are generally unholy ones. Heedless is another word for graceless." . . . "They who see death through the Lord's glass see a fair sight, which makes them forget the evil of life in foreseeing the end of life." . . . "Men rise up early and sit up late to build a house, and then the stranger tramps along its passages, laughs in its chambers, and forgetful of its first builder calls it all his own." . . . "If we kiss the rod, our Father always burns it." . . . "No man to lose oneself in like the labyrinth of love." . . . "God measures us with our own bushel." . . . "The kiss of the traitor wounded our Lord's heart as much as the nail wounded his hand." . . . "We might as well pray by machinery as pray by it." . . . "Hope carries stars in her eyes." . . . "The dew of love is falling, O withering heart, revive." . . . "It is a sad thing when the heart is cold with a good matter, and worse when it is warm with a bad matter; but incomparably well when a warm heart and a good matter meet together." . . . "Hell knows no aristocracy." . . . "The majesty of God is most conspicuous among his own elect, but it is not confined to them; the church is not a dark lantern but a candlestick." . . . "Meditation is the soul of religion." . . . "Our Lord's path to his mediatorial glory ran by the cross of Calvary; our road to glory runs by the rivers of grief." . . . "Murmurers are bad hearers." . . . "A silver thread of lovingkindness runs through the entire fabric of God's work of salvation and providence, and never once is left out in the whole piece." . . . "The character of a righteous man is not spasmodic, he is not generous by fits and starts, nor upright in a few points; only; his life is the result of principle, his actions flow from settled, sure and fixed convictions, and therefore his integrity is maintained when others fail." . . . "Prayer may be bitter in the offering, but it will be sweet in the answering." . . . POMPEII.—The other day an excavation at Pompeii yielded a beautiful inlaid marble table, with reclining bed ornamented with paintings; a bronze vessel with revolving handle; two Egyptian statues, covered with a patina of green glass, which is very rarely found; a tortoise and frog in marble; a Buehas in terra cotta; two marble busts; and a skeleton with bronze hairpins beside it. There was also discovered a cavity in the lapilli, which, when filled with plaster, will, it is hoped, produce a figure. . . . Preparations are being quietly made for the coronation of the Czar, which is expected to take place at an early day; but the date has not yet been made known. . . . The Rev. Dr. Lamsign, who was connected with Presbyterian mission in Egypt, thinks he sees in the bombardment of Alexandria an effectual measure towards the suppression of Mohammedan fanaticism. It is to be hoped that it might prove to be so.