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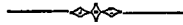
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pression remaining on the mind of the writer is that he has found nothing in the Book as a whole to disprove the traditional view that it belongs to the period to which it was assigned—the age of Moses. At any rate, he thinks that what he has said deserves some consideration. There is so much that is at all times fashionable with the men of a particular time, and which is accepted by many because it is fashionable. This is not the way in which the problems of Biblical criticism should be handled. Before a new theory is accepted, it should be subject to the most searching criticism, and in a case where the faith of many is involved, at any rate reserve and caution should be exercised. It is better about such things to withhold assent and to keep the mind in suspense for the time than to accept on the authority of others, however famous, dogmatic statements as to what is really still *sub judice*.



ART. V.—STUDIES ON ISAIAH.

2. *THE Futility of Human Calculations (continued).*—Apply chap. vii. 1-17 to our own history. In how many instances, from the Spanish Armada downwards, do we see the Divine Hand overruling the most carefully-planned schemes for our overthrow! Even our own national sins and follies, our errors in policy, our neglect of the most ordinary precautions, have not overthrown us, because, on the whole, as a nation, we have not forgotten that the Lord was our God. That has been a source of moral strength which has raised up for us deliverers in the hour of peril. As long as faith dwells among us that “hour” will ever produce its “man.” During the whole struggle with Napoleon, though we had one of the keenest and most brilliant of mankind as our antagonist, though he possessed and controlled the vastest resources ever yet known, and though we committed numberless follies and even insanities, the Divine Hand was stretched out over us. He raised up deliverers who were never daunted either by the valour or numbers of their foes, nor of the still more appalling shortsightedness and folly of their masters, the British people. Our greatest captain, Wellington, in particular, was cautious and provident in the hour of adversity, and yet knew how to strike boldly and decisively when the hour of triumph was within his reach. Of no people may it be more truly said than of the people of this land, “Not by their own power or the might of their hand have they gotten all this wealth, but

by the favour of the Lord God alone."¹ And as with nations, so with individuals. Do your duty, and leave the rest to God, is the policy of the true Christian. Not that he may be thoughtless, reckless, improvident: it is his duty to take all proper care and pains. But that once done, he must be content to leave results in higher hands. Time spent in "worrying" is time worse than wasted—it is time deliberately misspent.

3. *The Futility of Human Contrivances* (chap. viii. 1-8).—Passing over for the present the prophecy of Immanuel, which will be considered in connection with the similar prophecy in chap. ix., we proceed to the consideration of the policy pursued by the Jews in relation to the confederation which caused them such alarm. Ahaz, as we know, was resolved to ask the aid of Assyria; and though he paid a heavy price for it, he obtained it. The Assyrian monarch actually assisted him by invading Israel (2 Kings xv. 29).² On the other hand, there were those, as we have seen, who preferred alliance with Rezin and Pekah, and the expulsion of the Davidic dynasty. Isaiah remains apart from both parties, and takes his stand on religious principle. He emphasizes his position, as Hosea (chap. i.) and Ezekiel (chaps. iv., v., xii.) did, and as he himself did at the time of Sargon's expedition to Ashdod (chap. xx.), by his actions. The child Maher-shalal-hash-baz ("haste to the spoil, speed to the booty") was a type of the speediness of the deliverance which Isaiah had prophesied. The significance of the type was enhanced by the "great roll" in which the prophecy concerning the child was to be written, and by the trustworthy witnesses (one of them a priest) carefully selected to testify to its importance. The people, the prophet further declares, were unwilling to wait God's time (typified by the waters flowing slowly into the pool of Siloam), and so urged an instant reconciliation with the invaders. They would, therefore, instead of a softly-flowing stream, bring on themselves a mighty river, namely, the fierce and destroying, yet majestic, onset of the hosts of the King of Assyria (*cf.* chap. x. 28-34). Judah is likened to a man half drowned by the rushing flood; and then, with a rapid change of figure, Assyria is likened to a devouring bird, whose wings, in con-

¹ See Deut. viii. 17, 18.

² This invasion of Israel appears by the monuments to have taken place in the reign of Ahaz. The numbers in the Old Testament, for some reason or other, appear frequently to have gone wrong. Thus Hosea's conspiracy is declared in 2 Kings xv. 30 to have taken place in the *twentieth* year of the reign of Jotham. But in ver. 33 Jotham is said to have reigned only *sixteen* years. See also 2 Chron. xxvii. The error goes back as far as the LXX. Version.

sequence of Judah's sin, will overshadow even Immanuel's land—the land even of the promised deliverer (chap. viii. 7)—and so delay the deliverance which God had promised. Ever so it is with those who trust alone to human policy. A singular parallel is afforded by the history of the United Provinces. At the moment of their death-grapple with the mightiest Power in the world, which combined the resources of Spain, Italy, and the Indies, not unnaturally, after repeated and most disastrous defeats, they determined to seek the aid of France and then of England, that they might to some degree approximate to the strength of their foe. But, as the Rab-shakeh said to Hezekiah, these powers were but “as the staff of a broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it.” The rulers of England and France were actuated by no such high and noble aspirations as those which sustained the great leader of the Dutch and Flemish patriots, William, surnamed “the Silent.” Each “fought for its own hand,” and demanded an exorbitant price for its assistance; and Holland had to work its deliverance alone, and almost unaided. Nor has our own country, in the hour of its greatest peril, been able to trust to foreign alliances. More than once England has stood alone against the civilized world. When William of Orange brought over Dutch troops and Dutch statesmen with him to vindicate British laws and maintain the British constitution, they proved to be almost as great a danger as assistance to his cause. Even in the late war, waged as it can scarcely be denied to have been, in favour of freedom, fairness, and “the open door,” we were threatened once more by an European coalition. We have had alliances enough and to spare. Sometimes they have been beneficial, sometimes otherwise. But it is not alliances for a common object of which we now speak. It is the dependence on outside support in the hour of peril, instead of on the Divine Protection and on the justice of our cause. The refusal of Ahaz to “tempt” the Eternal by asking a sign, and his recourse to Assyria, brought about two results, neither of which he expected or desired. Judah first became Assyria's vassal, and then narrowly escaped the subjugation and deportation which had previously been the fate of Israel. So with ourselves. Our alliances have been as much for the benefit of other nations as of our own. But in the hour of peril we have found that “there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God.”

4. *The Folly of Chauvinism: True and False National Pride.*—The prophet's rebuke next (in chap. ix. 8-21, which takes up the subject left unfinished in chap. viii. 8) assumes the form of a denunciation of the arrogance and boastfulness

of Ephraim, the chief member of the Israelite confederation. First, this boastfulness is painted in strong colours (vers. 8-12). Then follows a picture of the state of society which is at once the cause and consequence of such an attitude towards God and man (vers. 13-17), and, lastly, the prophet describes the condition of abject desperation to which Israel's sin reduced her (vers. 18-21). And each section of the prophet's indictment is summed up in the warning words, "For all this, His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

We may thus read the lessons here placed before us. Ephraim and its capital have boasted "in pride and stoutness" (lit., *greatness—i.e.*, the false, not the true, greatness) "of heart," that notwithstanding the reverses that have fallen upon them (this would seem to point to the expedition of Tiglath-pileser recorded in 2 Kings xv. 29, and the prophecy would in that case have been written *after* it), all the devastation and destruction which had taken place, including the removal of the Gileadites and the tribe of Naphtali to Assyria, should be repaired, and that Israel would more than maintain her position among the nations. But these expectations were doomed to disappointment. Rezin and Tekah shall be "hoist with their own petard." The rebellion they tried to foment in Judah shall be their own fate. Syria shall rise in revolt behind them, and Philistia shall attack them in front.¹

Yet still (ver. 13) the obstinacy of Israel is not subdued.² Therefore a further chastisement is in store. Two classes of society will be involved in the same destruction: the rulers, typified by the lofty, spreading, elegant palm-branch, and their flatterers, typified by the reed of the marshes—the "reed shaken by the wind." A clique of false prophets, fawning and prophesying lies, veering about with every breeze of court favour, collected around the men of influence, as we see in the case of Ahab (1 Kings xxii.), and as we see in Russian courtiers just now. Sometimes, as in the case of Oded and his prophecy (2 Chron. xxviii. 9-15), there are gleams of a better feeling among the Israelites. But, on the whole, the mind of Israel is only too correctly expressed in the latter part of ver. 16. Therefore the Eternal One "shall not rejoice

¹ This was probably in connection with the invasion of Judah by the Philistines recorded in 2 Chron. xxviii. 18, 19. It is not *said* that Israel was invaded; but it is extremely probable that the raid extended to Israel also.

² It is by no means improbable that in the allusion to the "word" (ver. 8) which hath been sent to Jacob, and which has "fallen upon Israel," Isaiah has in view the prophecies of Hosea and Amos (especially Amos i.).

in their young men, nor have mercy on their fatherless and widows, because every one of them is a 'hypocrite' (or, rather, *profligate*) and an evil-doer, and every mouth speaketh folly" (ver. 17). No more serious state of things can exist in a nation than lack of religious principle among its young men. We have a vivid illustration of this in the degradation and disaster which befell our own country in the miserable recoil from Puritan austerity during the reign of Charles II. The youth were corrupted by the infamous literature of the day, and it took a century to undo the evil effects of that deplorable period. The "folly," we must bear in mind, is not folly in the abstract, but that "folly in Israel" which is connected in the Old Testament with the most abominable deeds (Gen. xxxiv. 7; Judg. xx. 6; 1 Sam. xxv. 25; 2 Sam. xiii. 12, 13). Such doings, and the mutual hatred and suspicion which they sow between brethren, kindle the Divine wrath until the land is consumed. Brother's hand is turned against brother (ver. 19). The greed (ver. 20) which they have displayed only defeats its own object. It leads, not, as had been hoped, to prosperity, but to the most frightful depths of want and starvation. Israel plots against the security of Judah, and only brings about similar plots in his own bosom. How can the Lord's indignation be turned away from such a people as this?

The lesson we may learn from this section is threefold: (1) To beware of falling into that national Chauvinism which insists upon idolizing itself, and loves to sing its own praises; which refuses, like official Russia at the present moment, to recognise disaster, and strives to hide it by hollow boastings; (2) to cultivate a true instead of a false imperialism; and (3) to beware of faction. It is remarkable how the ambiguity of the word "imperialism" brings about a difference in the way in which the thing connoted by it is regarded. Imperialism in its most exact meaning signifies *military tyranny*. It is the kind of despotism which comes on a society bereft of its moral strength by luxury, dishonesty, and party spirit. The nation which abuses its freedom falls under the hand of the *imperator* or General, and a military dictatorship succeeds to the epoch in which society is rent asunder by the struggles of unpatriotic factions. The history of Rome supplies us with the most notable instance of this, and the last century presents to us two further instances of it in France, under Napoleon I. and III. But the word is used in another sense in the present day. It is applied to British rule. It is undoubtedly wrongly so applied. The free principles of British rule have nothing in common with military tyranny, and it is unfortunate, since men, as a rule, are governed more by

phrases than thoughts, that we should have no other word beside "Empire" to denote British expansion. British imperialism means, not the rule of the dictator, nor of the sword (save in those countries under British sway which are not yet ripe for freedom), but the rule of the people at large. It is, as has been said, "government *by* the people and *for* the people." Such an "imperialism," however unsuitable the word may be in itself, need not disturb us. British rule, on the whole, has made for freedom all over the world. It has reposed on the ascendancy of free institutions. And now that circumstances make it possible, it is proposed, and, as I must believe, wisely proposed, to have a central legislature—I will not say for "imperial" purposes, but for the benefit of the British community as a whole. There is therefore a true and a false "imperialism." The British people has enjoyed the blessings of Parliamentary institutions for some six centuries and a half. However much we may federate—and federation seems to be the order of the day—this nation, we may believe, will always consult the whole people before taking action. Yet we must remember that there is such a thing as the tyranny of majorities, probably the worst, because the most capricious and changeable, of all tyrannies. The voice of the British legislature should always be raised on behalf of all; should aim at the greatest amount of freedom for every man, woman, and child within our borders, which is consistent with the freedom and happiness of the rest. But if a tyrannous majority should insist on sectional legislation; if one populous portion of the Empire should consider its own interest to the detriment of other portions less populous or influential; if political leaders should learn to "give to party what was meant for mankind"; if religious bigotry should be carried to the excess of depriving any section of the community of religious liberty or of its rights, then bastard imperialism will have taken the place of genuine, dissensions will arise, the judgment of God will be pronounced against this people, and, as before in the eighteenth century, the British Empire will be rent asunder, British influence in the world will be diminished, Britons will prey upon one another and devour the sources of their own strength, and one of the greatest securities for the peace and progress of the world will have passed away.

The spirit of *faction* is also rebuked. We are told how God will punish those who undertake to guide the people, but also refuse to be taught by experience. The leader and his flatterers (vers. 14, 15) shall be alike destroyed. The men of experience and high rank, as well as the sycophants who fawn on and deceive them, shall be "cut off in one day,"

because they aim at leadership, and lead amiss. Throughout the whole body politic discussion and discord penetrate (ver. 18) like a fire. There are *local jealousies*. Manasseh (ver. 21) is against his brother Ephraim, and both of them against Judah. There are also *personal injuries*. "No man spares his brother" (ver. 19). Rapine is universal, but it only leads to want. Misery is the natural result of dishonesty and wrong. Even the natural man can see that. It is the mission of the prophet to point him to the fact that it is the operation of the moral law Divine, infraction of which draws on a nation the "wrath of the Lord of Hosts" (ver. 19). Nor is the punishment simply vicarious. The young men are not only suffering for the sins of their fathers, according to a law clearly visible in Nature, as well as proclaimed on Sinai, but "*every one is profane and an evil-doer.*" And like the repeated strokes of a hammer there comes, after each successive count in the accusation, the terrible refrain, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." What a constantly recurring feature is this of the history of nations! And the quicker and more brilliant the intellect, the more danger there is of its being led away in the direction of the intrigues of factious men. Stolid, military Sparta wrested the power in Greece from the hands of intellectual but fickle and restless Athens, and, splendidly endowed though Athens was, she never recovered from the shock. In modern history Antwerp remains a conspicuous instance of the effects of self-interest, puffed up by vanity and the flattery by inferiors of those who supposed themselves "to be somewhat." While the guilds were wrangling during the celebrated siege, the enemy was advancing, and Antwerp was lost to Protestantism and Belgium to Holland from the day of the capture until now. "Yet the people" of that country did not "turn unto Him that smote them," neither did they "seek the Lord of Hosts." The same spirit of wrangling and self-interest which had been nearly fatal to their efforts after liberty continued to be fostered among them when they had obtained it. Calvinist and Remonstrant continued to fan the flames of hatred. The head of one man who had nobly served his country fell on the scaffold.¹ Others were torn to pieces by the fury of a mob.² More than once the wheel "came full circle": the oppressors became the oppressed, the slayer was counted among the slain. And so Holland, which, like Judæa, had once the opportunity to be mistress of the world, sunk down into a third-rate power, because she preferred gain to

¹ John Olden Barneveldt.

² The De Witts.

godliness, and violence and injustice to the way of peace and truth. Is there no lesson for us English people in this? Are we in no danger of having our passions played upon by dexterous partisans, who would tempt us to "snatch on the right hand, and be hungry," to "eat on the left hand, and not be satisfied," instead of cultivating the spirit of brotherhood first among those to whom God has most closely joined us—those of our own race—language, and faith, and next among the peoples of the whole world? One severe lesson has been vouchsafed to us—our breach with our American fellow-subjects, and great has been the loss, not only to ourselves, but to humanity thereby. Let us beware of anyone, however "ancient and honourable," if he be under the influence of the "prophet that speaketh lies." Mutual jealousies, the clash of conflicting interests, we may see, since the fact is stamped in ineffaceable characters over the histories of mankind, are fatal to the history of nations, for they make them unfaithful to their trust. If "the people are as the fuel of fire, no man spareth his brother" (ver. 19), the "wrath of the Lord of Hosts" will surely be upon us.

The following words of Shakespeare well illustrate this passage :

"And if you crown him, let me prophesy :
 The blood of English shall manure the ground,
 And future ages groan for this foul act ;
 Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
 And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
 Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound ;
 Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny
 Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
 The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls."
 "Richard II.," Act IV., Scene 1.¹

This "prophecy" was terribly fulfilled, as Shakespeare well knew, in the Wars of the Roses. So does all tyranny and injustice bring its Nemesis. As Tennyson puts it in "Harold"—

"The voice of any people is the sword
 That guards them, or the sword that beats them down."

"They shall eat, every man, the flesh of his own arm,

¹ The fine passage in the "Third Part of Henry VI.," Act II., Scene 5, where a son who has killed his father and a father who has killed his son are introduced to depict the miseries of civil war, may be adduced, though I have long thought, and am glad to find that Lord Tennyson is of the same opinion, that, except a few passages, "Henry VI." is not by Shakespeare.

Manasseh, Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh, and they shall fall together on Judah. In all this His anger hath not been turned away, even yet is His hand stretched out.”¹

J. J. LIAS.

(To be continued.)



ART. VI.—REPORT ON PHYSICAL DETERIORATION
(continued).

THE last section of the Report which we considered in our previous article was that dealing with the “Effects of Alcoholism.”

The next section (No. IV.) examines the assertion that there has been, and still continues, a “Depletion of Rural Districts by the Exodus of the Best Types”; in connection with this is considered the further assertion that “the evil is aggravated . . . by the drifting into the country of the debilitated town population, which is crowded out by the inrush of more vigorous elements.”

The country districts, from the physical point of view, undoubtedly produce the best specimens of the race. What the effect of town life is upon the mental powers seems at present to be a question upon which more evidence is needed before any opinion can be given.

The strong are attracted to the towns by higher wages; and it is found that in those occupations for which physical strength is a necessity the majority of the workers are country-bred, and have grown to maturity in farm or outdoor work. This applies to “navvies, pig-iron carriers in blast-furnaces, bleaching-powder packers, cement workers,” etc. A further proof of this fact was stated by one witness thus: “Thirty years ago it was the commonest thing for a farm labourer to carry 2½ cwt. of corn up a ladder; now you very seldom see it.”

It is to procure reliable data as to what extent this physical deterioration is proceeding that the committee so strongly urge the institution of an anthropometric survey.

But, whatever be the rate or extent of this deterioration, there cannot be any controversy as to the expediency of

¹ Precisely the same principles may be applied to the more contracted conflicts of each separate portion of the British Empire, and of each class in each portion.

NOTE.—The “critical note” on pp. 35, 36 of the October No. of the CHURCHMAN should have been inserted here. It refers to chap. ix. 8-21.