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ART. III.—THE HYMNS OF THE CHRISTIAN AGES
 COMPARED WITH EACH OTHER AND THE BIBLE.

(Continued from THE CHURCHMAN of November.)

IN the history of the Christian Church there have been certain seasons unusually prolific in hymns. "The Ambrosian era," not long after the Council of Nice, was so distinguished in ITALY; a similar outflow of sacred song occurred in GERMANY during the Thirty Years' War; and the eighteenth century, both in ENGLAND and on the Continent, was similarly conspicuous. The Holy Ghost was then pleased to awaken afresh the spiritual life of the Reformed Churches; and quickened energy, in the souls of many, manifested itself in an abundance of sacred poetry.

II. (4.) This AGE OF EVANGELICAL REVIVAL is the fourth period in Christian history, to which, according to the plan proposed in the November number of the CHURCHMAN, I have to apply that test of "proportionateness" in the themes of hymns which can be derived from the Biblical Psalms.

Those inspired canticles I have roughly separated into seven classes: (1) Psalms extolling the goodness of God; (2) Psalms expressing a believer's confidence in Him; (3) Psalms descriptive of Christian character and conflict;¹ (4) Psalms showing the worthlessness and helplessness of man unrenewed; (5) Psalms of instruction as to the story of the Lord's people, and the means of grace; (6) Psalms on the Redeemer's humiliation and glory; and (7) (pre-eminent among the rest, as having the topic into which those which begin on some other subject easily glide) Psalms which foretell the future glory of the Redeemer's earthly kingdom.

How far did the hymns of Isaac Watts, Philip Doddridge, Augustus Toplady, Nicholas Zinzendorf, Gerhard Tersteegen, Charles Wesley, Joseph Hart, William Cowper, John Newton, and other sacred poets of the eighteenth century, correspond with the Biblical standard?

Dr. Watts, though a singularly humble man, plumed himself, and not without reason, on having taken the lead in so versifying the Old Testament Psalms as to bring out their full meaning under New Testament light. "I think," he says, "I may assume this pleasure of being the first who hath brought down the royal author into the common affairs of the Christian life, and led the Psalmist of Israel into the Church of Christ without anything of a Jew about him." If he meant by the some-

¹ The number of these was, inadvertently, printed in THE CHURCHMAN of November as 30, instead of *thirty-five*.

what strange phrase at the close of his sentence, "without anything limited to the Mosaic dispensation," but with all the abiding marks of "the Israel of God," several of his paraphrases of the Psalms amply justify his satisfaction, as, for instance, that of the 117th :

From all that dwell below the skies,
that of the 90th :

O God, our help in ages past,
and specially that of the 19th :

Behold, the morning sun
Begins his glorious way ;
His beams through all the nations run,
And life and light convey.
But where the Gospel comes,
It sheds diviner light ;
It calls dead sinners from their tombs,
And gives the blind their sight ; etc.

There is a similar paraphrase of the 48th Psalm in the hymn by Joseph Hart, which he headed "Come and welcome to Jesus :"

This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend.

With an inspired passage from one of the Psalmists directly under their eye, these writers could scarcely fail to introduce the ancient notes into their more modern song. But in their strictly original compositions also, the hymn-writers of the eighteenth century echoed at least six of the seven subjects which are conspicuous in the inspired Psalms. Such experimental themes as "the preciousness of faith," "the Christian conflict," "the feebleness of human strength," and "the value of the means of Grace," were sung very clearly by JOSEPH CARLYLE in

Lord, when we bend before Thy throne
And our confessions pour,
Teach us to feel the sins we own,
And hate what we deplore ;

by DODDRIDGE in

Lord of the Sabbath ! hear our vows,
On this Thy day, in this Thy house ;

and in

Ye servants of the Lord,
Each in his office wait ;

by CHARLES WESLEY in the *prayer*—

O for a heart to praise my God !
A heart from sin set free ;

and in the corresponding *resolution*—

Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labour to pursue ;

by JOHN NEWTON in

Come my soul, thy suit prepare ;
Jesus loves to answer prayer ;

and in

Though troubles assail
And dangers affright,
Though friends should all fail,
And foes all unite ;
Yet one thing secures us,
Whatever betide :
The Scripture assures us
The Lord will provide ;

by COWPER in

Jesus, where'er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy seat ;

and by ZINZENDORF, the distinguished Moravian, in

Jesu, guide our way
To eternal day !
So shall we, no more delaying,
Follow Thee, Thy voice obeying ;
Lead us by Thy hand
To our Father's land.

Direct PRAISE TO THE LORD also was enthusiastically set forth at this era, as in the " noble ode " of THOMAS OLIVERS,

The God of Abraham praise,
Who reigns enthroned above,
Ancient of everlasting days,
And God of Love !
Jehovah ! Great I AM !
By earth and heaven confest ;
I bow and bless Thy sacred Name,
For ever blest !

in the hymn of DODDRIDGE, which followed a sermon on Jacob's vow,

O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thine Israel still is fed ;

in the intensely reverent lines of TERSTEEGEN—*Gott ist gegenwärtig*, as translated by JOHN WESLEY,

Lo ! God is here, let us adore
And own how solemn is the place !
Let all within us feel His pow'r,
And silent bow before His face !
Who know His name, His grace who prove,
Serve Him with awe and holy love ;

in the harvest hymn of MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS (1782), as translated by Miss Campbell—

We plough the fields, and scatter
The good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered
By God's almighty hand ;

He sends the snow in winter,
 The warmth to swell the grain,
 The breezes and the sunshine,
 And soft refreshing rain.
 All good gifts around us
 Are sent from heaven above,
 Then thank the Lord ; O thank the Lord
 For all His love ;

and in WATTS's accurate adoration of the Triune Lord—

Almighty God, to Thee
 Be endless honour done,
 The undivided THREE
 And the mysterious ONE.
 Where Reason fails, with all her powers,
 There Faith prevails and Love adores.

Writer after writer, moreover, delighted to proclaim the preciousness of the Divine Redeemer. CHARLES WESLEY might be said to rival the *Jesu ! dulcis memoria* of Bernard of Clairvaux, with—

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
 My Great Redeemer's praise ;¹

and—

Jesu, lover of my soul,
 Let me to Thy bosom fly.¹

TOPLADY was equally fervent in that cry to Emmanuel which thousands have since used, in divers languages :

Rock of Ages ! cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee.

¹ Serious consideration should, of course, be carefully given to the character of the congregation which is invited to use such fervent words as these. There is unquestionable force in the criticism of Bishop Christopher Wordsworth (Preface to "The Holy Year," p. xl.) : "Let the reader imagine, what the writer has heard, such a hymn as the following given out to be sung by every member of a large mixed congregation in a dissolute part of a populous and irreligious city :

Jesu, lover of my soul,
 Let me to thy bosom fly.

And let him be entreated to consider whether such language as this is not inexpressibly shocking to the contrite . . . whether it is not very hurtful to the presumptuous, and whether it must not be very offensive to Almighty God, who will "be sanctified in them who come nigh Him." But the reverend Bishop expressly wrote that he did not intend his censure to apply to *Private devotion*. May it not be added that a more select gathering, as, for instance, in preparation for the Holy Communion, might be reasonably expected to utter every expression with becoming awe? Nor is the objection of the same estimable prelate to the use of the *singular* in public worship *always* applicable. He allowed it to be suitable in emphasizing self-abasement as in the Psalm, "I acknowledge my transgression." Surely it may sometimes as appropriately emphasize gratitude. In the Passover chamber was sung in company, "Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee."

DODDRIDGE responded :

Jesus, I love Thy charming Name,
 'Tis music to mine ear ;
 Fain would I sound it out so loud,
 That heaven and earth might hear ;

and NEWTON in due time added :

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
 In a believer's ear !
 It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
 And drives away his fear.

Sometimes one detail in the precious story of Christ formed a subject for special exultation. JOHN BYROM sang of the Holy Nativity :

Christians, awake ! salute the happy morn
 Whereon the Saviour of mankind was born ;

as did also CHARLES WESLEY :

Hark ! how all the welkin rings,
 Glory to the King of kings.

One after another sang of the Cross and Passion. EVANS in—

Hark ! the voice of love and mercy
 Sounds aloud from Calvary :

“ It is finished ; ”

WATTS in—

When I survey the wondrous cross,
 On which the Lord of glory died,

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were a present far too small ;
 Love so amazing, so Divine,
 Demands my soul, my life, my all ;

and COWPER in—

There is a fountain filled with blood,
 Drawn from Emmanuel's veins ;
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood
 Lose all their guilty stains.

The glorious resurrection had, of course, its rapturous anthems.

GELLERT rejoiced in the German *Jesus lebt mit ihm auch ich*, translated by Miss Cox :

Jesus lives ; no longer now,
 Can thy terrors, death, appal us ;

Hallelujah,

as an anonymous author of the same century had already rejoiced in English :

Jesus Christ is risen to-day,
Our triumphant holy day,
Hallelujah.

CHARLES WESLEY found as gladsome a theme in the glorious Ascension :

Head of the Church triumphant,
We joyfully adore Thee :
Till Thou appear, Thy members here
Shall sing like those in glory.
We lift our hearts and voices,
With bless'd anticipation ;
And cry aloud, and give to God
The praise of our salvation.

HARRIET AUBER rejoiced in the coming of the Holy Ghost as a grand result of Christ's exaltation :

Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed
His tender last farewell,
A Friend, a Comforter, bequeathed
With us to dwell ;

and JOSEPH GRIGG, in the beginning of the eighteenth century wrote, when only ten years old, in vindication of all the unsearchable riches of Christ :

Jesus, and can it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee ?

Ashamed of Jesus ? yes, I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away ;
No tear to wipe, no joy to crave,
No fear to quell, no soul to save.

But, nevertheless, the seventh, and main, topic of "the sweet Psalmist of Israel" was, in the eighteenth century, not always repeated with equal clearness.

Firmly convinced that full salvation is a free gift from above, without any merit on the part of the receiver, some of these champions of the Gospel seem to have argued themselves into such a conception of the joys of Hades, that they described those who have departed in the Lord as if already possessed of the perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, which is reserved for their future resurrection. Instead of St. Paul's account of the time, when the incorruptible garland shall be bestowed on the Christian runner as "that day" of "the righteous Judge's future appearing," WATTS said, in language which contradicts the Apostle :

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign ;

and CHARLES WESLEY, in words as liable to be misunderstood :

Come, let us join our friends above,
Which *have* obtained THE PRIZE.

But other hymns, and, sometimes, strange to say, other hymns by the same writers, accurately adhere to "the blessed hope" set forth in Holy Scripture. The germ of the well-known second Advent hymn, "*Lo, He comes, in clouds descending,*" was written, about 1752, by JOHN CENNICK, whose first lines were :

Lo, He cometh ! countless trumpets
Blow to raise the sleeping dead ;
Mid ten thousand saints and angels
See the great exalted Head !
Hallelujah !

Welcome, welcome, Son of God.

WATTS wrote, as prophetically, not only the paraphrase of Psalm xcviii. :

Joy to the world, the Lord *is* come,
Let Earth receive her King ;

but also :

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run.

NEWTON wrote, as to the same glorious future :

But to those who have confesséd,
Loved and served the Lord below,
He will say, "Come near, ye blesséd,
Take the kingdom I bestow ;
You for ever
Shall My love and glory know ;"

and EDWARD PERRONET wrote a hymn "*On the Resurrection*" which, as an *anticipatory* anthem, has been most appropriately called the English Te Deum ; and which would have been generally understood in its prophetic sense if the words of the following verses which I have printed in *italics* had not been, in most hymn-books, changed for less appropriate ones :

All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall ;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

*Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line,
Whom David Lord did call ;
The God incarnate, Man Divine,
And crown Him Lord of all.*

Let every tribe and every tongue
On this terrestrial ball
Now shout in *universal* song,
The *crownéd* Lord of all.

II. (5.) The FIFTH Christian age includes rather more than half a century, up to the present day ; and it will not, I think, be denied that some hymn-writers of this period have not been

surpassed by the noblest composers of sacred songs in previous times. Not a few recent hymns, it must be owned, have been *far below* the mark both of Christian manliness and of Christian reverence. Bishop FRASER, if he had qualified the four words in *italics*, might have found some justification for his remark at a clerical meeting: "Modern hymns are, *for the most part*, strangely namby-pamby." But when all such productions have been eliminated from nineteenth-century psalmody, there remain several scores of hymns which reach a very high, and some of them the very highest, standard of excellence. Songs of praise, for example, are well represented, not merely by paraphrases, in the spirit of the inspired writers, like Sir ROBERT GRANT'S, on the 104th Psalm:

O worship the King, all glorious above,
O gratefully sing His power and His love;

or LYTE'S, on the 91st:

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the Wings Divine,
Reserved for all the heirs of grace;
O, be that refuge mine!

or on the 103rd:

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
To His feet thy tribute bring:

or on the 115th:

Not unto us, Almighty Lord,
But to Thyself the glory be!
Created by Thy awful word,
We only live to honour Thee,

or on the 150th:

Praise the Lord, His glories show;

but also in more original compositions, such as that of BONAR:

Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory be to God the Spirit,
Great Jehovah! Three in One;
Glory! Glory!
While eternal ages run.

that of the Bishop of EXETER (E. H. Bickersteth):

Father of heaven above,
Dwelling in light and love,
Ancient of Days,
Light unapproachable,
Love inexpressible,
Thee, the Invisible,
Laud we, and praise;

or that, by the same author,

O God, the Rock of Ages,
Who evermore hast been,

What time the tempest rages,
Our dwelling-place serene;

that of Rev. HENRY ARTHUR MARTIN :

Sound aloud Jehovah's praises,
Tell abroad the awful Name;

that of BAPTIST NOEL :

There's not a bird, with lonely nest
In pathless wood or mountain crest,
Nor meaner thing, which does not share,
O God ! in Thy paternal care ;

or that of HAMPDEN GURNEY :

Yes, God is good ! in earth and sky,
From ocean depths and spreading wood,
Ten thousand voices seem to cry,
God made us all, and God is good !

that of WILLIAM WHITING, for mariners :

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave ;

KEBLE's hymn at the beginning of another day :

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove ;

KELLY's Evening Hymn :

Through the day Thy love hath spared us ;
Now we lay us down to rest ;

and either of the hymns for the Sabbath—that of the Rev. SIMON BROWNE :

Hail sacred day of earthly rest,
From toil and trouble free.
Hail day of light, that bringest light
And joy to me ;

or that of Bishop WORDSWORTH :

O day of rest and gladness !
O day of joy and light !

that of Dean ALFORD at harvest-time :

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of Harvest-home ;

or that of Bishop WORDSWORTH, for a congregation offering alms :

O Lord of heaven and earth and sea !
To Thee all praise and glory be.
How shall we show our love to Thee,
Giver of all ?

So, again, admirable specimens may be readily quoted of spiritual songs in this age, on a similar note to psalms "of faith" and "of conflict," such as Miss ELLIOTT'S

Just as I am, without one plea,

RAY PALMER'S

My faith looks up to Thee,

Miss A. L. WARING'S

Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me ;

the Rev. CHARLES EVEREST'S

Take up the Cross, the Saviour said,
If thou wouldst My disciple be ;

Miss HAVERGAL'S

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee ;

Miss ELLIOTT'S

Christian, seek not yet repose,

Watch and pray ;

and Dr. BONAR'S

Thy way, not mine, O Lord,

Choose out the path for me.

It is as easy to produce instances of CHILDREN'S hymns, the modern psalms of instruction. Though the previous age was not wanting in "Divine songs" for the young, it has sometimes been objected, even to those of Dr. Watts, that "they are more suited to terrify the young than to attract them to their Heavenly Father."¹ But no such blame is likely to be awarded, to Mrs. ALEXANDER'S

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed ;

to EBENEZER BREWER'S

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean
And the beautiful land ;

or to Rev. S. BARING-GOULD'S

Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh ;
Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky.

Jesu, give the weary
Calm and sweet repose ;
With Thy tenderest blessing
May mine eyelids close.

¹ Nevertheless, the criticism of the shrewd RICHARD CECIL is worthy of record : "I am surprised at nothing which Dr. Watts did, but his hymns for children. Other men could have written as well as he in his other works, but how he wrote these hymns I know not."

There is also a rich abundance of modern hymns which magnify the REDEEMER. As Lord Selborne, in his "Book of Praise," has been able to collect, from various Christian times, pieces of sacred poetry which illustrate every article of the Christian's creed, a similar series may be gathered from writers of these latter days alone.

On the birth of Christ we have by EDMUND SEARS :

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold ;

on the beneficent life of Christ, by HAMPDEN GURNEY :

We saw Thee not when Thou did'st come
To this poor world of sin and death ;

on the death and burial of Christ, by KELLY :

We sing the praise of Him who died,
Of Him who died upon the cross ;

by Dean MILMAN :

Ride on, ride on in majesty,
In lowly pomp ride on to die ;

by Bishop MANT :

See the destined day arise,
See a willing sacrifice ;

by BONAR :

Cling to the Crucified,
His death is life to thee.
Life for eternity.

by Miss WINKWORTH (from a German hymn) :

Rest of the weary ! Thou
Thyself art resting now
Where lowly in Thy sepulchre Thou liest ;
And thus I will not shrink
From the grave's awful brink.
The heart that trusts in Thee shall ne'er be shaken.

On the glorious resurrection and ascension of Christ we have,
by HAWEIS :

The happy morn is come,
Triumphant o'er the grave
The Saviour leaves the tomb ;
Omnipotent to save ;

by F. POTT, from a Latin hymn :

The strife is o'er, the battle done ;
The victory of life is won ;
The song of triumph has begun—
Alleluia !

by Dean STANLEY :

He is gone. A cloud of light
Has received Him from our sight.

All the toil, the sorrow done,
All the battle fought and won ;

and by KELLY :

Hark ! ten thousand harps and voices
Sound the note of praise above,
Jesus reigns, and heaven rejoices ;
Jesus reigns the God of love.
See, He fills yon azure throne ;
Jesus rules the world alone.

On the coming of the Holy Ghost we have by Bishop WORDSWORTH :

Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost,
Taught by Thee, we covet most,
Of Thy gifts at Pentecost,
Holy, heavenly love ;

on the Holy Catholic Church, by Mr. STONE :

The Church's one foundation
Is JESUS CHRIST the Lord ;

and, lastly, on the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting, by Mr. BARING-GOULD :

On the Resurrection morning,
Soul and body meet again,
No more sorrow, no more weeping,
No more pain.

.

Oh, the beauty ! oh, the gladness,
Of that Resurrection-day !
Which shall not, through endless ages,
Pass away.

Neither is there a deficiency, in this period, of canticles which echo the main topic of the Son of Jesse, by rejoicing in hope of Christ's future reign on the earth. Very notable amongst these are three hymns of JAMES MONTGOMERY, who may have retained the ancient expectation of the everlasting kingdom all the more steadily because of his connection with the primitive and unworldly Moravian branch of the Church. His paraphrase of the 72nd Psalm is accurately Scriptural :

Hail ! to the Lord's anointed,
Great David's greater Son ;
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun.

So is the hymn which he has founded on a portion of the Revelation to St. John :

Hark ! the song of Jubilee !
 Loud as mighty thunders' roar ;
 Or the fulness of the sea,
 When it breaks upon the shore.
 Hallelujah, for the Lord
 God omnipotent doth reign ;
 Hallelujah, let the word
 Echo through the earth and main.

And St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians suggested to him the third :

For ever with the Lord,
 Amen, so let it be ;
 Life from the dead is in that word,
 'Tis immortality.

There is a corresponding song of hope by the Rev. C. E. OAKLEY :

Hills of the north rejoice—
 River and mountain spring,
 City of God, the bond are free ;
 We come to live and reign in Thee ;

and Dean ALFORD'S enthusiastic lines recall the same glorious future :

Ten thousand times ten thousand,
 In sparkling raiment bright,
 The armies of the ransomed saints
 Throng up the steeps of light ;
 'Tis finished, all is finished,
 Their fight with death and sin ;
 Fling open wide the golden gates,
 And let the victors in.

Doctrinal hymns which echo the Bible, as faithfully as these do, are of necessity *practical*. But those who note the sacred songs of this age should remember that they are supplemented by at least as many more which exhibit or enforce almost every detail of Christian well-doing. Such are—to mention only a few out of thrice the number which might be selected—by the Bishop of EXETER :

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin,
 The blood of Jesus whispers peace within ;

by Mrs. ALEXANDER :

Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult
 Of our life's wild restless sea ;

¹ This hymn, besides being an Advent-song, is also a missionary hymn. Many such, it may be well to note, have been composed in the two latter of the five ages into which I have divided Christian history, as, e.g., "From Greenland's icy mountains," "O'er the realms of heathen darkness," "Lord, Thy Church her watch is keeping," "Speed Thy servants, Saviour, speed them," "Thou whose almighty word Chaos and darkness heard, And took their flight," etc., etc., etc.

by LYTE :

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee ;

by DUFFIELD :

Stand up, stand up for Jesus ;
Ye soldiers of the cross ;

by Mrs. MAUDE :

Thine for ever ; God of love,
Hear us from Thy throne above ;

by HAMPDEN GURNEY :

Lord, as to Thy dear cross we flee,
And plead to be forgiven,
So let Thy life our pattern be,
And form our souls for heaven ;

and by Mrs. CODNER :

Lord, I hear that showers of blessing
Thou art scatt'ring full and free,

The psalmody of this single period is unmistakably extensive. When choice specimens from previous ages are added, the total is an abundant wealth of hymns ; and as it is continually increasing, no small responsibility belongs to those who can in any way direct their fellow-Christians into a proper use of it. The idea recorded by Keble is probably right :

To my mind the Church's hymnal should be always in a state to be improved and adapted to the need of the Church. So it grew, and so it must grow on—touch upon touch, line upon line—if it is to fulfil its mission.

When, however, an occasion arises, from time to time, for weeding or for enlarging any English manual of sacred songs, it is of the utmost importance that the compiler, or company of compilers, should intelligently and conscientiously *adhere to the inspired standard of proportionateness*.¹ And surely it is reasonable to expect of those who select the hymns for Christian congregations week after week, that they should discharge their onerous office *with prayerful diligence*.² Never

¹ At this point may arise the *questio vexata* whether any alteration should be made in the length or in the wording of the hymns as they came from their authors. I am disposed to answer that, *as a general rule*, the original composition should be entirely unchanged. But in exceptional cases, which should be very rare, in order to remove a glaring imperfection of speech or unbiblical thought (and there *have been* cases in which authors have thankfully accepted alterations), a note should be placed at the foot of the page, stating the word or phrase which has been removed, together with, when it is reckoned contrary to Scripture, the chapter and verse which reveal the error, or which uphold the substitute.

² "When metrical hymns began to form so large a portion of service, a substantial development in our Common Prayer took place. This is one of the inevitable steps in history, but *it asks for vigilance on the part of the clergy*."—Archbishop Benson, in "The Seven Gifts," p. 168.

should they allow the supposed prettiness of an accompanying tune to allure even the smallest company gathered in the name of Christ into the singing of an erroneous or feebly truthful composition. Constantly should they endeavour to secure a sufficient offering of direct adoration to the Triune God, and as unceasingly should they take heed to an ample setting forth of the glory of EMMANUEL: that whilst disciples of JESUS in these "last days" are repeating, with New Testament clearness, the songs of the Old Testament on the death and victory over death of the long-expected Redeemer, they may as distinctly follow the ancients in anticipating the day of His coming again in glory, and the "new song" which shall be sung by every creature when "of His kingdom there shall be no end."

DAVID DALE STEWART.

Coulsdon Rectory, Surrey,
October 18, 1888.



ART IV.—"BY THE HAND OF A MEDIATOR."

WE are informed by various writers that there are more than four hundred interpretations of this passage, Gal. iii. 19, 20, whose difficulty is considered to arise from its brevity. It would be very presumptuous in me to suppose that the view I am about to present may not be found among so many; that, in fact, it is altogether new. Such can scarcely be said to be the case. In the differences of opinion that exist among expositors, and the reasons they assign for their differences, so far as they have come under my observation, I have detected what appears to me to be the key of the interpretation: and from their ways of dealing with it, I have been led to an exposition altogether different from what any, at least of our modern exegetes, maintain. So diverse are the views of these magnates of exposition, that if we lesser folk hold any opinion at all, we are compelled to reject what some of them propound. And if, finding it impossible to accept all interpretations, we alike reject all, we cannot be charged with daring presumption, for we are only so far following the examples of those who deal similarly with others, fully their equals in learning and judgment.

The passage for consideration is, "It (the Law) was ordained (or administered) by (or through) angels *ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου*. 'Ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνδὸς οὐχ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἓίς ἐστιν." The translation of which is, A.V. and R.V., "in (R.V. by) the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one; but God is one." Now, it may be considered very daring in me to assert that the difficulty with merely English readers arises from the mis-