

Sunday Reading.

Work—Faith—Money—Salvation.

BY MARY SPARKES WHEELER.

WORK, Reaper! for see the grain bending
Its golden sheaves, ready to yield,
And the Lord of the harvest is sending
More laborers into the field.

FAITH, Christian! the Saviour hath promised
Against every soul to prevail,
All kindreds and tongues shall confess Him,
No word He hath spoken shall fail.

MONEY, Christian! your gold and your silver
The Master hath need of to-day,
As ye pray for the heathen in darkness,
Ask largely, but give as ye pray.

SALVATION! Oh! let the glad story
Re-echo o'er mountain and plain,
That Jesus is coming in glory,
O'er earth his dominion to reign.

Fundamental Truths of Christianity.

LUTHERD'S APOLOGETICAL DISCOURSES.
Translated from the German, by Prof. D. M. Welton.

TENTH DISCOURSE.

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

At the side of our Lord's miracles we place his word. His miracles are the illustration of his word and his word again is the interpretation of his deeds. Herein his miracles get a religious significance. His word is the principal thing;—the principal also for ourselves. For at bottom this is the fact; we believe not in his word on account of his miracles, but we believe in his miracles on account of his word and on account of himself.

Let us now turn to his word! At a certain time the Council sent its servants to Jesus to arrest him and bring him before the judgment, but they returned without accomplishing their object with the explanation: never man spake like this man (John vii. 46). So also we, so all time, are obliged to speak. Eighteen hundred years have passed away since Jesus taught, and the thought of man has undergone a complete change; but his word has preserved its old, eternally fresh power and might upon the human heart.

Wherein lies this peculiar power of his word? It is not in certain properties of its effect lies. Jesus is no poet, no orator, no philosopher, it is not the poetic ornamentation of his discourses which transports us, it is not rhetorical flights which carry us away, it is not speculative thought that calls forth our wonder—nothing of those. One can not speak more simply than Jesus speaks—whether we think of his sermon on the mount, or of his parables of the kingdom of God, or of his so-called intercessory prayer. One cannot speak more simply than Jesus speaks. But it is in simple words that he expresses the greatest, highest things, so that we might almost think, as Pascal observes, that he were unconscious of the truths to which he gives utterance, did he not express them at the same time so clearly, so positively and consciously, that we see that he well knows what he says, while he declares the greatest and sublimest truths in the simplest manner. We easily perceive that the words of eternal truth is his home in which his thoughts continually move. He speaks of God and of his relation to him, of the celestial world of spirits, of the future world and the future life of man, of the kingdom of God on earth, of its character and history, of the highest moral truths, and the highest problems of man, in short he speaks of all the highest questions and problems of humanity so simply and plainly, so free from all mental agitation, and without making his special knowledge conspicuous, or with the deliberate detail with which one is accustomed to propound new truth, as if all were perfectly natural and self-evident. We see that the highest truths are his nature; he is not simply a teacher of truth, he is the very source of truth; he carries the truth within him as his nature; he could say: I am the truth. And this is the feeling we all have in reading his words: we hear the voice of truth itself. Hence the power which his words have over the hearts of men of all times.

But it is not simple this, that his words are the manifestation of his wonderful Person—Jesus also makes his Person the central point of all his words. He is the substance of his teaching. He speaks indeed of the kingdom of God; but he ushers in this kingdom and faith in him is the way of entrance into it; the possession of this kingdom is for each individual a close joining of himself to his Person. He is also indeed the teacher of the highest morality. His doctrine is the purest and most spiritual ethics; it is his great act, that he has taken religion and morality from the sphere of external action to that of the inner doing of the mind and heart; but he has made them to consist in an inner relation and conduct of the heart towards himself. To believe on him and by virtue of such faith to love God, that is his teaching. And when he does not speak directly of himself, it is yet of himself he speaks virtually. He makes himself the centre of all his declarations. And the greater part of his words give him this position, not indirectly, but directly. He grounds everything upon his Person. The matter which he represents, the salvation which he brings, the claims which he urges, the future which he announces—all rest upon his Person. "I am"—that is his great declaration. For if ye will not believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins. (John vii. 24)—this, comprehensively stated, is at bottom the whole of his teaching. It is a remarkable declaration. There can be none more lofty, more self-conscious. None of the great teachers of mankind have ever ventured thus to speak. We should not permit any thus to speak. Each one has only emphasized the matter of which he has spoken, and of this matter has only perhaps affirmed that it is the truth. The significance of the person however disappeared in the significance of the thing. Jesus grounds all upon his Person, and the matter of which he speaks consists in his Person. Throughout he throws the weight of his Person into the scale. When he would speak of anything in the most emphatic manner he says: Verily, verily, I say unto you. We are to believe his words not on account of the truth of the subject, but on account of the claims of his Person. Because he speaks, therefore what he says is true.

The authority of the matter rests upon the authority of his Person. Verily, verily, I say unto you! so speaks no other man. Only God speaks thus in the Old Testament. Jesus speaks as if divine authority belonged to him. And he was yet the humblest of men! But all the more mightily sounds the word in his mouth: I am.

What is he? He has comprehended what he says of himself in two self-explanatory expressions, which are ever current with him. He calls himself the Son of Man and the Son of God. What is the signification of these names? He calls himself the Son of Man. What will he hereby express? On the one hand in this designation he includes himself with other men—he is one of our race; on the other hand he makes himself hereby conspicuous above the total remainder of the human race as the true final Son of Man, as the true scion of humanity, as the real man, in whom the whole history of humanity ends, in whom humanity has found its unity, on whom its history turns, as the conclusion of the old time and the beginning of the new. All this lies in the expression—Son of Man. He is the comprehension of humanity and the goal of its history.

Jesus has something universal in his nature: every one gets this impression. It belongs to the history of nations to be distinguished by particular comprehensive personal characteristics. Each nation honors such heroes in its history as are in a higher sense than others the bearers and organs of its national spirit, and in which the nation may see itself as it were embodied. But it is ever still only an approximation to a full representation. Especially is this the case when the question is that of the comprehension of the universal nature and spirit of man. Indeed, the greatest representatives of the human mind, and the most universal minds of whom we can think, how far they come short of the mark. Representatives of humanity itself—far from it! Jesus is such a representative; he is the only one. He is living prototype of humanity. Not only in him are certain sides of human nature seen in perfect form and representation, but we here meet with human nature itself in its original verity and purity, free from the turbidness and perversion which sin has introduced. The truth that is defaced and warped in ourselves we see fully realized in him. That which is archetypal in Christ is that which makes him at the same time the universal model for men. However diverse men may be in respect of individuality and nationality—each one finds in Jesus his pattern. Indeed Jesus was an individual and a national manifestation, he was the son of Mary and sprang from Israel, his external life embraced only a limited circle of movement—and still this appointed and special form of his historic manifestation bears in itself throughout so strongly the character of universality, that is for all persons of all times and under all relations the highest, most comprehensive, and inexhaustible pattern. In him vanishes every thought of national antipathy, of remoteness of times, of diversity of natural temperament: "The Greeks become his disciples, although he founded no school of philosophy among them; the Brahmin reveres him, although humble fishermen claim him; the red Indian prays to him, although he belongs to the white race which the Indian hates; every distinction of color, form, manner and custom, is exalted in him, in whom again all the sons of Adam find their unity.

In him humanity has found its unity and humanity its goal. He is the one who should come. All history before him is a prophecy of him. The course of external history, the development of the mind, rests upon him; its result is to demand him without being able to produce him; in him then it finds its fulfillment. Herein rests the secret might of his working, and this is the pledge of his victory, that he is the demand and the goal of the entire natural development of mankind. He is the accomplishment of the prophecy pertaining to Israel and the nations; for in him appears the means of divine deliverance. But he is also the fulfillment of the prophecy of our own hearts. He is the secret of our ardent yearning. This is the secret tie which unknown to nature joins us to him and involuntarily draws us to him. He it is whom in reality we mean without knowing it. We are all dependent on him, so that only in him do we find rest to our souls, because he is the truth of our being. Thus he is the goal of us all.

Herein does he hold his universal place in the world. He speaks in strongest terms of this. He designates himself Lord of the world. He joins the destiny of the world and of every

individual to his Person, makes it dependent on faith in him. When he speaks of this his words include the human race. But he is Lord of the world only in order to be its Redeemer. He has come to seek and make blessed that which was lost. This is what he will give the world: redemption from sin, true relation to God, Peace, Salvation. He is Lord in order to be the Redeemer, the mediator, who will remove the middle wall which sin has raised between man and God, and make the propitiation which is to be the foundation of the new Covenant. Thus Jesus speaks of himself, of his mission and its significance.

Herein he places himself over against the total remainder of humanity and rises far above equality with us; herein with the perfection of divine power and authority he stands above mankind. Especially when he speaks of his future. In the strongest words which can be imagined he speaks of this. Even when he was arraigned as a criminal and saw before him the ignominious death of the cross, he repeated to his judges the words which he had previously spoken to his disciples: He would appear exalted at the right hand of divine majesty, in heavenly glory, surrounded by the angels of God who should wait on him to execute his commands, he would summon all nations of the earth to his tribunal and judge them according to their treatment of him. He made this declaration, it is a fact; for it constitutes the basis of his judgment, and became to universal faith the strongest hope of early christendom. But it is an unprecedented declaration. In the mouth of every other man it would be madness. Even the frantic pride of the Roman Emperor, who demanded religious adoration for his statues, did not go to such a length as this. But here the humblest among men utters that declaration, utters it with the greatest composure, not in a moment of excitement which made him somewhat irresponsible, but he repeats it, for the instruction of his disciples, as a warning remembrance to his enemies, in all tranquility and calmness, in a moment when outwardly indeed he was succumbing to violence, but inwardly was triumphing over his enemies, he rises above the malice and baseness of men through the loftiness of his moral nature, and celebrates the greatest moral triumph—then he designates himself the divine Ruler and Judge of the world.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

From Mrs. Boggs in India.

We have lately spent a few days of unusual anxiety, followed by much joy and thanksgiving; and, as these recent experiences have shown us a very fine feature in the character of our Telugu Christians, and also in God's loving care of his children, I want to tell you about them.

We have here in our Indian home two dear little boys who help much in making it bright and happy. The youngest is not quite a year old; but he is a lovely baby, and very dear to us all.

During the greater part of the last three months, my two little boys and I have been alone, as Mr. Boggs has been very busy itinerating throughout the mission fields. Though alone in a place where we rarely see a white face, or hear the English language spoken, yet God has been with us day and night, and his care has been most manifest just when it was most needed.

Baby Albert, the pet of all, natives as well as ourselves, became very seriously ill, and for several days it seemed very doubtful if he would recover. Mr. Boggs was fifty miles away. The only English doctor in the district lives in Kurnool, one hundred miles from here, so our condition for a time seemed sad indeed.

As soon as the natives knew of baby's illness, they began to pray for his recovery. They came here in companies of half a dozen or more, sometimes men, sometimes women and children, some of them several times a day; and they always prayed before leaving. The tenderness and sympathy, the consideration and anxiety to help me, the repeated earnest prayers, and the brotherly kindness manifested by some of our good Telugu Christians during these days and nights of lonely watching over my sick baby, have done more to make me love their dark faces, and to feel that they are my own brothers and sisters, than any other experience since I came into the country.

But how were their prayers answered? The day the sickness was most severe, Dr. Bain, the district surgeon of Kurnool, unexpectedly came to Cumbum, and encamped in a grove within a quarter of a mile of our house,

I sent for him; and he came immediately, and twice daily as long as he remained in the place. At his last visit, he saw his little patient quite out of danger, and recovering rapidly. We have been at this station nearly eight months, and this is the only time we have seen a doctor. Was not God very good to send him at this particular time, and to bless his efforts for the restoration of the sick child?

God's goodness appeared to us still in another way. When fifty miles from here, the messenger whom I sent reached Mr. Boggs at midnight, with the sad news of the little one's dangerous illness. With the least possible delay, he started for home on horseback, and reached here in just twelve hours. Having to come much of the way without any made road, over rocky footpaths and cart-tracks, through fields and swamps and streams, and that under a burning India sun, the ride was not only fatiguing, but, at mid-day, dangerous also. When he reached here at 2 P. M., and I began to realize the dangers through which he had come, I scarcely knew whether to be more thankful for his safety, or for being able to tell that, through Dr. Bain's opportune arrival and skilful treatment, the baby was better.

The following Sabbath, into the usual weekly collection went an unusual amount as a "thank-offering" for the restoration of a loved child, not from the parents only; but one of the good old Christians, so poor that he has only the simplest necessities of life, but rich in faith, stood up and gave thanks to God from a full heart, and then gave his thank-offering of money also. Several others expressed their gratitude in the same way, by contributing to the funds of the mission.

After spending a few days at home, and seeing the little one nearly well again, Mr. Boggs returned to teach, and took up the work he had so suddenly laid down. He was permitted to see two hundred and fourteen persons baptized in the next two weeks, making five hundred and thirty-four since the beginning of the year.

Will not all who see this letter unite with us in the petition that the precious little life spared in answer to so many prayers may become a very good and useful Christian life, and will you not put forth still larger efforts for the dissemination of this religion of love, that has made these people so tender and sympathetic?—Helping Hand.

The Feast of Lanterns.

The Chinese have a proverb to the effect that the people dread to have the lanterns of the 'First-night Feast' wet by the rain. Occurring as it does on the fifteenth of the first moon, all greatly desire that the moon and lanterns combine to make it the brightest night in the whole year, hoping that thus the gods will be greatly propitiated. But, alas! to-day, the great feast day, has been most unfavorable; and, this evening, the rain has quite excluded the light of the moon, and must prevent the lantern exhibition from being a brilliant success. Furthermore, the gods, that have all been taken out of the temples, and placed where they may be supposed to participate in the festivities, will be as uncomfortable as wooden gods can be, and may not be in a state of mind to lend a gracious ear to the many petitions offered to them. On the evening known as the 'Feast of Lanterns,' the great number of beautiful illuminations of all shapes and sizes suspended from the branches of the spreading banyan and the twigs of the graceful bamboo, and in lieu of such in the doorways and on bamboo poles stuck in the ground, etc., make a Chinese village to resemble a forest illuminated with myriads of various colored lights. The number of lanterns is in proportion to the population, often each family providing as many as it has individuals. That lasting good may come to him whom the lantern represents, each must bear the inscription, 'Thousands and ten of thousands of descendants, long life, riches, and honor.' On the afternoon of this day the idols are everywhere worshipped; and, early in the evening, offerings are made in every ancestral hall and before every ancestral tablet.

A description of the superstitious observances of this day, varying as they do in minor details, even neighboring localities, would fill a volume. Space forbids a description of more than two or three of the curious customs observed. One is 'the bringing home of the big pig.' The head of the family betakes

himself to the rice field, and digs up as large a clod of earth as he can well carry in both arms: the larger the clod, the larger will be the pigs he will be able to raise the coming year. This he carries home, and places before the entrance to his pig-sty, which, however, is usually a part of his own parlor. In this clod, he sticks some twigs of banyan or bamboo, and then burns incense before the 'kitchen god,' all the time praying in a loud voice: 'O kitchen god! I pray you to preserve my pigs, that this year they may grow fat and large, so as to be sold for a great many cash. And then I will come and worship you.' And true to his word, if his prayer be granted, some of the money received from the sale of the pig he uses to buy pork and other articles of food that the gods are supposed to be fond of, and makes a thank offering.

Another custom, and one observed by the women only, is to rush, at twilight, to some neighboring clump of bamboos, shake them vigorously, as tokens of their trust in the tree divinity; and each woman sticks in her hair a twig from the same, for good luck. The old women hope for health and long life, and the unmarried that they may gain, not a good husband, but a good mother-in-law.

But the most curious custom of all is that of the incense boat. Each village provides itself with a small boat made of bamboo splints and paper. Early in the evening, a man, previously chosen by lot, bears the yet empty boat aloft on his head to the place where the gods are assembled, and places it before them. In the mean time, the head of each family buys a dozen sheets of 'paper money,' and as many incense sticks, to represent the months of the year,—thirteen of each, providing there be an intercalary month, as there is this year. Calling before him each member of his family, he scrapes him gently down the back with the bunch of money and the incense sticks, to free him, not only from present disease, but from all that might be in store for him during the coming year. This done, he with other heads of families, proceeds to the spot where the incense boat has been placed; and, in the presence of the gods and each other, they cast into the boat the money and incense, that is now supposed to represent all the evil spirits that would afflict the credulous villagers.

The boat, with its cargo of disease, is then supposed to be driven away by the enraged divinities, and is borne by the boatman to the river, into which, having first been set fire to, it is cast. But if, perchance, the fire should go out before it has accomplished its work of destruction, and the boat should float down to some neighboring village, woe be to that village; for it becomes heir to all the disease with which the boat has been freighted. In noticing the observances of this custom, one is taught how natural and congenial to the human sense of need is the idea of substitution. Here is an opportunity to extract good out of evil. It becomes a suitable occasion to tell of the scapegoat, and to direct the thoughts of this deluded people to the 'Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.'

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To the Rockies and back.

III.

As the stranger looks at the foot-hills from Denver they seem near enough to be reached after a half hour's walk. But take the train and you are moving toward them for three quarters of an hour before getting there. This train, on the Colorado Central, a narrow-gauge road, runs by the Argo Smelting Works, where from unsightly ore come bars of glittering gold and silver. Through an opening in the foot-hills the train passes into Golden, a town environed by mountains, and the seat of the State School of Mines. Entering Clear Creek Canon, just a little way from Golden, we are in the midst of Rocky Mountain scenery. Much of a pigmy-like feeling steals over one in the presence of such grandeur. What strange, fantastic shapes these huge, precipitous rocks assume—towers, castles, lions, sphinxes. Now to the right and anon to the left runs the Creek, noisy and murky. Sit upon the rear of the last car and the spray occasionally reaches you. As the engine sweeps around Hanging Rock,