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Sunday Reabing.

The Raindrop's Lesson. BY REV S. E. LATHROP.

Little Raindrop, pure and sweet, Falling softly on the street, Tell me, Raindrop, if thou wilt, What thy home is—where 'tis built?

In what fountains cool and bright? On what mountain's airy height? From what streamlet's laughing wave In what fairy's crystal cave?

Spoke the Raindrop's silvery cry: " Home I have none. Pilgrim I! Coming earthward, joy I sow; Soaring heavenward, pure I grow.

"Thus I journey up and down, Gladdening field or dusty town, Whether sprinkling shriveled leaves Whether moistening thirsty eaves;

"Whether filling cisterns dry; Whether answering suppliant cry; Whether blessing good or bad, Just or unjust making glad;

. Whether traveling east or west, God, who sends me, knoweth best. So I go from earth to sky, Never idle, happy I!"

Fell the raindrop at my feet, Smiling, sparkling, on the street. Little Raindrop, thanks to thee! Precious lesson taught thou me. Little Raindrop, thanks to thee! Precious lesson taught thou me. Let me ever do my part. Murmuring never in my heart; Working always, helping all, Friends or foemen, hut or hall. Never tempted work to stop. Though my cup hold but a drop, Rising heavenward, pure to grow, Coming earthward Joy to sow.' -Independent.

Scenes in the Life of Christ.

BETHLEHEM'S BABE.

The first of a series of sermons preached through Samaria they, being Jews, in the Leinster Street Baptist Church, St. John, N. B., on Sunday evening, June 3rd.

BY THE PASTOR, REV. J. F. BARTLETT.

(Reported for the Christian Messenger).

demanded had been doubled by Egypt's hard-hearted king, and the burdens of slave-cursed and exiled Israel had become greater than mortal flesh could bear, that the Midianite shepherd, divinely panoplied, was sent to bear his suffering brethren the news that their cries had entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and that deliverance where Samuel judged God's people, sions to be made, which mankind sorely was at hand.

At a much later day, it was when a remnant of that peculiar nation were prostrated beneath the iron heel of Rome, and slaves to a yet more mercilesst yrant, spiritual degradation, when, groaning beneath the chains that bound them, and intently listening for the heavenly voice of a promised deliverer, they lay in helpless, yet sinful distress; it was at this juncture that the stillness was broken by the heavenly minstrels, slow, and many pilgrims would pass of the human race. He might have chanting the grandest anthem ever poured into the ears and hearts of a burdened nation, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man," and then was disclosed to the evangelist, "there was no room be made upon God's plan, and some less that which proved to be the great central event in all the history of the human race since the lapse of Eden, " For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

The character, history, environments | devoid of all earthly comfort or splenand teachings of this heaven-born infant | dor, that it is impossible to imagine a are of greater value to this gathering humbler nativity, Christ was born. of human souls than the possession of all other knowledge with which the birthplace, on an elevated plateau, towworld is filled, and it is my desire to follow with you, on successive Sunday evenings, this son of Mary as He goes about upon His Father's business, dwelling upon the principal events in His remarkable career, and presenting thing which betokened earthly wealth, spark of humanity is an incipient such lessons as may present themselves, or that might minister to sensual appeand to-night, in the moments remain- tite. How complete the contrast and how hands of the potter, so is the child easiing, let us seek first of all to reproduce full of meaning. This apostate king, ly moulded by patient skilful hands the physical surroundings, and the cirthis Herodian usurper, this blackcumstances under which the Redeemer hearted, red-handed demon in human of the world was born.

The home of Joseph and Mary was comfort and luxury, unlimited wealth in the humble village of Nazareth, and we should naturally expect that the God, the Lord of creation, the rightful Saviour would there be born, especially king of the universe, the Saviour of the cerning the honors, rights and privias the time of His advent was so near

ing of Providence in the circumstance which we can form a thought. which brought to pass the nativity at accomplishes His designs when it pleases

Him, even through the unconscious

agency of wicked men. The evange-

must have rendered the journey a pain-

ful and an anxious one, Mary and

Joseph leave their Gallilean home for

Bethlehem, eighty miles to the south-

ward. It is something of a satisfaction

to know that for the most part their

route can be traced with almost abso-

lute certainty. On the left of them

they leave Mount Tabor, and the vil-

lages of Nain and Endor, and journey

due south over the historic plain of

Ahab, Israel's wicked king. The jour-

ney at every step would be through an

almost endless stretch of cities and towns

teeming with a crowded population, who

by the contrast between the freshness

and activity of that day, and the bar-

renness and comparative silence that

greets the modern traveller in that his-

toric land. On the east of Jezreel as

they journeyed on, loomed up the moun-

tains of Gilboa, famous as the scene of

the defeat and suicide of King Saul.

to seek his brethren, never returning to

would avoid all intercourse with the

not expect and would not receive hos-

loved soil of Israel. First comes Shi-

loh, where Hannah prayed, then Gilgal,

stone, and called it Ebenezer. Then

further along the Hebron road, they

it as a stable, among the hay and straw

spread for the food and rest of the cat-

tle, weary with their journey, far from

home, in the midst of strangers, in the

chilly winter night, in circumstances so

Not far distant from the Saviour's

and about which could be seen every-

form, revelled in the midst of every

King David.

phenomena which occurred on that told of bright harnessed angels " who list Luke tells us that " in those days | hovered over that manger cradle, of a there went out a decree from Cæsar Divine radiance which filled the taxed." This taxing or enrollment of before the young infant, who, imnames in a census must take place in the mediately after His birth, proclaimed their ancestor, and although their fortunes | told how " the pole of the heavens stood were fallen, Mary and Joseph were both stood still, the birds were motionless in of the house and lineage of David, and mid-air, the shepherd raised his hand thus, humanly in accordance with the to strike the sheep, and his hand re-Emperor's decree, but in fact divinely mained up, kids were standing with ordered, under circumstances which their mouths touching the water, but of her maternal love. they did not drink, and everything which was being propelled forward was intercepted in its course."

But what a contrast between these apocryphal legends and the simple story of the evangelist. We might indeed expect that the greatest event this earth has ever known would be heralded by some grand Divine demonstration, such as might fittingly introduce the world's emancipator, and impress mankind with Esdraelon to Jezreel, once the seat of the grandeur and magnificence of the surroundings to which He had been accustomed in His Father's heavenly reap if they faint not. kingdom.

But nothing could possibly be more had cultivated every available spot of simple than Luke's record of the birth land. What a commentary is furnished of Christ, and all the circumstances connected with it. " And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

That is absolutely all that is said concerning the most stupendous event earth has ever known, the birth, not Further on, and a little to the right, is alone of a wonderful child, but the birth Dothan, with its rich pasturage, where of everlasting hope and freedom to unconverted millions of hopeless slaves to Joseph so many years before had gone sin and wretchedness. How vivid the his father's saddened home. In passing contrast between Jewish fable and Divine truth; and what a testimony is here to the authenticity of what purdwellers in that country; here they did | ports to be the word of God.

And although we might at first feel pitality or friendliness, and would surprised that God had chosen such scarcely make any long resting place method for revealing Himself to man, except at the famous well of Jacob in first making an unknown Jewish maid It was after the tale of the bricks | Shecem, on whose curb, in days not | en the bearer of heaven's gift, and then far distant, He who was as yet unborn depositing that gift in a place more would sit, even as does now His weary | comfortless than that afforded to the mother, and fill the soul of a thirsty poorest of the poor, yet we have great Samaritan outcast with the waters of reason to believe that in the whole woneverlasting life. Passing the boundary | derful plan He had His purposes of line of Samaria they press again the grace toward those for whom this great expenditure of love was made. There were lessons to be taught, and imprespast memorable Bethel, and Ramah, needed to know, and which would have the weeping place of Rachel tor her been lost by the advent of Christ under captive children, then Mizpah, on whose less humble circumstances.

summit Samuel raised his memorial Some of these lessons lie on the very surface of the narrative, and we have comes Jerusalem, the holy city, through just time to give them a brief considewhich they pass; journeying six miles ration here. First-Infancy possesses an added interest and charm since Christ stand at last in Bethlehem, the city of was born a helpless babe.

The infinite God might have chosen Their progress was of necessity very some other method for the perpetuation them on the road, so that when, toot- created every man, like Adam, fullsore and weary, they sought a resting grown and strong, and equipped for life's place in the village klan they found unceasing battle; and many have foolnone, for, in the simple words of ishly fancied that an improvement might for them in the inn." Therefore, ignoble way of introducing man in the rude limestone grotto attached to earthly scenes and activities might be adopted. But let all mouths be stopped by the remembrance that the Son of God, the Almighty Redeemer of the world, was once a little helpless infant in His mother's arms, needing in those first days the love, care, and tenderness

which only a mother can bestow. And what is more interesting to contemplate than a slumbering infant. Here is something as yet untouched by ered the magnificent palace of Herod any taint of wilful sin, fresh from the the Great, from which, as the virgin hand of the Creator, in its helpless mother passed it by, issued the sound of purity launched upon a sea whose boisterous mirth and noisy minstrelsy, every billow crest reveals the presence of sin; this tiny sleeping blessing or a curse; like soft clay in the into a vessel of honor or dishonor. Oh what a sacred charge to her whose work it shall be to fashion this little growing bud till it shall burst into a could secure; while He, the Son of fragrant, full-developed flower.

Very much is said in these days conworld, opened His infant eyes in the leges of woman, and the claim of those at hand. But this was not God's plan, manger of a cattle stable, surrounded who fain would turn the current of her

and it is interesting to watch the work- by the most untoward circumstances of life into coarser and more masculine channels, that she should be allowed Jewish tradition has been busy with more freedom of thought and action, Bethlehem, showing how the Almighty extravagant descriptions of wonderful new spheres in which she may reach places of greater honor and usefulness. birth night of our Lord. They have This is not the time or place to discuss the questions of female suffrage, but this is undeniably true, no greater honor could God or man bestow upon woman Augustus that all the world should be place, of the ox and the ass kneeling than to entrust to her the training of the human mind in the most important humblest sort. His was not a forced period of its life; no prouder right village or city that had been the home of Himself the Son of God." They have could be given her than the almost exclusive moulding of the days of infancy and early childhood; and no mightier through His poverty might become power could be hers in any realm than that which enables her to sway her offspring by the mild, unselfish strength

> Oh, ye who are young in motherhood, you hold in your arms and clasp to your heart that which ought to remind you of Bethlebem, a germ of undeveloped life, whose possible value to succeeding generations of man cannot be estimated, may you be led to appreciate the honor that is yours, and when body and mind are weary, and patience is sorely tried by these little helpless ones, remember that for all your patient, painful, toilsome owing there shall come in due time a golden harvest. for they who are not weary in well-doing shall one day

Again, when God selected this humble Gallilean maiden to be the mother of the world's Redeemer, second, He set the never fading seal of dignity upon

The birth of Christ was the ushering in of a new era in the history of woman; the beginning of a new and glorious chapter in sharp contrast with the black and shameful record of her degradation and wretchedness. Once the slave and tool of man, scarcely more highly esteemed than the dumb cattle, who were treated with equal consideration, henceforth and forever more, to he his equal in all things and his superior in many. Since the advent of that oriental star she has been to man another star of hope, sympathy and inspiration, his light in darkness, his faithful nurse in sickness, his tellow laborer in the toils of life and in the hour when fortune plays him false, or when Satan takes him in his toils, the last of earthly comforters to forsake

And she may date the hour of her deliverance from a condition worse than death, and her gradual and ever accelerated ascent to the proud eminence on which she sits enthroned today, from the hour when the starry stillness of Bethlehem's winter night was broken by the first and last anthem ever sung in human ears by the angels

In whatsoever land the gospel message has been recited and received it has proved to be God's two edged sword for the unshackling of woman's chain of moral and social degradation; while in that land which has never heard the story of Bethlehem's babe her condition is no whit the better this hour than it was 2000 years ago.

Jesus Christ the great deliverer of the human race, was born of woman by the miraculous overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; not through man in any sense, did this deliverer come, but God the power, Mary the instrument, and lo, the Saviour comes.

And just here, my friends, mark a fact of immense significance: what were the characteristic virtues which shone pre-eminently in the life of Christ, and whose reproduction in the life of the militant church, are drawing the world to the feet of Him who soon bear the wrongs heaped upon Him; particular have a rich profusion of bloshow patient with the erring and the ignorant; how gentle in His care for the tender and helpless; how long suffering toward those who slighted his mercy; how self-sacrificing in His untiring efforts for the happiness of All these were noticeable traits in His character. Have you ever remembered that all these are virtues of which woman and not man is the exemplar and type? meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, self-sacrifice. all these are more fully developed in woman than in man. The Saviour possessed all these in their fullness, and this fact is of great significance when we remember the gospel declaration that Jesus was not simply born of a woman, but made of a woman, and the inference seems to be that He in the province of His humanity, drew from His mother, as the representative of her sex, those gentler virtues which more readily harmonize with the methods of the Divine Spirit to work out salvation's plan, than do the more rugged virtues, which are characteris-

Let me not be deemed sentimental or irrelevant if I say that around true womanhood God has thrown a kind of halo and sacredness, and that man who in this day of grace esteems her, all things considered, as inferior to himself needs to be taught of God, and is poorly fitted to fill his proper place in human society. God has indeed highly

exalted her, and she may fittingly magnify His glorious name for Gabriel's message to Mary, the mother of our Lord, so many centuries ago.

And finally ; The birth of the Son of God amid such circumstances, forever robs a state of comfortable poverty of the meanness and contempt too often attached to it.

The earthly parents of our Lord were poor, their manners of life were simple, and their surroundings of the poverty, for all riches and splendor were His by right, but in accordance with Divine wisdom, "Though He was rich yet He became poor, that we To be poor in this world's goods is the lot of the vast majority, and no man dare attach disgrace and contempt to this condition of life, since the possessor of all richness, temporal and eternal, had not even a suitable place in which to be born. So many restless ones, with ambitions and long ing for earthly treasures far beyond the possibility of attainment, are spending their days in worry and fret and discontentedness over an earthly condition which is affluence when contrasted with | Sabbath day. What a beautiful day for the home-life of the Son of God.

These have yet to realize that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink and luxury and ease, but something more substantial and enduring than these; that it is not all of life to live; that "godliness with contentment great gain, having promise of the life which now is and of that which is to

birth we learn that humble beginnings | the gospel trumpet), in the same MESare no prophecy of life-long abasement indeed, more than this may be affirmed. for here was the inauguration of that God-given principle which so thoroughly permeates the New Testament, and was so often repeated by the Lord Jesus Himself, " He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And after His ascension into heaven it is said of Him that He who was in fact co-equal with God made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a dren." servant, and that because of this, God highly exalted Him, giving Him a name above every other name, to which every knee should bow and every tongue make confession.

Illustrations of the admirable workings of this principle are to be found on every hand. By far the greater number of men who have reached deserved eminence in life, and have been a real help to the generations in which they lived, can heartily thank heaven that they were born poor, and were stimulated to action by the pressure of temporal need; while on the other hand, many a man born with a golden spoon in his mouth, fritters out life's day in effeminate frivolity, or fatal indulgence of appetite and passion.

Young man, if you are rich, learn wisdom and discretion, that you may make the most of your advantages but if you are poor, and are possessed of a right heart and a determined will you are in possession of all you need for success here, and exaltation at the right hand of God the Father.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. From England.

BY REV. JOHN BROWN.

My pen has been idle for a consider rable time, so I must stir it up to duty. We are now in May, the most charming month of the year. "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds has come." The chestwill come again. How meekly did He | nut, lilac, laburnum, and orchards in som, buttercups and daisies bespangle the meadows, the trees are all in their full new dress, and the birds in full song. How loudly nature speaks just now of the power, wisdom, and love of God.

"This lovely earth, the hill, the sward, Look all so fresh as if the Lord,

But yesterday had finished it." Now the beautiful, gladsome spring has come with her fragrant flowers and balmy breezes, with her merry music and sweet song, one almost forgets the piercing winds of winter, the cutting frosts and chilly snows, or if not forgotten the memory of them only helps to heighten and sweeten the joys of spring Is it not also probable that the sterner life's battle, the fiercer its conflicts, the sharper its trials, the deeper its sorrows, the more welcome will heaven be? Who will trouble then about the wilderness life? Paul says something very much like it, for he declares that "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

"And then never more shall the fears, And trials, temptations, and woes, Which darken this valley of tears Intrude on my blissful repose.

Or if yet remembered above, Remembrance no sadness shall raise They'll be but new signs of thy love, New themes for my wonder and praise."

I see by the last MESSENGER that Bro. James Ford, of Milton, has gone home to the Better Land. I felt the blow, for I loved him well. He was one of whom we have not one too many, whose religion seemed to fill his heart with music. and his life with cheerfulness. When I saw the announcement of his departure. some lines he was very fond of, and frequently quoted when speaking in anticipation of death, came quite fresh to my mind, and no doubt they will be at once recognized by friends at Milton: "Life, we've been long together,

Through cloudy and through sunny weather: 'Tis hard to part when friends are dear. Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear. Then steal away-give little warning.

Choose thine own time, say not 'Good Night,' But in some happier clime, bid me "Good Morning."

Death to him was an angel of light, and he often spoke of it with joyful anticipation, not as a thing to be dreaded but desired. He has bid "Good Night" to earth, and heard the "Good Morning" of heaven. I notice he died on the a Christian to die on! To pass from the earthly Sabbath right away home to the heavenly! That is the day on which I have often thought I should like to die. and in the spring time, when earth is most like heaven. The wife of one of our deacons was called up higher a short time since, also on the Sabbath day. I observe Bro. Vidito, (who I am glad to Moreover, from the Redeemer's lowly | find is still on the field and still blowing SENGER records the death of a deacon's wife, and his words addressed to her I will address to Bro. Ford: "Farewell, blessed saint, you are not dead, only gone before, yet in heaven we hope to greet you;" and also those of Brother Murray, in his brief obituary of Bro. Ford, which I most heartily adopt: "May the loving Saviour comfort the sorrowing widow and mourning chil-

Thank God "there's a changeless world

A world of peace, and joy, and love: Where, gathered from the tomb. The boly hopes that earth has crossed. And the pious friends that we loved and

Immortally shall bloom. Who would not watch, and strive, and

That their longing soul might soar away On faith's untiring wing, To join the throng of the saints in light In that world forever fair and bright, Of endless, cloudless spring."

No winter there, no shades of night, Profane those mansions blest; Where, in the happy fields of light The weary are at rest."

When I begin this communication I meant to give a few particulars of matters of interest in Eogland, but my pen ran in another direction. No doubt, however, the editor with his eagle eye will have discovered and picked out such things from the English papers as are of interest to his readers. The May meetings have come and gone. They were for the most part above the average. Our denominational papers, the "Baptist" and "Freeman," contained complete reports of the Baptist meetings. and the "Christian World" extra num bers gave full reports of all the meetings. I had the pleasure when in London of hearing in the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone, Sir W. Harcourt, Sir Wilfred Lawson, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Hartington, Sir R. Cross, and others on Local Option; for which the majority increases largely every year. There was a great cheer when Lord Hartington announced that the Government had adopted the principle of Sir Wilfred Lawson's bill. Their measure will be looked forward to with much interest. Canon Farrar who sat near me appeared greatly delighted. It was a great pleasure too to hear Mr. John Bright at Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle at the Liberation Society's triennial meeting. You do not need such a society, O happy people! nor such meetings; and from the temper of the meeting, one would think we here should not need them for many more years. But long standing evils die hard. When Mr. Bright read the Resolution reaffirming the principles of the Society, and that those who agreed with it should say "Ay," I was little prepared for a sound not unlike a sudden peal of thunder, when between six and seven thousand people shouted "Ay." When the contrary was put there was one "No." So the Ays had it. Dr. Bevan lately home from America also spoke, and Dr. Macfadyen, and Sir Wilfred Lawson, and the indefatigable Carvell Williams, and others. A reference to the Affirmation Bill by Mr. Bright met with loud applause, for Nonconformists generally are strongly in favour of it, and when he said that the opposition to it in the House from the party in Opposition arose more from a desire to worry the Government than

to honor God, there was tremendous

and continued cheering for some time.

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Baptist cities; tongue highland he was r unfortur not seen to stop s few ever common to hear spoken, takable, brother. Now, become set of r correspo essentia

Mr. Ed We l both the GER, in May 9th of Rev. N. B., sive ter Baptist these of May quiring

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