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form characters and in the Babylonian language on a tablet found at Babylon, or possibly at Sippar, and transliterated and translated by Mr. Sidney Smith of the British Museum in his *Babylonian Historical Texts* (Methuen & Co., 1924), is a remarkable and by no means friendly account of the reign of Nabonidus, the last native king of Babylon and the father of Belshazzar. It appears from this account that Nabonidus retired to a distant spot called Tema' in the third year of his reign, where, as we know from the Annalistic Tablet of CYPRIUS, he remained at least until his eleventh year, and possibly longer; for that part of the tablet which covers the interval from the twelfth to the sixteenth year is wanting. On his retirement to Tema', Nabonidus committed the royal power at Babylon to his son Belshazzar, gave him a free hand, and placed an army at his disposal, as the following extract testifies:

A camp he (Nabonidus) entrusted to his eldest-born (Belshazzar),

An army he caused to go forth with himself;  
He loosed his (Belshazzar's) hands, he entrusted to him the sovereignty

While he himself set out on a distant expedition.  
The forces of Akkad (Babylonia) advanced with him:  
Toward the town of Tema' in Amurru he set his face,  
He set out on a distant march, a road not within reach of old.

The context goes on to tell how the King of Tema' and his people were slain, and the captured city beautified until its palace rivalled that of Babylon. 'Tema' in Amurru—the West Country, or land of the Amorites—which could only be reached by 'a distant march,' is identified by Mr. Smith with Teyma, the North Arabian oasis, referred to in Job 6<sup>19</sup>, Is 21<sup>14</sup>, and Jer 25<sup>23</sup>, and mentioned in the inscriptions of Tiglathpileser III.

As long ago as 1854, when the cuneiform inscriptions began to be read, Sir Henry Rawlinson discovered from a cylinder found at Ur that the eldest son of Nabonidus was called Belshazzar. In the year 1880, Dr. Pinches published a translation of the Annalistic Tablet of Cyrus referred to above, which gives a brief account of the reign of Nabonidus down to the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, remarking that the tablet shows Belshazzar to have been commander-in-chief of the army, and that he probably had greater influence in the kingdom than his father, and so was regarded as king. But more convincing evidence was yet to follow when, after another long interval, Pinches was able to state in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for April 1915 that on a contract tablet from Erech he had found an oath sworn in the name of Nabonidus king of Babylon, and of Belshazzar the king's son, and that this was a proof that the latter was in some way associated with his father in the sovereignty. All that was now wanting was some distinct statement as to the elevation of Belshazzar to the throne. This at long last—seventy years after Rawlinson's discovery of the name of Belshazzar and his relationship to Nabonidus—has been brought to light, and the historic facts stand out clear that not only was Belshazzar associated with his father in the sovereign power, but that he actually reigned in Babylon for a considerable period in the reign of Nabonidus. Slowly, but very slowly, as on a misty morning in late autumn, the historic landscape has cleared, and the kingship of Belshazzar, so plainly stated in Dn 5<sup>1</sup>, as well as the references to the years of his reign in chaps. 7<sup>1</sup> and 8<sup>1</sup>, are seen to be facts which no longer admit of question.

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## Entre Nous.

### POINT AND ILLUSTRATION.

#### Mark iv. 41.

"Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" If we accept the answer of St. Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" as the key to the interpretation of Christ's Person, the miracles He per-

formed ought not to prove a stumbling-block to the believer to-day.

'But in this case a new difficulty presents itself. If it is nothing but natural that the Son of God should command the winds and the waves, we may well ask, on the other hand, *is it anything but supernatural that such an one should be found asleep in a*

boat? Are we to believe that if we had been present that day on the lake we should have seen God asleep!

'Is it more extraordinary to be told that the Son of God exercised control over the forces of Nature than to read that God was asleep in a boat, located at a particular spot in time and space?

'Surely the crucial miracle is here revealed in the fact of the Incarnation. What does it mean? God leading a truly human life! God the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Lord of heaven and earth, King of kings, Invisible, Eternal, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain—such an one found confined within the limits of time and space, revealed in human form, experiencing all the vicissitudes and limitations of a truly human but none the less finite existence, God walking about the streets of Jerusalem, teaching on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, found one day asleep in a boat in the midst of a storm!

This quotation is from *The Catholic Conception of the Incarnation*, by the Reverend H. Maurice Relton, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d. net), and from a sermon which appears for the first time. A number are reprinted from 'The Church of England Newspaper.' But they will all bear re-reading, and one on 'The Claims of Spiritualists Examined' is the best treatment of the subject within a limited space that we have seen. Uniform with this volume is one by the Reverend W. J. Sparrow Simpson, D.D., *The Revelation of God* (3s. 6d. net). There are only eleven sermons, but they deal with the great problems of the faith in a way which cannot fail to clear and stimulate thought.

### 1 John i. 3.

'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.' 'I say it deliberately, the Evangelists were not competent to create the ideal which the Gospels contain. . . . The great poets in the nineteenth century scarcely ever invent a speech for Christ. The greatest of them tells us the story of Lazarus and lets St. John the Evangelist speak in "The Death in the Desert." Christ is the subject of their noblest thoughts. But Christ Himself is not impersonated in their poems. That popular romance "Ben Hur," with its realistic story of the leper's fate, brings in the Figure of the Christ simply to repeat the Gospel sentence, "I will—be thou clean." But when that mighty word is spoken Christ is at once withdrawn. And why? Partly no doubt from reverence, but partly also from a wholesome sense of limitation. The author could not invent a conversation fit for Christ, and knew not what to do with Him. The Russian writer Andriev in "Judas Iscariot" tells the story of the Passion and of the traitor going mad. Judas speaks, is voluble, incoherent, raging—page after page is

filled with the ravings of lunacy. But Christ? Christ is kept in the background, silent all through.

'Still more significant even than these is the treatment of our Lord in that remarkable poem called "Christ in Hades." The gifted author follows Christ in imagination through the regions of the departed. He tells us how the dead assembled round a wondrous Figure, keenly aware that He is not as they; how they waited wistfully to hear Him speak; how they made pathetic and piteous appeal, how they fell to calling him by sweet human names. And He—how did He answer them? Ah! there was the poet's perplexity. With all his genius he could not imagine it.'<sup>1</sup>

### A Christian International.

*God's Better Thing* (Sampson Low; 3s. 6d. net) is a plea for a Christian International. The Reverend A. D. Belden is already known by his volume 'The Greater Christ' and by the essays he has published in various religious magazines and periodicals, and this volume of essays 'threaded upon an intense Conviction and a deep Concern' should not be neglected. The conviction, he tells us, is that the evangelical faith is being cramped by a purely individualistic application, and 'that it must blossom into the full flower of the Gospel of the Kingdom-of-God-on-Earth before it can adequately satisfy the spiritual needs of mankind. This new World Order is God's Better Thing.'

### Members One of Another.

'A while ago I was helping my little boy to put together a picture made of bricks. You know the kind of thing. As one looked at each brick and saw the section it represented, the dog's head, the horse's legs, the man's face, each section had its own perfection, but it gained fuller meaning and value, it was clothed in greater beauty, as it was slipped into its appointed place, and it took every brick to make the complete picture. Go to the quarry and mark the newly hewn and chiselled stones. Each one has its value and individual beauty, but a grander beauty adorns it as it reaches its place in the great cathedral. "Ye are living stones," says St. Peter, "to be built up, a habitation of the Spirit of God."'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *The Revelation of God*, 60.

<sup>2</sup> A. D. Belden, *God's Better Thing*, p. 61.