

SUNDAY READING



REVELATION AND NATURE. They are Not at War With Each Other, but are Reconcilable.

Revelation is not at war with nature. From the necessity of the case, the earliest instruction must have come to human beings from this source. It is our race had a beginning (and nothing but the insanity of atheism can doubt this) then its first members, created as they were without human parentage, and having no resource in the experience of fellow-creatures who had preceded them, required an immediate teaching from their Creator; they would have perished without it. Revelation was the very commencement of human history the foundation of all later knowledge and improvement. It was an essential part of the course of Providence, and must not, then, be regarded as a discord in God's general system.

Revelation is not at war with nature. Nature prompts us to expect it from the relation which God bears to the human race. The relation of Creator to the most intimate which can subsist; and it leads us to anticipate a free and affectionate intercourse with the creature. That the universal Father should be bound by a parental interest to His offspring, that He should watch over and assist the progress of beings whom He has enriched with the divine gifts of reason and conscience, is so natural a doctrine, so accordant with His character, that various sects, both philosophical and religious, both anterior and subsequent to christianity, have believed, not only in general revelation, but that God reveals Himself to every human soul. When I think of the vast capacities of the human mind, of God's nearness to it, and unbounded love towards it. I am disposed to wonder, not that revelations have been made, but that they have not been more variously vouchsafed to the wants of mankind. Revelation has a striking agreement with the chief method which God has instituted for carrying forward individuals and the race, and is thus in harmony with His ordinary operations. Whence is it that we all acquire our chief knowledge? Not from the outward universe; not from the fixed laws of material nature; but from intelligent beings more advanced than ourselves. The teachings of the wise and good are our chief aids. Were our connection with superior minds broken off, had we no teacher but nature with its fixed laws, its unvarying revolutions of night and day and seasons, we should remain forever in the ignorance of childhood. Nature is a volume which we can read only by the help of an intelligent interpreter. The great law under which man is placed, is that he shall receive illumination and impulse from beings more improved than himself. Now, revelation is only an extension of this universal method of carrying forward mankind. In this case God takes on Himself the office to which all national beings are called. He becomes an immediate teacher to a few, communicating to them a higher order of truth than had before been attained, which they in turn are to teach to their race. Here is no new power or element introduced into the system, but simply an enlargement of that agency on which the progress of man chiefly depends.—Channing.

OBSTACLES TO CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Why the Prospects are no Brighter Than in the Past.

In a recent editorial on christian unity, the N. Y. Sun remarks: "In all orthodox protestant communions the desire for a sentimental unity seems to be substantially unanimous. They are ready to treat each other as christian brethren; but when the question of devising a scheme of organic unity comes up, they are as much apart as ever. Such unity means the merging of the whole into one church organization. It implies the giving up by each of the very grounds of its separate existence; for they are divided rather because of differences of conviction touching ecclesiastical organization than by reason of disagreement as to the fundamental articles of christian faith. They cannot combine organically in a new system devised by compromise and concession. They must take a system already existing. Some one of the churches must absorb all others. The prospect of such protestant unity is no brighter now than it was a hundred years ago, for the existing diversity is a necessary consequence of the theory of protestantism. If the individual conscience and not church authority is made supreme, there must be innumerable divisions.

Moreover, the union of protestant imagination is not full christian union. It is only protestant union. It would leave the great division in christendom unhealed, and it might embitter still further the controversies of christianity. Protestantism would simply be consolidated against catholicism.

The true christian union is a union of all christendom into one great army of the faith. Instead of protestant fighting catholic and catholic fighting protestant, it would bring the two together and enable them to stand together against the unbelief which their division tends to provoke and promote.

Thankful for Small Mercies.

A gentleman—a clergyman—said to me, "I have visited at the houses of the rich, and stood by the bedside of the wealthy. But never have I been so lifted up above myself, and stimulated to a better life; never have I seen such grand examples of patience, trust, and endurance; never have I seen such cheerful submission to that which, when witnessed, amazes us that any poor human being can exist under its severity, than by the side of the bedridden, the crippled, and the suffering, who are in the midst of poverty, not knowing what would befall them on the morrow, living actually by faith, yet rejoicing and thankful in the

midst of privation and suffering." Come with me; turn under this low doorway; climb these narrow creaking stairs; knock at the door. A pleasant voice bids you enter. You see a woman sixty-four years of age, her hands folded and contracted, her whole body crippled and curled together, as cholera cramped and rheumatism fixed it twenty-eight years ago. For sixteen years she had not moved from her bed nor looked out of the window, and she has been in constant pain, while she cannot move a limb. Listen! she is thankful. For what? For the use of one thumb; with a two-pronged fork, fastened to a stick, she can turn over the leaves of an old-fashioned Bible when placed within her reach. Hear her, "I'm content to lie here as long as it shall please Him, and to go when He shall call me."—J. B. Gough.

IN THE ANGLICAN CALENDAR.

All Saints Day and the Lesson It Has for the Believer.

Tomorrow will be the Sunday within the octave of All Saints Day and the liturgical color for the day and the following days of the octave, including Tuesday, the octave day, is white, with four lights.

Sunday is also the feast of St. Leonard, confessor, of Gaul. There does not appear to be much that is authentic recorded of this black-letter saint, who is one of two Saints Leonard, after one or the other of which a number of places in the British islands have been called. This St. Leonard appears to have been converted by St. Remigius at the court of Clovis, the founder of the Frankish monarchy. St. Leonard became a monk and abbot of Noblac, near Limoges, where he died, A. D. 559.

Friday will be the feast of St. Martin, bishop and confessor. When the festival is noted, red is the color prescribed in the Western use, and yellow in the use of Sarum. In churches which aim to follow the latter use, but have not its colors, red takes the place of yellow when the festivals of confessors are observed. There is much of interest told of St. Martin, the patron of soldiers. He was the son of a Roman military tribune and was born at Saboria, Hungary, about the year 316. Being of a mild and peaceful nature he greatly disliked the life of a soldier, to which he was trained, and after serving in the army several years retired into solitude. He was a disciple of St. Hilary. In 374 he was called from his retirement to become bishop of Tours, in which office he was remarkable for his zeal and piety. He converted the whole diocese to Christianity, and put churches where before had been pagan temples. He founded the monastery of Marmoutier and died A. D. 397. He was styled the Apostle to the Gauls, and was the first confessor to whom the Latin church offered public prayers. He is also known as the soldier saint.

One legend of St. Martin says that seeing a beggar naked and cold at the gate of Amiens, he divided his cloak with his sword and gave half of it to the needy man. This cloak was long a valued relic and was carried as a banner before the French army in its battles. It is asserted that this cloak gave the root of our English word "chapel." The oratory in which the cloak (French *chape*) was preserved was called *chappelle*, and the priest who had it in charge was termed *chapelain*. Hence "chapel" and "chaplain" in modern usage.

The colors for the other days of the week are those of the ferias, red and green respectively, according to the particular use. Two lights are prescribed.

Cardinal Gibbons at Chicago.

Among those who took part in the Columbus celebration at Chicago was His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, in whose prayer occur these eloquent words: "As nineteen hundred years ago men assembled in Jerusalem from various portions of the Old World to hear from the lips of the apostles 'the wonderful works of God,' so shall we soon behold men assembled here from Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, from the islands of the Atlantic and Pacific, as well as from all parts of the American continent, to contemplate the wonderful works of man—of man created to thine image and likeness; of man endowed with divine intelligence; of man, the production of whose genius manifest thy wisdom and creative power not less clearly than 'the heavens which declare thy glory, and the firmament which showeth forth the works of thy hands.' And as every contemplative being and student of nature 'finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks and sermons in stones,' and rises from nature to nature's God, so will he devoutly rise from the contemplation of these works of human skill to the admiration of Thee, the uncreated architect. For every artist and man of genius who will exhibit his works within these inclosures must say, with the Royal Prophet, 'Thy hands, O God, have made and fashioned me,' and with Bezaleel, who framed the ancient tabernacle, he must confess that thy spirit enlightened his understanding and guided his hands."

Inspiration Defined.

Inspiration is the co-operation of the Spirit of God with the spirit of men in such a degree as to produce and preserve, in terms of human speech, an accurate record of such doings and sayings of God and of man, and in such proportions as the Holy Spirit deemed necessary to shew the various lines along which the kingdom of God among men was to be built; to show the human and Divine elements out of which he is to build it; to shew the varied stages of its progress and growth, and to shew its final and glorious consummation.—Wood.

Every man has within the depths of his heart a tribunal which he begins to judge himself, awaiting the hour when the Supreme Arbitrator shall confirm the sentence. Thus does conscience furnish another proof of the immortality of the soul.

NEWS AND NOTABILLIA.

The average salary of preachers in the United States is \$700, ranging from \$60 to \$25,000.

The earliest mention of a ferry boat may be found in 2 Samuel xix. 18: "And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household."

The Roman catholics in the United States number six and a quarter millions, having increased fifteen and a half per cent. in the last decade.

It may not be generally known that Lady Tennyson is the writer of several hymns that appear in Palgrave's "Treasury of Sacred Song."

Thirty years ago there was a great outcry against the lighting of St. Stephen's cathedral at Vienna by gas. The Archbishop has now introduced electricity.

The grotesque knocker on the sanctuary door of Durham cathedral, which bears a rather distinct resemblance to a lion, is said to be of the twelfth century.

Dr. Pierson, who has been pointed to us as Spurgeon's successor is quoted as saying that the will not oblige presbyterianism, and "will never turn baptist or be immersed."

The college of the Propaganda at Rome announces the conversion of 40,000 persons to christianity in the first six months of 1892. The greater portion of the converts were in Asia, and West Africa.

The bishop of Nova Scotia has asked the clergy of his diocese to observe next Thursday as a day of thanksgiving, and has requested that the offerings on that occasion be given to the widows and orphans' fund.

The Rev. Charles Ferguson, rector of St. James' church, Syracuse, N. Y., recently resigned, and in referring to the matter from the pulpit he spoke disparagingly of the parish system, with hired ministers, high-priced choirs, pew rents, church fairs, and caste distinction.

The oldest church in the United States is said to be the church of San Miguel erected at Santa Fe, N. M., seventy-seven years before the landing of the pilgrims on Plymouth rock, twenty years before the founding of St. Augustine, Fla., and fifty-three years after the landing of Columbus.

One of the members of the Spanish-Portuguese synagogue in New York has deposited there a document containing his pedigree since the time the Jews were driven from Spain 400 years ago. Many of the Jews here have genealogical records running back for ages; but all of them are not regarded as authentic.

Robert Braybrook, Bishop of London, who died in 1404, was taken from his tomb after the great fire of 1666 after having been buried for 262 years. Notwithstanding this his remains were found to be perfectly fresh and unshrunk. His hair had grown more than a yard in length, and had a natural life-like lustre.

The N. Y. Press says there are thousands of clergymen who regard Phillips Brooks' former church in Boston as the finest place for a clergyman in America excepting Trinity and Grace churches in New York; and yet of the two clergymen who have been called to succeed Dr. Brooks, both from New York, one, Dr. Greer, declined the call, and the other, Dr. Donald, is yet in grave doubt about the acceptance of it.

The Vicar of Middlewich being consulted by a parishioner as to whether he would save his grain on Sunday wrote: "I am informed that the corn is already seriously damaged, and with more wet will soon become worthless. In the ordinary course of events an emergency of this kind is not likely to occur again for a series of years. As a clergyman I wish to say that in my opinion farmers will be justified in saving their corn should the need for carrying it on Sunday next in their judgment appear urgent."

A papyrus manuscript found in the den of an old hermit in a cave near Jerusalem in the year 1880, and which experts have all along believed to have been the handwriting of St. Peter, "the friend of Christ," was submitted to a committee of the Biblical Society of London in 1890. They have arrived at the conclusion that the work is in reality exactly what it purports to be, the last literary work of the great apostle. It is said that a "society of British literary vountuaries" have offered £20,000 for the document.

Rev. Thos. Spurgeon, son of the famous preacher, has returned to New Zealand, after a visit to London. It is stated that he has his father's clear, resonant voice, but he seems far from strong in health. With most of the congregation he has become very popular, and many would have preferred his remaining in England as his father's successor. The strength of their affection showed itself in a rather remarkable way. After the benediction, as the preacher retired to the vestry, there came from various parts of the vast building cries of "Good-bye, sir!" "God bless you!" "Come back again."

The instruction of Jewish children in the tenets of Judaism is now carried on in New York in special schools that are kept open on Sundays. The Jewish Messenger desires the extension of this system under a Jewish school board composed of rabbis and selected laymen, who shall assume with tact and firmness the task too long shirked—the religious training of the Jewish children of this city, rich and poor; the creation of elementary Hebrew and religious schools, properly graded; the establishment of higher classes leading to seminary and colleges; the supervision of existing religious schools, and the formation of a training school for teachers.

Mr. Arthur Acland is the first clergyman of the Church of England who has become a cabinet minister, though Sir William Marriott, who was also at one time a clerk in holy orders, filled the post of Judge Advocate-General in Lord Salisbury's first and second administrations. Several other gentlemen who have taken the advantage of the Ecclesiastical Orders Relief Act have been elected members of the House of Commons. Among them are the late Prof. Thorold Rogers, who sat for Southwark from 1880 till 1885; Mr. W. A. Macdonald, the member for one of the divisions of Queen's county in the last parliament; and Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Q. C., who has represented Cardiganshire since 1886.

The Title of Reverend.

In answer to a question of why clergymen are called "reverend," London *Tid Bits* says it is because of their being worthy or deserving of reverence as ministers of God, their lives being devoted to His service and the sacred matters of religion. The title is given because of the office they hold, and not of the individual filling it. This is shown by the distinction given to the several offices in the Church of England; a dean being addressed as very reverend, a bishop as right reverend, and an archbishop as most reverend. In Scotland the principals of the universities, if clergymen, and the moderator of the general assembly are styled very reverend, and each of the ministers reverend. In 1874, the Bishop of Lincoln refused to allow "Rev." to be put on the tombstone of a Wesleyan preacher, and gained his cause in the Court of Arches, in 1875, but the Privy Council, on appeal (January, 1876), reversed the decision, and declared the title to be simply complimentary, and not confined to clergymen of the English Establishment.

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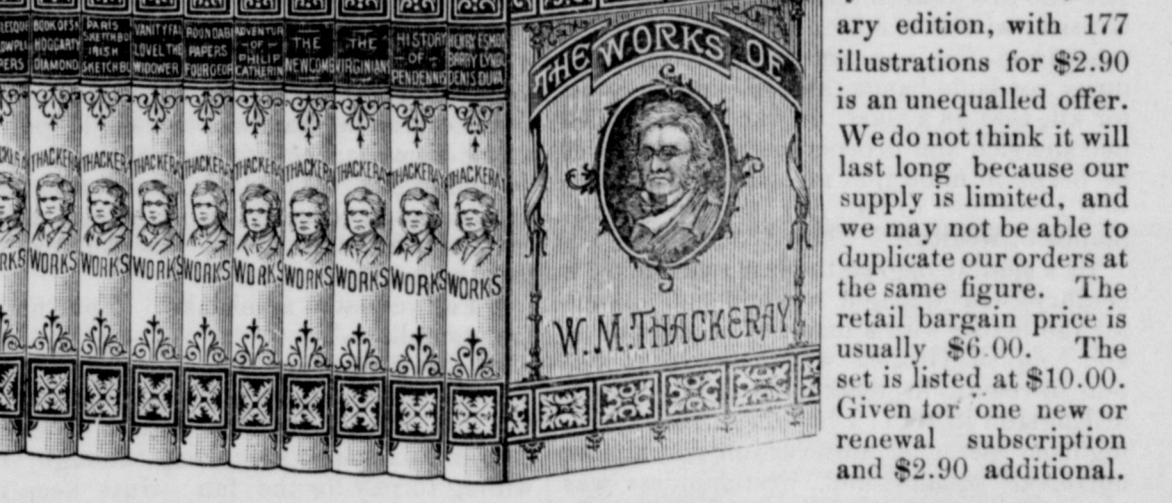
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