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space, and less inclination, for descriptive writing. 'To picture the view from the Areopagus, or to describe the monuments of ancient Athens, sheds little light upon Paul's labours in that city.'

The Apostolic Age is represented as 'the supremely great missionary age of the Church,' and is to be studied for the light it throws upon the problem of world evangelization. 'Without a knowledge of the beginnings, the later movements of Christianity are as mysterious as were the rise and fall of the Nile in the days when its sources were unknown.' The general standpoint of the writer is conservative, though he is conspicuously fair in presenting diverse views. No better book could be put into the hands of an intelligent layman desirous of gaining a serviceable acquaintance with the Christian origins.

Messrs. Skeffington have published a volume of sermons by the Rev. R. C. Faithfull, M.A. The title of the volume is *The Word of Christ* (5s. net).

Mr. Faithfull is already known. The sermons in this volume are short, but they are not too short, and a number of them are suitable for special occasions.

Two books on Christian Science were recently reviewed in this magazine, one for and the other against. Another has come to hand with the title *Christian Science versus Popular Religion*, by Mr. Charles H. Lea (Simpkin; 1s. net). The author says that sixteen years' experience has proved to him the truth and inestimable value of Christian Science. His book has been approved by the authorities of that movement and may be taken as

representing its teaching correctly. It includes essays on Prayer and on Spiritual Regeneration from the Christian Science point of view.

The Student Christian Movement has done well by the Gospel of St. Mark. Mr. Oldham's textbook, published a long time ago, could hardly be improved on. But in *The College St. Mark*, by Mr. C. B. Young, M.A. (3s. net), the Movement has done another good deed. This is the second of the 'College Commentaries' Series of New Testament books for educated Indians. It is written and printed in India (there is one error in the list of contents), and it is a creditable product of the Indian College Christian scholarship. There is a good introduction which deals with just the points on which a virgin mind will need to be informed. The R.V. text is elucidated by brief but sufficient notes; and a feature of the book is the general summary of the contents of each section which is to be read before the explanatory notes. This edition will be found as useful here as in India, and especially by students and upper schoolboys. The writer's experience of eastern life enables him to throw light on the narrative in its eastern aspect.

Here is a new edition of *Mad Shepherds*, by Principal L. P. Jacks, D.D., LL.D. (Williams & Norgate; 10s. 6d. net). These tales and studies have a character of their own and are well worth a re-reading. This issue of them is a handsome book, prettily bound, beautifully printed, and with striking illustrations by Leslie Brooke.

'The Same walk' (Matt. xi. 5).

BY THE REVEREND JOHN A. HUTTON, D.D., LONDON.

THESE words occur as part of the answer which our Lord sent back to John the Baptist. John was lying in prison. He was there by the decree of Herod, who had acted on the whim of a woman whom, together with Herod, John had rebuked for the life they were leading. There he was in the prison of Macherus, on the shore of the Dead Sea, his prison-walls washed by the waves of its desolate waters. It is about as poignant an illustration as one could give of the *apparent* triumph of wicked-

ness in this world. We can well believe that the brave man's heart was near to giving way. We conclude that so it was, from the question which he commissioned some of his disciples to put to Jesus. That question had to be a very direct one, one of those questions which admit of only the answer 'yes' or 'no.'

The Baptist had to learn that you cannot get an off-hand, ready answer, an answer in terms of 'yes' or 'no,' to any of life's really great questions.

The answer from God to the great inquiries is never an unmistakable 'yes' or 'no,' for that would destroy the soul, would interfere with our moral education. A 'yes' spoken once for all by God to life's ultimate questions would paralyse our souls with a too great confidence; and a 'no' spoken once for all to life's ultimate questions would paralyse our souls with despair. God's answer is never an explicit 'yes' or 'no'; but only the secret pressure of His Spirit upon ours. The answer which Jesus sent back to the Baptist was of the same kind as God still sends back to all our questionings: 'Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?' 'Am I wrong in believing? Am I wrong in my estimate of Christ? And in that case, am I wrong everywhere?' And Christ's answer to him was, 'The lame walk.' It was part of Christ's wonderful manner that He would not give Himself a name. It was His plan to be Himself, to become for man all that He could become, and leave it, not to the world as the world, but to those who in every age have been drawn to Him by secret and indestructible affinities, to say out what they have found Him to be. Jesus Christ is *there*: we see what He has been; we know what He has it in Him to be for this world of ours; and it is left to us to answer our own questions, and to say whether He is not for us the wisdom and the power of God.

My subject, however, is not that. I wish to consider, not the situation in which Christ used these words, 'the lame walk,' but these very words themselves. Obviously, Jesus in using such words in the circumstances in which He did use them is describing what in His view was and is the characteristic feature or result of His appearance and work in the world of mankind. What is that characteristic feature?—'The lame walk!' That is to say, Jesus Christ came into the world to work a miracle. He came into the world to do something for man for which there was no other way. He came in order to break up the tyranny of all natural and moral consequences. He came in order so to deal with us that we one by one should have a new beginning. He came in order, if there should be need, to make an abrupt entrance into our lives, in order to plant something or Someone at the very root of our being, who should make all the difference in the world. When we deny the miracle which Christ is ready to work, we are not faithful to Him.

It is perfectly true that the Christian religion assumes what in theology is called the doctrine of the Fall of Man. It assumes that in some profound way the race of mankind had gone wrong. For practical purposes, it declares also that every one of us has in some way gone wrong; or at least that there is something in each one of us which needs to be put right. There is something in each of us which might well be altogether different, stronger, steadier, holier. That—in one aspect of it—is the implication of the Fall.

I wonder what many people mean who become angry over that great doctrine. They say that it is a disparagement of man. I do not think so. It is a disparagement of you and me and everybody in particular; but it is not a disparagement of *man*, the child of God. On the contrary, the doctrine of the Fall is the doctrine of the essential dignity and erectness of man. Only he can fall who has it in him to stand erect. We must hold to the doctrine of the Fall, if we are to hold to the doctrine of the essential and—God willing—the final erectness of man. The doctrine of the Fall simply declares that we men and women are naturally not ourselves, that we are not by nature, and can never by merely natural processes become, what God had in His mind when He proposed us. Is that a disparagement of man? Do I disparage you if I say that you are not the man it is in you to be? Do I disparage you if I tell you that God meant something bigger and better for you than, it may be, you are dreaming of? Would you rather that I said that you are all the man you could ever have been, and that throughout eternity you will be the same? The only alternative to the Christian doctrine of the Fall—the doctrine that man has come down and is not now himself—is the doctrine of human perfection. The alternative to the doctrine that we are naturally all wrong is the doctrine that we are naturally all right. Now, if you tell me that I am all right, I am depressed and miserable; for in that case life is a poorer thing than I had thought. But if you tell me that I am all wrong, I ought at least to start up, either to answer you, or to examine myself; and, if I find reason, I shall pray God to put me right.

To take an illustration which at the same time will lead us to the very text. Suppose I am walking behind some one whom I know, and presently I overtake him. I say, 'I am glad to see you, and

glad to see how briskly you can go along.' Whereupon he looks at me displeased, and says, 'Surely you cannot mean it. As a matter of fact, I am going lame just now!' Why is the man displeased? Why is he right to be displeased? It is because I said something which meant that I thought he could walk no faster than he was walking, that I thought he was all right when he was not all right; and his displeasure at me is just the fine protest of a man against being taken for something no better than he seems, against being judged by his mere appearance, as though he could be nothing more. We may have often wondered that good people like our fathers could rejoice in the doctrine of the Fall. We need not wonder; they saw in it the deeper and the thrilling doctrine that, according to God's way of considering us, we are better than we have become, that our behaviour all along in this world has been, as we say, beneath us, not according to our dignity.

Now Christianity is built round about that same doctrine. It declares that until we have been treated, until we have received from Christ something which He came to give to us, we all go lame. It declares that we are not ourselves until we are more than ourselves; and that we do not even begin to be ourselves until something has happened between Christ and our secret personality.

Let us keep hold of this idea of lameness as signifying that condition of moral impotence, of weakness and stumbling, or of dullness and deadness to God which is our average and natural condition until Christ makes us different. In what follows, I mean now by 'lameness' something more precise; I mean *that*, within each one of us in particular, which is hindering us from living our full happy life as a child of God, under God's sky, with God's secret resources. Upon this, I shall say what I have to say under four propositions.

And first: there are those who are *born lame*. There is a sense in which this is true of all of us: that we are none of us free and untrammelled, ready to run in God's ways, until Christ makes us free. But I am speaking now of varieties of this general condition; and I say there are those who are born lame.

We have become aware in our day as never before of how the generations are bound to one another, how the sins of the fathers may be visited upon the children. I say, *may* be visited; and even the severest science cannot say more.

Heredity—certainly on the moral side—is not a doom, but only a condition. In a world governed by God we dare not say of anything evil, that it *must* be. Indeed, we dare say, on the contrary, of every evil that exists, that it need not be, that there are resources in God for its overthrow. Though it is only of recent years that we have learned so much of the material processes of heredity, the thing itself has always formed part of the knowledge of the human race. The Bible knows the doctrine that because 'the fathers have eaten sour grapes, the children's teeth are set on edge.' But the Bible declares that what God is working for in this world is to overthrow that fatal sequence. God is working for a state of things, as Jeremiah says, when every one shall suffer for his own sin, and not for the sin of his fathers. And we believe that there is in Christ this very power to rescue every man from the dead hand of his ancestry. The great thinkers of Greece were engaged all the time with this very question—how was the evil which one generation had set a-going in the world to be contradicted, transformed, brought to a standstill, and finally cast out? And it was given to them to see very deeply into that great inquiry. They saw, as in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, that if one of the fated line, even herself, were to allow the guilt of the house of Laius to have all its way with her; if one were, in utter meekness and without one moment's revolt, to submit to the dark wave of evil consequence, in her stricken soul the evil thing would die. Or, to put it otherwise, if one were to arise in the fated line who was ready to suffer, who was ready to sacrifice her fair chance of life without complaining, that such a one would implant in the race a new and holy motive, which would counteract the fatal drift and change it into a tide towards God.

I verily believe that this has been done in Christ. Our fathers did well to protest that Christ had done something for the whole world of men, apart from what He could do for each of us, one by one. They did well to protest against Arminianism, and to claim for Christ's Passion a world-wide and eternal significance apart from the understanding and acceptance of it. And it is when we think of hereditary evil that we seem to get a glimpse of that world-wide significance. In dying as Christ died, there was impregnated into the world of mankind a new motive; there was let loose

amongst the world-forces a new and blessed force—something which is now *there*, fighting against the tyranny of mere natural consequences ; something which each hard-pressed soul of man can lay claim to as a power on his own behalf, and also as a reason for believing that He who is with him is more than all that is against him !

I say there are those who are born lame. And Christ would fain make these walk and leap and sing. There is something that can come closer to us than the threatening of our natural blood ; it is the holy grace of the spiritual blood of Christ.

Then there are others ; for, secondly, there are those who are *lame as the result of an accident*. There are those who to-day are what they are, and not better than they are, because of a sin, or because of a life of sin. They have done something wrong, something against the light, and they know it—and go lame. It may be that some one who reads these words is in that very case. Well, if Christ cannot heal us, no one else can heal us. It is too great a subject to go into now, the subject of the very possibility of forgiveness. We simply say in Christ's name that every one who sincerely repents of his sin, who bemoans it, who puts himself humbly in Christ's hands to bear witness of Him in the world—that every such one is forgiven, is back in the love of God. The Bible, the world, are full of such people, God be praised, whom Christ has healed of this kind of lameness—the lameness that comes with actual transgression.

Then again, there are those who are lame *because they are weary, because they are footsore*. They are getting older. Some of the visions of youth have failed. Life has broken for them some of its promises. The way for them now lies on a dead level of grey monotony, with no fine heights from which they can look away beyond immediate things. It is the spiritual danger which besets us all from the mid-time of our life and onwards. In the case of many there have been sorrows in addition, disappointments from children, or disappointments from themselves, which have the effect of bringing them to a standstill. It is a bad form of lameness this. And yet with this also Christ can deal, making the lame ones walk. For the peril of our condition at such a time is that we consent to the view that because in some ways this life has failed us, all has failed. There is the danger, too, at this stage, that we lose something

of our first natural heroism and that we fall into a mood, desiring mere physical comfort, and estimating life by what it gives rather than by what it asks from us and keeps in reserve. And Christ heals us of this lameness, in part by arousing our minds to what is really happening within ourselves. He came to show us that this world is not to be seen by itself, but always in its relation to another world and to God's will ; that the things which are seen are temporal, and the things which are not seen are eternal. To the world's maxim that 'nothing succeeds like success,' He declares, on the contrary, that nothing fails like success. In His treatment of such cases, perhaps it is not His way now to thrill them into new life with some great and happy spiritual excitement, though He *may* choose that way ; but rather to speak comfortably to them, to deal gently with them, to talk to them of other things, until, almost unknown to themselves, the lameness leaves them.

I have spoken of those who are *born lame*, of those who have been made *lame by accident*, and of those who are lame because they are honestly *tired and broken in spirit*. There is yet another class of lame people in this world. They have become impaled upon a proverb : *there are none so lame as those who will not walk*. That is to say, there are those who are lame *because they are lazy*.

How does Christ deal with these ? They must present to Him the hardest case. For their malady is in the region of the *will* ; and even God cannot, certainly He will not, compel the will. And yet surely there is in Christ something that should make these also get upon their feet and walk. The only hope for a lazy man is that one day he may become ashamed of himself. I verily think there was that, too, in Christ's purpose when He set His face to go to Calvary. I verily believe that He had it in His mind, by dying for man to make us ashamed. Certainly that did happen. I think it is a fair thing to say that the first emotion which swept through the souls of the first disciples the moment they understood things, was a burning shame—shame that they had been talking about their own little affairs as to who should get the best seat at table, and the best office in the new government ; and all the while there was One beside them who saw no course before Him except to give up everything, even life itself. And surely there is still that in Christ which should shame us into protests against ourselves, when we consider

that however we may sink back upon ourselves and humour ourselves in this world, there was One who heard in life a very different call.

Suppose we are all standing on the bank of a river, when suddenly a child falls in and sinks. For an instant we stand there doing nothing. But one of us steps out and plunges into the water to save the child. Suppose he saves the child. Do we not applaud the deed? Does not the most sluggish and indifferent heart rise up to acknowledge an act like that which clothes our human nature with glory? And our applause, if it is genuine, is not mere applause. It is not mere

admiration. It is the confession by every one of us who saw him do the deed, that it was *our* deed. By our very applause we declare that, in the deed, he was our representative and substitute—not to spare us doing the like if the need should ever arise, but to reinforce in ourselves and to create within hearts from which it is absent, the instinct in the presence of a necessity to fling away our dearest thing, even life itself.

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in His train?

Two Chronological Enigmas in the Old Testament.

BY THE REVEREND T. NICKLIN, HULME HALL, MANCHESTER.

I.

THOSE who have pursued in any measure the study, at first hand, of such intersections as are known to us of the Biblical history and the Assyrian and Babylonian records, are aware that there is one troublesome obstacle in the story of Hezekiah's reign to what is otherwise, through that period, a tolerably simple harmonization. That obstacle is that according to Is 36¹ repeated in 2 K 18¹³ (but not in 2 Ch 32¹): 'It came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up.' In all three narratives this invasion is followed by Hezekiah's illness and Merodach-Baladan's embassy, yet this embassy may in the light of the profane records best be placed about 710 B.C., while Sennacherib's invasion would naturally be about 701.

Further, Hezekiah's reign should begin about 728 B.C., if, as 2 K 18¹⁰ declares, Samaria was captured in his sixth year, and we know that Samaria was captured in 723-2.¹ Various schemes of chronology have been constructed to give coherence to as many as possible of these facts; all involve some violence to some statement or other. Some twelve years ago now, I was led to think of a solution which was subsequently developed in a paper not yet complete for publication. Further

¹ This has been proved by Dr. Olmstead in his *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon of Assyria*, p. 45, n. 9.

consideration has not made me dissatisfied with this solution, and in the last few weeks what may be some confirmation of its validity unexpectedly presented itself, so that I am impelled at once to lay it before others for examination.

A few words of preparatory elucidation must be given. (1) The three narratives in question—as critics declare, in reality one narrative with two derivatives, not independent records—are based, we may suppose, on 'the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.' We do not know the nature of these 'Chronicles,' but on the analogy of those known to us from Nineveh and Babylon, they at any rate conceivably may have been brick-tablets. Whether tablets or not, they were probably of the annalistic type. The tablets we know had catchwords to enable a librarian or a reader to secure a correct sequence if they were disturbed. This catchword method, it is reasonable to suppose, would not be useful only for tablets; at any rate the annalistic dating would supply a sort of thread by which the series of records would be held together, and it must be added that this thread might on occasion mislead a reader if dislocation once took place. (2) Apart from this matter of the form in which were kept the 'Chronicles' on which our three narratives are built, another possibility has been thrown into prominence by discoveries made in the last twenty years. At a still earlier period Mommsen had pointed out that the inadvertent