

MINISTER OF CHRIST FOR THE TIMES

VIII.

"Established in the faith"—Col. ii, 7

The minister for the times is a believing man. He believes God. He believes God speaking through the prophets of olden times. He receives the witness that was thus given to the coming Messiah. He believes Christ speaking personally in the gospel message, and by inspiration through his apostles. He receives the Bible, and the whole Bible; undertaking not to prescribe what God ought to say, but to understand what he has said, and then to believe. The great central truth of revelation—Christ crucified—is full in his eye. Here he looks and believes, while he wonders and triumphs. All other essential faith follows of course; for this great truth, as it were the sun of the universe, illuminates all else that God hath spoken. In the splendour of its rays, it is easy to see and believe the doctrine of the Godhead—that of the fall and inherent corruption of man—of repentance—of pardon by faith—of regeneration, and entire holiness by the Spirit's baptism—of a coming Judgment, followed by eternal life and glory to the believer, and irretrievable ruin to the neglecter of the great salvation. Such is the sublime system of truth believed firmly by the minister I am describing. And not only is it pictured, in vivid colours, upon his mind,—it is written, as with the point of a diamond, upon his heart, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. His faith makes the things believed to be great and divine realities. It is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It mightily influences his whole character, spirit, and conduct. He believes, and therefore speaks—acts. "He loved me, and gave himself for me," is his thorough persuasion; and, believing, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "He gave himself a ransom for all," is also his thorough persuasion, and he flies to bring all the world to the feet of Jesus—to remission, and sanctification, and salvation. He not only reads and hears of a judgment to come, but he sees it. The trump of God—the mighty angels—the great white throne—the Son of man in his glory—the far-reaching multitude—the strange separation—the all-eventful sentences of welcome and rejection—these rise on his vision, not as poetry or dreams, but as grave realities; and knowing the terrors of the Lord, he persuades men. Hell, with him, is no fiction. The devil and his angels—the undying curse—the torment—the utter despair—the pit,—these he contemplates, and warns the sinner to flee from the wrath to come. Heaven—its mansions of rest—its river of life—its tree of immortality—its robes of white—its forms of beauty—its crowns of honour—its songs of glory—its angelic society—its sinless, tearless, endless happiness;—these, all these, though not seen, are yet "substance" to this minister. Living as in eternity, sure prospects are before him, through Christ, such as are most astonishing;—prospects of a destiny more enchanting by far than have ever "sages told or poets sung."

We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

If you are a true Christian, you go about Christ's business as if it were your own.

SINGING HIS WAY THROUGH OPPOSING ARMY LINES IN CHINA

Miss Bertha Cassidy of Wuhu has told this story of a Chinese pastor who frequently has to pass between the lines of the opposing armies as he goes to visit Anhwei stations in Free China.

"This last spring he was held by Japanese soldiers for questioning, and when United States flags and some proclamations were discovered in his baggage, the affair promised to be serious. The officer in charge placed his sword on the table with a great flourish, while behind him stood soldiers with bayonets. For five hours he replied to questions about these mysterious belongings. He explained that they were to be used to protect chapels in places where fighting might take place, but all the while he feared his word might not be believed. Silent prayers for help went to the Throne as he stood there hour after hour. Finally, when a hymn book was found in his box, the officer opened it at random and ordered him to sing the hymn he pointed to. It was 'How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds in a Believer's Ear.' Mr.—— has a fine voice, and it charmed the officer and the guard, for when he finished the hymn, they all clapped, and told him he was free to go. Strength poured into his soul as he sang."

BIBLES BY TONS FOR WEST CHINA

That the enduring values of the Bible and their rich contribution to life experience are being increasingly recognized in China is attested by the sales and by the gifts that come to the Bible societies. The Rev. W. H. Hudspeth of the China Bible House writes:

"It may interest you to know that within the last few days we have shipped five and a half tons of Scriptures to Rangoon, whence we trust they will find their way to Yunnan and other West China provinces. During this same period of time we have sent by post five tons of Scriptures to a point from which we hope they will find their way into the north-west.

"You may also be interested to know that last week we had a 'phone message from one of the banks here saying that His Excellency had wired from Chungking saying that he wished to subscribe \$2,000 to the China Bible House and would I call and receive this donation. Naturally on the morrow I was very happy to call and bring away a cheque for so generous a sum."

IN THE AIR LINER

A letter from one of America's great air lines contains this interesting information: "Because the Holy Bible has followed man to the ends of the earth, sustaining him and providing guidance for his spiritual life, it seems appropriate to invite your attention to the fact that the Scriptures are now available to man as he takes to the air.

"Through the courtesy of the Gideon Society, a copy of the Holy Bible has been placed in every plane of Eastern Air Lines' Great Silver Fleet. A special metal pocket has been installed on each plane to receive the Bible. And the response by our passengers has been most gratifying. Here again, the universal appeal of Biblical truths is apparent."—Religious Digest.

DISTURBANCES OF THE SUN

Improved solar photography has revealed remarkable phenomena. On September 17th, 1937, without disturbance to the earth, nor even to the radio waves, a terrific explosion took place, during which part of the atmosphere of the sun large enough to swallow several suns was lifted to a height of 600,000 miles above the earth's surface. Later, on March 20, 1938, a similar explosion reached the height of 900,000 miles.

Rains of hot fire, thousands of degrees in temperature, have been seen descending in great curving spirals on the surface of the sun, emanating from a mysterious source outside. One of the solar eruptions was travelling at the rate of 430 miles a second, or a velocity of a million and a half miles an hour. These and other pictures were taken by a new instrument, known as a spectro-heliograph.—The Alliance Weekly.

PALESTINE NOTES

The fulfillment of God's purposes in regard to the Promised Land progresses daily. Action by the Council of the League of Nations on the British White Paper that would deal a death blow to the plan for a Jewish National Home in Palestine has been postponed until the end of the present European war, says the contemporary Jewish Record * * * Arabs and Jews are forgetting their animosity and are fraternizing with one another, all in whole-hearted support of the government. * * * According to the Economic Bulletin of the Jewish National Fund, there has been a forty-seven per cent increase of Palestine population since the 1931 census. On June 30, 1939, the population was 1,458,090, made up as follows: Moslems, 909,566; Jews, 422,142; Christians, 114,442; others, 11,940. There are 288,000 more Jews and 184,000 more Arabs than in 1931. * * * American exports to Palestine totaled \$5,012,000 the first seven months of 1939, compared with \$2,740,000 in a corresponding 1938 period.—Pentecostal Evangel.

A MASSACHUSETTS MAYOR ENDS RELIEF FOR FIFTEEN PERSONS FOUND AT BARS

William E. Kane, the mayor of Woburn, Massachusetts, on September 3rd, 1938, ordered the names of fifteen relief recipients stricken from the welfare rolls after he found them in saloons and taverns drinking.

The mayor, who several months ago sponsored and then abandoned a cage-for-drunks plan, stated that during a visit to ten drinking places he found men and women who were not only receiving cash relief, but also some who only recently had filed applications for shoes for their children. He declared that he started his tour of the drinking houses with a knowledge of excessive drinking going on in Woburn and that some of it was being done by people who were getting a living out of the pockets of the taxpayer. He announced he would continue his visits and remove from relief rolls the name of every relief recipient he found drinking.—Scottish Rite News Bureau.

The shining sanctity of Fenelon was such that an earl fled from his presence saying: "I must not stay here, or I shall become a Christian in spite of myself."