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means of purifying individuals and nations; and finally it is to be regarded as part of the arrangement of a universe which exhibits in what is comprehensible so many indubitable indications of wisdom and goodness that we have the fullest warrant for attributing to its Author a wise and

beneficent purpose also in the relatively small dose of ills and sufferings we discover in the constitution and the history of the world.

This solution of the problem of suffering, offered to us by the author of Job, will approve itself as correct for all time.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Rearing a Monument.

'Now Absalom in his life time had taken and reared up for himself the pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name.'—2 Sam. 18¹⁸.

MOST of you have been taken at some time or other to see a monument or statue erected in memory of some famous man. Perhaps you were visiting a strange city and among the sights of the place there was pointed out to you the statue of a man who had been born there and who had afterwards made a name for himself in the world. His fellow-townsmen were proud of him; they wanted to recognize his great gifts, and they wanted to connect his name always with their city; so they erected a monument to his memory.

But were you ever taken to see a monument which a man had erected in honour of himself? Of such a monument we read in this verse out of the old sad story of Absalom.

Absalom could not bear to think that he might be forgotten. Admiration was the very breath of life to him. He would rather have been hated than not noticed. But he had no son to carry on his name. So he took this curious way of having his memory kept green. He built a monument to himself.

Now Absalom's name *has* been remembered, but not in the way he intended. It has been remembered as the name of a treacherous son who plotted against his own father and tried to deprive him of the throne. It has been remembered as a name for vanity, selfishness, and ingratitude. In the end of the day he lay, not near the pillar he had erected to his own glory, but in an inglorious grave in a lonely forest, and over his grave was cast a great heap of stones. Near Jerusalem there

is a monument which is called Absalom's Pillar. Very probably it is mistakenly so called, but the Jews and Muhammadans believe it is the original pillar. And every Jew who passes throws a small pebble at it and utters a solemn curse to express his disapproval of the man who 'set at light' his own father. So is Absalom's name remembered.

Men have done strange things to have their name remembered. One man set on fire the beautiful temple of Diana at Ephesus, so that he might not be forgotten. Some men are remembered for their cruelty, others for their cleverness, others for their beauty. Artists, poets, musicians have left behind them monuments in the works they have created. But there are others who have left behind them a better monument than any of these. They are remembered for their loving, self-sacrificing service to others.

Some years ago a missionary was visiting a village in the East of Africa. He was staying with the chief of the village, and one day an old native presented himself at the dwelling of the chief and asked to see the white man. He wished to see him because he hoped he would resemble the only white man he had ever known. Over his shoulder the old native carried with great care and tenderness a mouldy, moth-eaten coat, and he told the missionary that it had once belonged to 'the white man' and that he had kept it for ten years. He went on to describe his friend. 'He treated black men as his brothers,' he said, 'and his name will be remembered up and down the Rovuma valley long after we are all dead and gone. His eye was piercing, but his words were always gentle and his manners were always kind. He knew the way to the hearts of all men.'

Then very carefully the native took the mouldy coat from his shoulder and gave it to the missionary to keep, because he came from Britain and

was a brother of the great white man, who was none other than David Livingstone.

Boys and girls, what kind of a monument are you raising? Whether we will or not we are all leaving our mark on our day and generation. God has endowed us with gifts of mind and heart, and how we use these gifts decides the kind of monument we are rearing. There are just two ways we can use them. We can squander them on themselves, on our own glorification, our own pleasure, our own comfort and profit, or we can spend them in helping and serving our fellow-men. Absalom tried the first way. He had great gifts of body and mind. He was beautiful and brave and clever. He had great charm of manner. He was a born leader of men. Had he acted as a true son, he would in time have succeeded to the throne, and he might have been known through all Israel as a great and good king. But he cared only for his own selfish ends, his own glory, and he came to an inglorious and unhonoured end.

David Livingstone tried the other way. He gave himself up entirely to serve God and his fellow-men, and he earned the love and esteem of all men, both black and white.

Boys and girls, which are you going to imitate—Absalom or David Livingstone? What kind of a monument are you going to rear?

A Happy Couple.

'I will trust and not be afraid.'—Is 12².

The moorland I am thinking of was not considered a pretty place. On the contrary, people used to say that it made a blot upon the country side.

But a little couple had chosen it as their home, and had built a very tiny house on a tangled clump of herbage. Travellers across the moor spoke of it as a peat-bog, but the words had no meaning for Mr. and Mrs. Pipit. The place was exactly to their mind and they were happy in it.

The husband had a brown coat with light edging, and a spotted waistcoat, and his dear wee wife was so dainty that boys and girls were always eager to get even a glimpse of her. It was a very happy time when the couple were building their little house and trying to make it a sweet place to live in. They had no money; God provided the things with which to build and furnish it. These were a few dried stems of grass and moss, and

their bed was made soft and warm with tufts of bog-cotton and thistle-down.

When I made her a call just now
I found she had furnished her house somehow,
All trim and tidy and nice and neat,
The prettiest cottage in all the street.
Of thistledown silk was her carpet fine,
A thousand times better and softer than mine;
Her curtains, to shut out the heat and light,
Were woven of blossoms pink and white;
And the dainty roof of her tiny home
Was a broad green leaf like an emerald dome.¹

When the couple talked to each other, Mr. Pipit always ended his story in a lovely song. Sometimes, but not often, they had sad things to speak about. 'Sweet-one, sweet-one,' Mr. Pipit would say then, 'we won't let any one come near our little house. Trill-trill,' and then there followed a note of wonderful joy. 'I know it, I know it,' Mrs. Pipit answered tenderly, 'no robbers . . . we two . . . together.' Then Mr. Pipit sang his favourite 'Happy Song.' It was full of exquisite trills and cadenzas, for his little heart felt bursting with happiness, and what added beauty to it was the pathetic ending. There was an echo of longing, perhaps even of anxiety in it. Dear little Mr. Pipit! Mrs. Pipit just nodded her wee head coquettishly and said, 'Sweet-sweet; sweet-sweet.'

Not far from Mr. and Mrs. Pipit's house there was lodging the very person of whom they were afraid. She had no home of her own; she was a vagrant and hated housekeeping. One day when the Pipits were out she peeped into their snug little house, and saw two wee eggs amongst the cotton and thistle-down. They were whitish with a great many brown spots. She gave no thought as to whether they were pretty or not, she just said to herself, 'They're nearly the same colour as my egg, I will bring it and put it in the nest; Mother Pipit will have quite forgotten that she had only two of her own. Kwow-ow-ow-ow,' she said, and went off. Very soon she saw the couple start out again for messages. Back she went carrying the egg in her mouth and laid it in Mother Pipit's soft bed. When the fond mother returned and peeped into the soft nest, she put her head first to one side, then to the other, turned the eggs and called Mr. Pipit, saying, 'Three-two; three-three-

¹ 'My Neighbour,' in *A Garland of Verse*, p. 180 (ed. A. H. Miles).

three.' He perched beside her and said, 'two, two, three,' touched number three, and then sang such a lovely song that Mrs. Pipit soon felt happy and satisfied. 'God gives,' 'trill . . . trill,' 'Sweet-sweet' could be heard in the house all the afternoon.

One morning there were two little Pipits in the nest. The day following a very big baby appeared, and it gaped as soon as it was born, screeching, 'Give me something to eat; give me something to eat.' Mrs. Pipit brought all sorts of nice things for it. Mr. Pipit whispered to her, 'Sweet-sweet, he's so big, do you think . . .?' and he followed his question with a trill and a lovely song. 'Think-think,' said the anxious little mother, 'he is—baby,' and she wore out her strength trying to find hairy caterpillars to put into the great open mouth.

Very soon the strange baby grew so big and strong that there was scarcely room for him in the little home, and he began to hate the little Pipits. One day, when father and mother Pipit were out, he shuffled himself about amongst the cotton and the thistledown until he got one of the babies on his back, then put his head well down in the nest and gradually worked up backwards until he reached the edge of the nest. He rested for a moment, then gathered all his strength together, and with one final effort sent the little helpless Pipit down. Wasn't he selfish and cruel? And he was only a baby himself; he hadn't even got his sight at the time.

Of course Mr. and Mrs. Pipit missed the absent one. For a moment they were sad; then they said 'Sweet-sweet' to one another, and went on to feed their big greedy foster-child. He throve and grew until he was nearly as big as a pigeon. It was hard indeed to feed him; Mrs. Pipit sometimes had to stand on his back in order to do it, the greedy, gaping child turning his head and crying impatiently, 'I'm hungry; give me something to eat.'

One day the overgrown vagrant child left the Pipit cottage and never came back. Mr. and Mrs. Pipit looked at each other and said, 'Sweet-sweet,' 'sorry-sorry.' Then Mr. Pipit sang a song with not a single sad note in it. His little heart had really no room for sorrow — there was still one baby in the nest.

The homeless bird felt very miserable indeed when he found himself all alone in a wide world

with no loving Mrs. Pipit to look after him. One day, sitting very tired and hungry in a furze bush, he nearly broke his heart when he thought of the hairy caterpillars she used to give him.

A boy crossing the moor chanced to see him. He did not want to frighten the bird, but he took a few crumbs from his pockets and laid them down not far from the furze bush. They did not lie there very long, for he had not passed far on his way before the sound of 'Cuck-oo, cuck-oo,' reached him. Mrs. Pipit's greedy foster-child was actually thankful!

Even the cuckoo, child of Ishmael,
With but two notes and no place where to
dwell,
Still does his best his grateful thanks to tell.¹

And the Pipits just went about saying 'sweet-sweet,' 'sweet-sweet.' They were not always together, however. One day, when Mr. Pipit was away alone, he sang a very lovely song near an open window at which a frail old gentleman sat. 'Put out a few crumbs for the little songster,' he said to a young girl who was keeping him company. Mr. Pipit came and ate them, made his most graceful bow, flew to the twig of a bush and sang again with a joy that made the old gentleman feel young again. Only Mrs. Pipit could have told the words of his song, but the white-haired listener thought he understood them just a little bit.

'Hand me the little book I was reading in the morning,' he said to the girl. Then he opened it at a page he had marked, and in a trembling voice read:

The wonderful trust of a birdling!—
So full and so free!
For what does it know?—Not the smallest thing
Save its own concerns, and those it learns
'Neath the mother-wing and instinctively.

And yet it is happy as happy can be,
Enjoying each moment right merrily,
It knows not at all what to-morrow may bring,
And yet it can cheerfully chatter and sing;
To-day is enough; yesterday has no sting;
It carries no load, for it simply trusts God
For its home, and its food, and for everything.²

¹ J. Oxenham, *All Clear!* p. 64.

² *Ibid.* p. 64 f.

The Christian Year.

WHITSUNDAY.

His Presence.

'I will come to you.'—In 14th.

The practice of the presence of Christ is based on the fact of His present living activity. Now in the New Testament we have two main lines of thought on this subject: (1) The promises of Christ to be with His followers, and (2) their witness to His faithful keeping of the trusts.

1. It will not be necessary to examine all the words wherein Jesus said that He would still be in the midst of His disciples after His death, but here are a few. It was under the shadow of the coming Calvary, in the Upper Room when fear was striking a chill into the company gathered there, that He spoke words bright and radiant with hope. 'I will not leave you desolate,' orphaned, forlorn; 'I am coming to you. If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him.' And then He speaks of the Spirit, the Comforter, who is to come as His *alter ego*, and in whose coming He comes, and in whose presence He is present. It may be a theological inexactitude to speak of the Holy Spirit as the spiritualized presence of Christ, but devotionally and practically it is a help to conceive of the Spirit as such. He is the Spirit of Christ, He takes of the things of Christ and illuminates them. Wherever the Spirit is there is Christ, for *the Lord is the Spirit*.

But apart from these references in John's Gospel we have the words of promise to those who unite in prayer: 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'; though we often use the words as only a charter for our corporate prayer, they are the promise of His presence emphatically and distinctly: for prayer in its essence is communion. Whether Jesus was adapting a rabbinical saying that where two were engaged in the study of the law there was the shekinah, matters not, for here He lays down one of the fundamental laws of life. 'His presence is axiomatically certain.' He is always there in the midst according to His promise.

When the Seventy were sent on their mission, in His ordination charge He told them that they were His ambassadors and representatives, 'he that heareth you, heareth me; and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that sent me.' What is that but saying

that as His Father was present with Him when He evangelized, so His presence was to be with them?

When Jesus told the allegory of the sheep and goats, He said the sheep were welcomed and goats rejected on the ground that the sheep showed love and the goats none, to the 'least of his brethren,' and He identifies Himself with these waifs and strays. He is present, and to Him we minister in the personalities of the outcast. When Paul met his Lord on the Damascus road, he was challenged, 'Why persecutest thou me?' and here the identification is with the persecuted disciples. Jesus was present with them: and He is present in every cause in which His disciples are engaged.

And there is that mystic saying of His, recently dug up at Oxyrhynchus, 'Wherever there are two, they are not without God; and wherever there is one alone, I say, I am with him. Raise the stone, and thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I.' The mystic word has surely a precious truth to convey when it suggests that the mason or the carpenter may find Jesus present with them in the daily round of the workyard and shop. If the mason and the carpenter, why not every other trade and every right way of earning a living? 'In the handiwork of their craft is their prayer,' and prayer brings the realization of the presence of Christ.

And finally there is the all-sufficient promise when our Lord in Galilee gave His command for universal evangelization, 'Go into all the world . . . lo! I am with you all the time, to the end of the world.' Seldom surely has so great a command been entrusted to men; here was One, claiming all authority—the Omnipotent Jesus, issuing with imperious word a command which knew neither limits of space nor time, and claiming to be able to accompany His servants whithersoever they went on their high embassy. The Omnipotent promises His Omnipresence: the Risen Jesus is affirming a universal presence.

2. Now pass to the fulfilment of these manifoldly rich promises. In the appendix to Mark, that Gospel fragment has for its last verse the words: 'They therefore went forth preaching everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the words by the signs that followed.' The words sum up the Acts, for that early record of the generation following Christ might be termed 'The Acts of Christ through the Apostles,' and none would have more gladly accepted such a designation than the Apostles themselves. Each in turn

would have acknowledged that their words and work were due not to them, but to the Spirit of Christ which energized them.

(1) The best and most accessible case is of course that of Paul, for we know his mind and heart better than any of the others, and are providentially allowed to see what was a standard experience of Christ. Paul was an epitome of many men, and touched life on more sides than most. The autobiographical passages from his pen are witnesses to this aspect of Christian life. If ever a man practised the presence of Christ, had clear and definite first-hand knowledge, Paul was that man. From that pregnant day on the Damascus road, right on through his varied career till in Cæsar's City, he knew what it was to have his Lord standing by him, when all others had forsaken him. His favourite expression for a Christian, his pocket definition, as it were, was 'in Christ.' We need not understand that his own personality was annihilated, but that he lived and wrought in the presence of his Lord: it is the consciousness of spirit meeting with spirit, of the inter-relation of his heart with God-in-Christ, indwelling and ruling and obsessing, but never destroying the freedom of his own will: it is the deliberate and resolute action of his will yielding itself up to Christ as his Captain, whose banner he follows into the thickest of the battle: it is the momentary and quick realization that wherever he was Christ was with him, giving him strength and wisdom, peace and joy and love. Christ dwelt in his heart by faith, and life for him spelt one word, Christ. It is needless to give quotations, for a quick reading of the Apostle's correspondence will convince every one that for Paul there was nothing worth thinking of, or living for, no other ambition worth striving after, but how to be acceptable to Christ whose slave he was. It made him a mystic, it made him an evangelist and an apostle, it made him one of the great creators of our modern world. It gave him a name which after his Master's is the greatest in the history of man. But for that he cared nothing.

Paul has no honour and no friend but Christ.
Yes, without cheer of sister or of daughter,

Yes, without stay of father or of son,
Lone on the land and homeless on the water

Pass I in patience till the work be done.
Yet not in solitude if Christ anear me.

Wherever he went he found the Presence of Christ—in Antioch, in Galatia, in Macedonia, in Corinth, on the wild waters, in Rome. Wherever he woke Christ was still with him.

(2) What is true of Paul is true also of the other Apostles, though our knowledge of their inner life is more scanty. Christ was present in their meetings, and by His Spirit was the spring of their activities, guiding, upholding, guarding. But there is no need to examine the subject, for the New Testament later writings are a text-book for all who would practise the Presence, and no one can read the book without discovering that if the writers were sure of one thing more than another it was that Christ had risen from the tomb and was with them, a constant Friend and Saviour. He had been with them; He was still with them; He was to appear at the last day with a Presence or coming more awe-inspiring, majestic, glorious than anything they had yet experienced—these three thoughts are the very points of the orbit on which their life and service revolved.

(3) The Apostolic age is one continued fulfilment of the promises of His Presence, and in every age since the word has been kept. He has never failed the heart that trusted Him. The saints of all ages and every Church have proved it. They affirm it as a real experience and are like the late Sir Edward Burne-Jones: 'I never doubt for a moment the real presence of God. I should never debate about it any more than I should argue about Beauty and the things I most love.'¹ It is a real catholic article of Christian living, and of it may be said the great words, *quod semper, ubique et ab omnibus*, always, everywhere, and by all. In martyrdom and persecution, in Church assemblies and lonely hermitages, in employments both religious and common, on service in foreign lands, wherever hearts have turned to God they have found He is with them. And the saints add their long and ever-increasing roll of witness to this truth, lying at the very core of the religious life. They have realized and they have loved and felt the awe of the Presence of God in Christ. Even when with complete assurance they have been tempted to locate it, saying, 'Christ is with us, but not with you'; 'Lo! He is here, but not there,'—they have been right in their affirmations, but wrong in their denials. He is not confined to any four walls of man's building. We cannot limit

¹ *Memorials*, ii. 325.

the Presence of Christ, since He is everywhere. It is His Presence which alone gives consecration to life. For all life, truly considered, is dependent upon and saturated with God if only we had the eyes to see and the hearts to understand.¹

TRINITY SUNDAY.

The Trinity.

'According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through (R.V. "in") sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.'—1 Pet. 1².

The three clauses of this verse beyond all reasonable question set forth the operation of the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Son respectively. Here, therefore, as in several Epistles of St. Paul (1 Co 12⁴⁻⁶, 2 Co 13¹³, Eph 4⁴⁻⁶), there is an implicit reference to the Threefold Name. In no passage is there any indication that the writer was independently working out a doctrinal scheme: a recognized belief or idea seems to be everywhere presupposed. How such an idea could arise in the mind of St. Paul or any other apostle without sanction from a word of the Lord, it is difficult to imagine: and this consideration is a sufficient answer to the doubts which have, by no means unnaturally, been raised whether Mt 28¹⁹ may not have been added or recast in a later generation. St. Peter, like St. Paul, associates with the subject of each clause, if one may so speak, a distinctive function as towards mankind: on their relations to the Divine Unity he is silent.²

1. The functions assigned to the three divine Persons respectively are described throughout the New Testament in language that varies according as its context relates to the unity of Church life, to spiritual endowments for Christian service, to the sanctification of the individual, to human effort, or to Divine grace, or to the relation of the Godhead to the world as a whole.

(1) To the Father are attributed love, foreknowledge, choice, sovereignty, all effective working.

(2) To the Son the grace of condescending, the atonement of suffering, mediation in the bestowal of the Spirit, the consummation of the glory of humanity, the mercy of final judgment.

(3) To the Spirit the regeneration and renewal of human nature, the fellowship of spiritual life in

the body of Christ, the indwelling of the divine in the human, the growth in holiness.

2. These attributes may fairly be grouped under the familiar headings of the doctrinal summaries of later ages—creation, redemption, sanctification.

(1) In the present passage one of the parts of creation is made prominent—foreknowledge. Now it is easy to interpret this idea in such a way as to make it seem arbitrary, despotic, fatalistic; but those who have eyes to penetrate below the surface of things cannot get away from it; they refuse to believe that the universe is without a settled purpose at the core of it; they do not feel as if they themselves had been saved by chance or by caprice. St. Peter himself in his Pentecost sermon had used a very strong phrase of this kind about the Cross of Christ: 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken' (Ac 2²³). And if even the Cross, which seemed at first sight so much like the negation of all rule, all order, and all right, was no afterthought, no accident, no unforeseen misfortune, but the shining centre of God's plan, Christian souls had some reason for being sure that a thread of purpose ran through all things, and that, being brought into the Kingdom of the Lord, they had been laid hold of by the Eternal Design. The saints have ever had this consciousness, though they might not be able to explain it, or to reconcile intellectually the two sides of it. Their Christian life was their free response, but it was a response: something else had gone before it. 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' 'We love because he first loved us.'

(2) Redemption is spoken of as 'obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.' We put the experience of cleansing first, and the way of obedience afterwards. But three times at least the Bible inverts that order. Probably the idea here is an echo of Ex 24, where there is described the making of the covenant between the elect people and their God. 'Moses took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.' The same order of thought is followed in St. John's famous saying: 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we

¹ W. J. Ives, *The Ever Present Christ*.

² F. J. A. Hort, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, 17.

have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 Jn 1⁷). And this is the order in the passage before us now. In one sense the Cross comes first; it is the beginning of all: it is the root and motive of our obedience. Yet in another sense it is only the loyal and surrendered heart that has a right to claim the benefits of the Redeemer's passion. A Peter and a Pilate were equally close to the Cross viewed as an historical event, yet only to the disciple soul was the Cross turned into a gospel.

(3) That which is election in the Father appears as sanctification in the work of the Spirit. Sanctification is setting apart. The root idea of the word is just separation from common uses to the service of God. The saint is one who has separated himself from known evil in an act of consecration, which is prolonged through all his after-life; and who is animated by but one aim and purpose—to be only for Jesus. We cannot do more than this; nay, we cannot do this without the Holy Spirit. From Him comes the first conviction that we are wrong; and the indication of the infirmity, or weight, or evil, from which we must get free. From Him also comes the grace by which we are set free. From Him comes the in-filling with the love and life of God, which is inseparably connected with each act of consecration. And thus there is evolved at last the obedience which pleases God; and which is thus wrought through—and in—sanctification of the Spirit.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Propitiation.

'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'—1 Jn 4¹⁰.

In this sentence there is one word which calls for interpretation above the rest. The Latin term from which our English 'propitiation' comes means that which may render propitious one who has been offended. The Greek word which St. John uses in this place (and in 2⁹) has almost the same meaning—that which promotes or secures reconciliation. In the New Testament and the Septuagint the reference of the propitiation offered is invariably Godward, and the suggestion which inheres in the classical use of the term, namely, that 'goodwill was not conceived to be the original and

natural condition of the gods, but something that must first be earned,' is altogether foreign to the Biblical scope of the term. The righteousness which requires atonement and the love which provides it meet in the profound harmony of the Divine attributes.

1. It is, however, the Hebrew word which concerns us most nearly. The father of Samuel Taylor Coleridge used to speak of Hebrew as 'the authentic language of the Holy Ghost.' Certainly, it is in that language that we find the key to the meaning of the significant terms of Scripture. The Hebrew word which St. John undoubtedly had in mind signifies literally 'a covering.' The priestly service in Israel was summed up in the sacrificial action of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, and of that action the sprinkling of the offered blood upon the golden plate of the mercy-seat—the propitiatory—was the culmination and crown. It represented a sheltering life, albeit a life laid down—interposed between the Shekinah presence and the condemning law, thus covering the covenanted House of Israel. The life of the sinner is therefore preserved by the interposition of another life, divinely bestowed and divinely accepted.

A father sees an arrow speeding towards his boy; with a cry he flings himself in its way; the arrow pierces the father's heart, and he, dying, secures deliverance and safety for his son. Even so, Christ died for us, interposing His life between us and the punitive justice of God. And still, between us and our adversary, the life of the Son of God, once offered, now taken again, is interposed. 'He is the propitiation for our sins.' It is not merely that He has effected something, secured something, for us, but that He in His own person is our ransom, our reconciliation, our redemption. The late Dr. Edwards of Bala was engaged with his admirable treatise on the atonement, when this thought burned itself into his mind. He rose from his desk, leaving his books and papers as they lay, went into the street, and cried aloud, 'Jesus is the atonement! Jesus is the atonement!' Then he returned to his study to write down sentences such as these: 'This is the atonement—not the sufferings and not the death, but the person of the Son of God in the sufferings and in the death. He is the propitiation. . . . It is not said that He made the atonement, nor that He paid an atonement. I do not condemn those expressions, but the Bible

goes far beyond them. He is the propitiation. . . . He is the atonement—not He Himself without the act, but He Himself in the act. . . . 'The atonement is eternally offered to the Father in the person of the Son.' Dr. Edwards concludes his consideration of this topic by warning us not to tarry in the doctrine, but to come by way of the doctrine to the person: 'The atonement is not an event that took place in Palestine, but lives in heaven in the person of the Intercessor, and the person is as accessible, yea, more accessible to us by faith than He was to the weary and heavy-laden who saw Him on earth.'

2. Since this is so, the atonement has the virtue of an eternal act, its efficiency is ever present. Between us and the Cross there is nothing. 'The Church's is an everlasting Easter.' Luther used to say, 'I feel as if the Lord Jesus had died only yesterday.' It is not even so long ago.

Upon the Cross of Jesus

Mine eyes at times can see

The very dying form of One,

Who suffered there for me.

'The passion of the Lord is here,' exclaims Bernard of Clairvaux, 'here, this very day, breaking the rocks, shaking the earth, opening the tombs.' This blessed truth is illustrated in the Apocalypse by the presence, in the midst of the throne, of 'a Lamb, as it had been slain.'

3. The word propitiation implies that the love that leads us to salvation and draws us into fellowship is a love that is revealed in righteousness. If it behoved the Christ to suffer, if without shedding of blood there is no remission, if it is only through the scarlet stream of cleansing that the holy nation shall have entrance into the city and find access to the tree of life—there must have been some unspeakably solemn reason why God should hide His face and withhold comfort from this world of men. The reason is written in broad letters on our conscience, 'We have sinned.'

In the *Cur Deus Homo* of Anselm, his pupil is represented as objecting to the shedding of sacrificial blood. The teacher replies, 'It seems that thou hast not sufficiently considered the weight of sin's burden.' Perhaps such a rebuke might be addressed to us all. Who among us has experienced adequate sorrow for sin? Yet, on the other hand, how many there are, who, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, have mourned in words

which the penitent King of Israel wrote as if in tears and blood: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' From the Cross this answer is returned: 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.' What the heart craves for, what the conscience requires, is a salvation that will enable a just God to be the justifier of the ungodly. Adolphe Monod represents the awakened sinner addressing Christ in these terms: 'Save first the holy law of my God; after that, Thou shalt save me.' It is a righteous salvation that is provided. And the grace displayed in the gift and sacrifice of a Redeemer has so fully satisfied divine justice that righteousness exercises its prevailing plea even upon a Father's heart, usually so swift to discover reasons in virtue of which one may be permitted to forgive. 'We have an advocate *with the Father*, Jesus Christ *the righteous*.'¹

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

In Love.

'This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.'—1 Jn 3².

The secret of a life free from anxiety and worry is the dominance of an overmastering passion. Take the nearest and most frequent analogy provided by the experience of ordinary human life. Take the love of man for woman and woman for man. We cannot account for it by any reasoned analysis. A man does not fall in love of premeditated design, he does not argue himself nor, by any effort of will, force himself into love. He meets some one to whom his nature instinctively responds, and gradually or quickly this response strengthens, till the day arrives when he becomes aware that his happiness depends upon life-union with the woman who has aroused it. Doubtless this experience has its antecedent conditions which later on he can, if he thinks it worth while, to some extent analyse and distinguish. The self which thus seeks completion in another self is the outcome of the interplay of many forces and influences; of natural endowments, hereditary tendencies, of education, of social surroundings; and the same statement holds good of the other self. They are at first congenial to each other, and later on

¹ D. M. McIntyre, *Love's Keen Flame*.

become necessary to each other, because their dispositions correspond, and this correspondence is largely due to the circumstances of their birth and training. But at the time of the experience itself there is little or no consciousness of this antecedent process. The only consciousness is that of being under the sway of a great passion, masterful and dominating and all-absorbing.

How does this affect the man's general outlook, his way of regarding and treating the people he meets, and the affairs he has to transact, in the ordinary intercourse of life? At first it generally has to some extent the effect of secluding him from them, and lessening his interest in them. Lovers are at first proverbially selfish. They are inclined to think only of each other, and to be absorbed in each other's companionship, and this means to some extent neglecting their former friendships, and cutting themselves off from their former pursuits. But this is only a passing phase. Friends soon begin to reassert their rights, business affairs have to be attended to or they will go awry. Even the most devoted lover has to maintain his place, and to discharge his duties, as a member of the community to which he belongs. But he does so in a new spirit, and with a new zest and energy and hopefulness. The experience which has come to him transforms the whole world for him, it illumines everything with its own radiance. The sun shines more brightly, the birds sing more sweetly, the landscape reveals new beauties, commonplace incidents become more interesting, everyday intercourse more attractive, even the drudgery of monotonous toil no longer depresses him as it used to do. And then as to his worries and forebodings, those anxieties for the future which are the chief cause of man's unhappiness, what about them? Why, he finds that they have disappeared as the mountain mist melts away before the rising sun. They have not been confuted by any argument, nor expelled by any act of will. They have passed out of the arena of his consciousness; he no longer thinks about them or is distressed or depressed by them. He looks out on the future and he sees it peopled with bright forms and pleasing anticipations; he has found his heart's desire, and this suffices him not merely for to-day, but also, as he imagines, for the days which are yet unborn.

1. This experience, which we cannot call fanciful or exceptional, for it is as old as human history

and is being re-enacted every day, provides the nearest analogy to the master-experience of Christ, and of those who approach the problem of life under His guidance. Christ was dominated by an overmastering passion. He was dominated by love for God. God was the one supreme and all-inclusive object of His heart's desire. He lived in constant communion with Him. His will was in complete accord with the Divine will, and the acts and words in which His will expressed itself had for their sole aim the effecting of God's purposes and the establishment of His supremacy. Looking out on life thus it is little wonder that He was undisturbed by its passing trials and rebuffs, that He could gaze into the future with clear and confident eyes, and through the gloom-clouds of threatening calamity could see the fair land of promise where His Father dwelt, and where, when He had finished the work which had been given Him to do, He would rejoin Him. Doubtless there were times when physical or mental anguish was so acute that His consciousness of the Divine Presence seemed for a moment to become blurred and indistinct. Such an experience seems to have come to Him in Gethsemane, and to have repeated itself in more intense form on the Cross. But in each case it was only temporary, only a passing storm on the surface of a life-stream which went on unchecked and unabated. 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' He pleaded as He lay outstretched in Gethsemane; but His next words, 'not my will, but thine be done,' retract the plea. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' He cried as He hung in agony on the Cross; but His final words, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,' show that before the end came He knew that God had not forsaken Him.

2. As Christ was, so Christians are, though in a very imperfect degree. They are Christ men, men who share Christ's spirit and act on His principles, and look out on life and its experiences as He looked out on them. The Christian life, in its ultimate analysis, is the life of the love of God. The initial act by which a man enters consciously into that life is, if we may so describe it without irreverence, an act of falling in love with God. This episode, or rather its different aspects, is referred to in the New Testament as faith, or conversion, or regeneration, and just as in the case of its human analogy it has its antecedent conditions.

Only the pure in heart can see God; only those who will to do His will can know Him. But the experience itself is spontaneous and instinctive; it is the response of the self to another self in which it finds its complement and completion. Sometimes it comes as love at first sight comes, suddenly and unexpectedly, like the lightning flash in a darkened sky. Sometimes, like the sun rising up behind the eastern hills, it is the consummation of a gradual process. But sudden or gradual, the outcome is the same. The man has found God, and has bound himself to Him by ties of conscious loyalty and love, and he knows that henceforth life has but one centre for him; that all its efforts and experiences come from God and lead back to Him; that, like the angels whom Jacob saw descending and ascending the celestial ladder, they bear messages of love from God to him, and can, if he will, bear back similar messages from him to God. It is thus that he looks out on life, and interprets the different strains which make up its complex melody. He has learnt that its master-strain is love, and as he listens to this even apparent discords become parts of an all-embracing harmony. The cadence of God's love fills his ears, the brightness of God's love illumines his vision, the warmth of God's love wraps him round as a mother enfolds the child whom she bears in her arms. He is a God-lover, dominated by an over-mastering passion which carries him forward with it, to the fulfilment of its purpose and the completion of its desire.¹

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Believers.

'Unto you which believe he is precious.'—I Pet 2⁷.

1. Speaking broadly, Christ's life, Christ's mission, divides itself into two parts, closely related yet deeply distinct. Into one of these divisions must be put the various ministries of speech and action which marked His busy career. The other aspect of Christ's work comprises His essential mission, that which He shared with no man, which no man shared with Him—the work of reconciliation between heaven and earth, the work of redemption amid a dead and lost humanity. Now it is quite clear that men may take note of the former of these divisions, the wise utterances, the beneficent activities of Christ's true daily life, without ever perceiving or admitting the latter, the essential aspect of

His spiritual place and mission. So if we take this outer ministry of Christ, this ministry which attracts men of all creeds and no creed, we shall find it so many-sided as to touch mankind on a thousand points of interest, all of them true, all of them helpful, but all of them falling short of men's deepest spiritual concern.

(1) For instance, here is an artist, roaming through history in quest of an ideal man, a man of symmetric grace and truth personified, and his eyes and ears are closed to everything except this symmetric and beautiful man; and he comes across Jesus Christ and he says that God has given answer to his quest, and he bows before Christ as before the apotheosis of the beautiful, one in whom the spirit of art is caught up into an eternal and perfect embodiment of form.

(2) For similar reasons Christ constrains the attention and the admiration of thinkers and teachers. Wisest among the wise, speaker on those deepest themes of life and destiny which claim even while they baffle human thought, He has left behind Him an account of man, his origin, his quality, his destiny, which demands attention, which throws light on many of our most perplexing enigmas.

(3) To the moralist, again, Christ stands forth as a Man who to a marvellous degree succeeded in brushing away the webs of casuistry from moral questions, and in cleaving a way through a mass of tangled maxims and rules right down to the essential and simple principles of right conduct. Nowhere shall the student find a teacher who reduced morals to so transparent a simplicity, or transfigured them by such spiritual emotion. Dispossessing human consciences of those arbitrary laws and hindrances which pressed like death upon them, He gave to men the eternal principle of right conduct and lifted the whole domain of morals into a purer and clearer air.

2. Now all these estimates are true, but they are special and partial; they are all framed on some particular aspect of the outer day ministry of Christ; not one of them takes account of His spiritual and redemptive mission. Our text introduces quite a different class of persons, and suggests a widely different estimate of the Christ. 'Unto you which believe he is precious.' 'You which believe.' That class includes all the sections mentioned—artists, philosophers, writers, moralists,

¹ W. H. Carnegie, *Personal Religion and Politics*.

statesmen, men of commerce, men of industry, men of all ranks and conditions; but it does not include them on the ground of their specialism. Its distinguishing feature is 'believe,' 'trust.' It includes men who, beneath all their special tastes and functions in life, are believers in the Christ. They do not merely attend to Him, agree with Him, admire Him; they trust Him.

Now it is clear that this attitude is at once different from and broader than those we have been considering. What account shall we take of it? In one word, these believers have learned this simple truth that the outer ministry of Christ, thronged as it is with gracious deeds and beautiful with a spirit which the world will never let die, does not exhaust all that He came to be and to do; that the sympathetic appreciation of this sermon, or that miracle, or that deed of kindness does not fulfil our present relation to Him. These believers have learned that there is another and essential aspect in which Christ is to be found, the aspect of Reconciler and Saviour between heaven and earth; that He came above all things to seek and to save the lost, to endow dead men with life, and by that gift of life to raise the whole quality and destiny of mankind. These believers have felt in their own experience the need of such a Deliverer, and out of a broad and deep conviction they have risen to the belief that Christ is the Deliverer that they need; and so there is an attitude not merely of respect, or agreement, or admiration—it is the attitude of a soul conscious of deep, even eternal needs, and of the glorious reality that in Christ God had answered the needs

He awakened in the soul. And so the Christ they see is more than teacher, reformer, embodiment of beauty, worker of great deeds, hero, leader; He is essentially and supremely Redeemer.

Once, my life was sad and dreary,
Love Divine I did not see:
Seeking earthly gain and pleasure,
Yet despising heavenly treasure—
Jesus had no charm for me.

Though the Spirit shone within me,
And His light I needs must see;
Sin and danger clear revealing,
To my future fears appealing—
Still He had no charm for me.

But I saw His tender pity
As He hung upon the Tree;
All my guilt and sorrow sharing,
All my sins upon Him bearing—
Then I felt His charm for me.

Oh, the depth of love and mercy,
Daily in His care of me!
While my thankful, joyful spirit
Found through His infinite merit
More and more His charm for me.

Praises to the Lord of glory!
He who died now lives for me:
Through His perfect mediation
I have now a full salvation—
He is all-in-all to me!¹

¹ J. Mountain, *Steps in Consecration*, 18.

Traces of Targumism in the New Testament.

BY RENDEL HARRIS, RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER.

IT is said that the custom still prevails in the Jewish synagogues in Yemen of S. Arabia of following the reading of the lessons of the Old Testament by the Aramaic translation which we know under the name of Targum, a translation in which, on the one hand, the Scriptures were rendered from the classical Hebrew into the popular vernacular; and on the other hand, such changes were made and such expansions allowed as would secure the right understanding of the

text on the part of the worshipper, as regards both the text itself and its dogmatic implications.

What we have extant in Yemen synagogues is a survival; and, although the connecting links are not to be detected in any continuous form, we know enough to say that it is a survival from Palestinian custom and from a time at least as remote as the beginning of the Christian era: it does not follow that the Targum goes back so far as that time as an actual script; its genesis as a