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That God in all

things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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Religious.

BABYLON.

From Dr. Sleight's "Christian's Defensive Dictionary."

The capital of the ancient kingdom of Babylon is supposed to have been situated in N. lat. 32° 34', and in E. long. 44° 12' 30". It was founded by the first descendants of Noah, 2234 years before Christ, enlarged by Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah 2000 years B. C., and in a manner completely rebuilt about 1200 years B. C. by the Assyrian queen, Semiramis. It was greatly strengthened and beautified by various succeeding sovereigns; but it was by Nebuchadnezzar and his daughter, Nitocris, that it was brought to such a degree of magnificence and splendor, as rendered it one of the wonders of the world.

Babylon stood in the midst of a large plain, in a very deep and fruitful soil. It was divided into two parts, by the river Euphrates, which flowed through the city from north to south. The old city was on the east, and the new city, built by Nebuchadnezzar, on the west side of the river. Both these divisions were enclosed by one wall, and the whole formed a complete square, four hundred and eighty furlongs in compass. Each of the four sides of this square had twenty-five gates of solid brass, at equal distances; and at every corner was a strong tower, ten feet higher than the wall. In those quarters, where the city had least natural defence, there were also three of these towers between every two of the gates; and the same number between each corner, and the nearest gate on its two sides. The city was composed of fifty streets, each fifteen miles long, and one hundred and fifty feet broad, proceeding from the twenty-five gates on each side, and crossing each other at right angles, besides four half streets, two hundred feet in breadth, surrounding the whole, and fronting towards the outer wall. It was thus intersected into six hundred and seventy-six squares, which extended four furlongs and a half on each of their sides, and along which the houses were built, at some distance from each other. These intermediate spaces, as well as the inner parts of the squares, were employed as gardens, pleasure-grounds, &c.; so that not above one half of the immense extent which the walls inclosed was occupied by buildings.

The walls of Babylon were of extraordinary strength, being eighty-seven feet broad and three hundred and fifty feet high, and they were surrounded on the outside by an immense ditch. The city comprehended a regular square, forty-eight miles in circuit, and was eight times larger than London with its appendages. (Gillies' Hist. of the World, Vol. I. p. 166.)

The celebrated French Historian, M. Rollin, gives, in his Ancient History, the following account of the besieging and taking of Babylon, by Cyrus. "The taking of Babylon," says he, "is one of the greatest events in ancient history; and the principal circumstances with which it was attended were foretold in the Holy Scriptures many years before it happened."

"Cyrus, whom the Divine Providence was to make use of, as an instrument for the executing his design of mercy and goodness towards his people, was mentioned in the Scripture, by his name, above 200 years before he was born. 'Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know, that I am the Lord, which call thee by thy name: I have earned thee, though thou hast not known me.' (Isaiah 44:1-4.)

"God Almighty was pleased not only to cause the captivity, which his people were to suffer at Babylon, to be foretold a long time before it came to pass, but likewise to set down the exact number of years it was to last. The term he fixed for it was seventy years—after which he promised to deliver them, by bringing a remarkable and irretrievable destruction upon the city of Babylon, the place of their confinement. 'And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.' (Jer. 25:11.)

"That which kindled the wrath of God against Babylon was, 1. Her insupportable pride; 2. Her inhuman cruelty towards the Jews; and 3. The sacrilegious impiety of her king.

1. *Her pride.* She believed herself to be invincible. She said in her heart, I am the queen of nations, and I shall remain so forever. There is no power equal to mine. All other powers are either subject or tributary to me, or in alliance with me. I shall never know either barrenness or widowhood. Eternity is written in my destiny, according to the observation of all those that have consulted the stars to know it.

2. *Her cruelty.* It is God himself that complains of it. I was willing, says he, to punish my people, as a father chasteneth his children. I sent them for a time into banishment at Babylon with a design to recall them, as soon as they were become more thankful and more faithful. But Babylon and her prince have added to the paternal chastisement which I inflicted, such cruel and inhuman treatment as my clemency forbore. Their design has been to destroy; mine to save. The banishment they have turned into a severe bondage and captivity, and have shown no compassion or regard either to age, infirmity, or virtue. (Isaiah 47:5.)

The sacrilegious impiety of her king. To the

pride and cruelty of his predecessors, Belshazzar added an impiety that was peculiar to himself. He did not only prefer his divinites to the true and only God, but fancied that he had vanquished his power.

Make bright the arrows, gather the shields, saith the prophet, speaking to the Medes and Persians. The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of Medes, for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it, because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple. (51:11.)

How ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand,—a day cruel both with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate. (Isaiah 13:6, 9.) Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon, and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. (Jer. 50:18.) Shout against her round about. Jer. 20:15, 29, and 51:4.) Recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her—and spare not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Every one that is found shall be thrust through, and every one that is joined to them shall fall by the sword. Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces, and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. O daughter of Babylon, (Ps. 137:8, 9,) who art to be destroyed, happy shall be he that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. (Isaiah 13:19-22.) It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherders make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there; and satyrs shall dance there; and the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places. I will also make it a possession for the beasts, and pools of water. (Isaiah 14:23, 24.) I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have proposed, so shall it stand. (To be continued.)

THE SABBATH-SIN OF PROFESSORS.

God hath appointed the Sabbath: he hath sanctified it for special and entire communion with himself. The law of the Sabbath was given before the fall; because man was to labor and dress the garden on the six days, and therefore could not have that complete and undistracted communion with God, even in his state of innocence, which he might enjoy by a total separation from all earthly and heterogeneous employments; but since the fall this rest is of more absolute necessity, for that we cannot now apply our minds entirely to matters of so different a nature as heavenly and earthly things are. The Sabbath is many ways honorable: it was anciently set apart by God; it was written with God's own finger in the tables: God mined manna on that day; it is called an "everlasting covenant," by way of eminency, as if nothing of God's covenant were kept if this were not; yet, God puts a *renewal* on this day, and no other: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day." "If a friend sendeth to you that he will come and sojourn himself in your company such a day, and tells you the set time when he will come, will he not take it ill if you neglect him then? If you are full of employments and other guests, and have no leisure to attend communion with him? Thus said God, remember such a time; I will set it apart on purpose to enjoy you and feast you; I will then take you into my cellars—my wine-cellar—and (after an holy manner) imbriate you with divine comforts; you are on your other days clogged and cumbered with earthly affairs, so that I can have therein but broken communion with you; but pray remember to lay aside all other business, to rest from all your other works, that I and you may freely converse together." But instead of this,

How little preparation do we make for the observing of this day unto the Lord, though *remember* be a watch-word of solemn preparation for it? Remember it; think of it before it come, so that thou mayest be ready to sanctify it without any distraction by worldly business. Which of us despatcheth his worldly business sensibly on the six days? Nay, is it not a wicked custom to engross more business into our hands and hearts the day before than on any other day of the week? Do not greedy professors sit up later on Saturday night than on any other night? Hereby their hearts are encumbered with the world, and their natural strength and spirits wasted and spent, so that they cannot with a free spirit wait upon God. Such is the reverence that is due to the solemn and public duties of devotion, that they require not only a ceasing from other works and thoughts for the time of the performance, but also a decent preparation beforehand—that we "look to our feet," &c.—that so our thoughts and affections, which are naturally bent upon the world, and not easily withdrawn from it, may be raised to a disposition becoming the day. God alone knows how oft the devil and our own hearts have entangled us with occasions on the Saturday, whereby our minds have been distracted on the Sabbath; yea, have we not at times even secretly wished that the Sabbath were over, or might be adjourned, that we

might pursue some worldly design, which is obstructed by its interposal? The Sabbath is the saint's market-day, or fair-day: you know what preparations are made by workmen for their days of gain; would to God we had learned wisdom from carnal men, so to fit and prepare for the advantages to our souls we may reap upon God's day.

How have we curtailed the Sabbath? Have not we risen later on the Lord's day than on any other? and gone sooner to bed on that day than on any other? "When will the Sabbath be gone?" Do not we make it the shortest day of the week? O! if God had reserved all the days to himself save one, how diligent would you have been to take all the day to your worldly business? This is a clear evidence that your minds are more on your profits and pleasures than on the services of Christ.

How lowering are our countenances and how heavy are our hearts in the beginning of a Sabbath—much more than upon any other day? Doth not this prove the day to be no way pleasing to us? And how cheerful are some of us when the Sabbath is ended? The heart is not so well pleased all the days as then; yea, do not some cheat and delude themselves hereby, as if they had joy in the Lord, and had received comfort from the word and other ordinances; whereas they are glad that the yoke of ordinances, the burden of the word of the Lord, and the burden of the day of the Lord, is taken off their shoulders?

How many are there who would profane God's Sabbaths, and wholly neglect the ordinances of them, were it not for the laws of men and the eyes of their relations?

How quieted are some when they have attended the public service? and do they, between and after those solemn duties, refrain their lips from worldly talk, from impertinencies, from such discourse, as bears no proportion with the holiness of the day?

When works of necessity and charity happen out beyond our expectation or forecast, are we (at all) troubled at them? Do not we rather rejoice because we have thereby a dispensation to withdraw from the immediate worship of God? And how many neglect to "do all their works on the six days," though the Lord so expressly chargeth them so to do that they may have a pretence of necessity to do so much servile work on the Sabbath? How common it is to dress meat on the Sabbath more than on any other day, when there is not the least pretence of weakness, &c. Hereby not only servants, but the whole house are too much in labor and distraction, and hindered (if not from the solemn assemblies, yet) from family and closet worship.

How do many gossip, compliment, and feast away (abroad) the day of the Lord? or else eat to an excess at home, and thereby make themselves fitter for a bed than to wait on the sanctuary, to hear Christ's voice, to meditate on his love, and to feed on his pleasant pastures.

How careful are we to keep ourselves and ours from pilfering from our neighbor, but not from stealing from God his time? Yea, are not some governors so ungodly—unmerciful—that they will allow their people no time but the Sabbath to recreate themselves from their labors? If they need recreation, you have more time than God hath reserved; sure you should not steal from God to pleasure them.

In the discharge of the works of mercy to man and beast, do not we respect more our own commodity than the will of God—than the dispensation of God and the creature's necessities? Are these works of mercy attended with such spiritual meditations as they do afford us if our hearts were holy?

How few bless God for giving them one day wherein they may lighten their hearts of all worldly cares, and throw off all griefs and secular encumbrances, and may seek for relief and comfort in their God?

Perhaps the master observes a day unto the Lord, but how careless is he that his sons and daughters, and all within his gate, honor the day of the Lord? Do not many professing governors of families let their sleep away the Sabbath that they may be the fitter for their drudgeries the following week? O! when will governors be as diligent that their servants and households serve the Lord as that they serve themselves? You have been careful that your work were done on the week, but careless whether God's work were done by them on the Sabbath: careless whether your servants profited by the Sabbath yea or no? When will God's glory and the good of your people's souls be nearer to you than your worldly advantages? You ask your servants what work they have done for you every day, had call them to frequent accounts for your gain's sake, and what! never reckon with them about their spiritual soul-work? O how little is the love of God shed abroad in your hearts?

How justly may God be angry with us till he hath consumed us, for our defiling the day of the Lord? It was God's express law, that "every one that defileth it should surely be put to death." When the people were weary of the Sabbath—when they said, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn?" and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat," &c. "The Lord swore by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land trouble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon and I will darken the earth

in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation," &c. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."—Gospel Glass.

A NEW TESTAMENT SEASONABLY DISPOSED OF.

The following incident is communicated by the Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in France under date November 15, 1853.

Our Colporteur, who is carrying on his work in the department of the—, relates, that on entering a house in a certain village he found a young man, between twenty and twenty-five years of age, lying on a sick bed, troubled in his soul, and speaking with dread of death which he felt to be fast approaching. The Colporteur, deeply affected at the sight of the inexpressible anguish of this dying young man, besought the Lord to assist him, that he might, in His hand, become an instrument of awakening, of conversion, and of joy. This prayer was abundantly heard; for in a short time—in about two hours—the reading of the word of God, accompanied by familiar explanations of the Gospel—of which the young man had only heard as it is spoken of in the Romish Church—became for him the good news of salvation. It was wonderful to behold with what delight this young man, whose soul was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, came to understand the work of the Saviour; with what eagerness he laid hold on the promises of free pardon, offered to every repentant sinner. All this was so evident, that when our Colporteur thought it right to leave, in order not too greatly to excite the young man by feelings which already surpassed his bodily strength, he went away with the conviction that the Lord had quickly completed a good work in him, and that before long the heavens would be opened to receive this newly-ransomed soul.

In the evening, or some four or five hours after the scene above narrated, a female entered the inn where the Colporteur had taken up his lodgings. He recognized this female as the one who had stood by the bedside of the young man; and the tears which she now shed quickly gave him to understand that the young man no longer lived. The female in question, who was the young man's mother, told our friend, amidst many tears, what followed—"After you left, my son kept his hands folded, and his eyes directed to heaven; he prayed; I could see by the movement of his lips. The Cure soon afterwards came in to administer extreme unction, according to the custom usual among us. 'No, sir,' exclaimed my son, 'there is something else which is far better.' 'What is this? what is this?' the Cure cried out with extreme surprise: 'has something happened here?' 'Yes,' replied my son: 'here is the new Testament which a dear man has sold me, which he read to me, and with which I desire to live and to die.' 'Fine things, indeed,' said the Cure, reddening with anger: 'some wicked Protestant has evidently been here; some emissary of that Bible Society which sends as many souls to hell as it distributes copies of its detestable Bibles. . . . 'Detestable!' my son exclaimed: 'oh, sir, do not speak thus. This book, which you see here,' he added, pointing to the New Testament, 'has in a few moments taught me more of heavenly things than all I have heard since I was born.' 'Hold your tongue,' cried the Cure furiously; 'you are nothing but a foolish fellow; and if you do not this very instant repent of your sin, you will depart and burn eternally with the devil in hell-fire. . . . On this my son, with great effort, raised himself up in bed, and his countenance being, as it were, illuminated, said slowly and solemnly, 'No, there is no longer condemnation for me—no more hell for me: Jesus has gained Heaven for me—I believe it—I am certain of it. Jesus, the Son of God, Jesus, God, has spoken to me by His word. I am saved, Sir, I am saved.' Scarcely had he uttered these last words than he fell back on his pillow. He was dead. Oh, Sir," added the mother, "God grant that I may die as he died!"—Bible Society Reporter.

I DO NOT LIKE PRAYER-MEETINGS.

"To tell you the truth, Mr. H—, I do not like prayer-meetings." So said a young man connected with one of our Sunday schools, when invited by the superintendent to attend the teachers' monthly prayer-meeting. Yet this young man was a professed disciple of him who has promised "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Did he believe this promise? If so, the inference is irresistible that he did not wish to meet his Lord.

Afterward he added: "But I am of no use at a prayer-meeting." Of no use at a prayer-meeting? Have you no heart to pray? Do you not believe in the efficacy of prayer? If unwilling to lead the devotions of others, can you not join in them? O, what a sad spirit for a professing Christian! Is it not to be feared that he who does not love the prayer-meeting does not love the closet; that he does not love the throne of grace? How would my friend be shocked at such an interpretation of his "I do not like the prayer-meeting!"

If you do not love the prayer-meeting, look now to it, and see if this feeling has not its root further back. Do you love the throne of grace?—American Messenger.

A sermon full of plain, naked scriptures does not suit our fast times.

Correspondence.

NEW YORK CORRESPONDENCE.

New York, January 31st, 1854.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Last Thursday evening there was a great meeting in Broadway Tabernacle, holden for the purpose of importuning the aid of our government, to secure to our citizens abroad, the rights of Americans as to the matter of religion. That they may have a right to bury their dead in Catholic countries as may seem best to them; that they may have the scriptures without the annoyances to which they are subjected now by police regulations. It was a large and spirited meeting. Very able speeches were delivered. Some sentiments were quoted from our papist press that struck those who have not given much attention to it with amazement. One notorious renegade or some other equally unscrupulous person, has said in a speech, that there are three great powers of the world, Russia, England, and the United States. If Russia triumphs it is a triumph of barbarism if either of the others, then infidelity triumphs, and Austria is the only present hope of the world for liberty and civilization. Sentiments were quoted from the Shepherd of the Valley, a papist print of St. Louis, that our sympathy with those who desire liberty abroad will, if not checked, render us the worst enemies in the world to Christianity and civilization; that the crime of heresy ought to be punished by christian kings and states; that the Papists did this in the past and do and will continue to do it, wherever they have the power; that reading and writing do not make the people more happy or respectable; that the invention of printing is a curse, and popular education a humbug. The reading of these papers was done by Rev. S. Robinson of Baltimore. Others followed with able speeches, and then resolutions were passed calling upon our government to use its influence to secure our American citizens abroad, the rights of conscience. These passed, a gentleman by the name of Fuller, I believe, in a very kind and polite way, begged the privilege of offering another resolution on the same general subject; and having obtained permission, proposed to invoke the influence of our government "to secure the same right and privileges to American citizens throughout the United States," which are asked for Americans in foreign countries; and that it be not a criminal offence for an American of either sex, to teach the precepts and practices of Christ in their households, without regard to color, occupation, or family relations." This resolution so apparently reasonable and consistent, was more startling than a clap of thunder in a clear sky. It is impossible to imagine the excitement and confusion that followed. Hisses, cheers—"put him out," "fair play," "go on," "down with him," "hear him," stamping and clapping. All the while the gentleman was exerting his lungs to the utmost. I could occasionally hear "Madai," "Mrs. Douglas," "Bible," "prison," "humanity." I presume Mr. Fuller was saying something in the way of comparing the treatment of Mrs. Douglas and the Madai—the latter the Duke of Tuscany imprisoned for reading the Bible—and the former we shut up in a common prison the other day in Virginia, for teaching some coloured children to read it. At this very time I believe she is in prison for no other reason. A year ago perhaps it was, there was a great meeting got up in this city to sympathize with the Madai but not a word about the innocent sufferer in Virginia, who may drag out her weary days in prison, and no protestant meeting here to protest against the outrage. Loud and clear above the general din to which I have alluded, I heard some one on the platform shouting "Abolitionist! you're an Abolitionist." Who would you think was this new ventor? Rev. Mr. K—y, D.D. . . .

If there is sorrow in heaven over the fallen, and if the sainted Wesley looked upon that scene what must have been his grief! O the power of our cursed system of oppression to pervert the human heart.

When Mr. Fuller had taken his seat, some one moved to lay his resolution on the table, for the reason that it did not pertain to the subject in hand. The negative I believe was not called, but there was nevertheless a loud and earnest protest against the neglect of God's poor, by the priest and the Levite. This plague spot of oppression you see stupifies our protests against other oppressions, and brands all our efforts to do good to those abroad, with the meanness of hypocrisy. But this will not be so always, and there was an earnest of a change in the very things I have related.

There was a great meeting at the Tabernacle last night again, that looks in the same direction. All the world knows that our Congress passed in 1850 a set of so called compromise measures, including the Fugitive Slave Law. Among these measures was also a provision permitting the territories of New Mexico and Utah to hold slaves or not, as they please, and eventually to be received into the Union as free or slave States, as the people of those sections themselves may choose. These lands we had acquired from Mexico in our recent war with that power. At the opening of our present Congress, Senator Douglas introduced a bill to organize the territory of Nebraska, which with other lands were long ago acquired from France, and concerning which in 1820, Congress declared by solemn act there shall never be slavery in it north of 36 degrees 30 minutes. But the present Bill proposes now virtually to abolish the Act of 1820, and apply to this portion of our country the same Act which was passed in 1850, for the portion acquired from Mexico. The meeting last evening was called to protest against this out-