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JOURNAL OF THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
THE VICTORIA INSTITUTE.

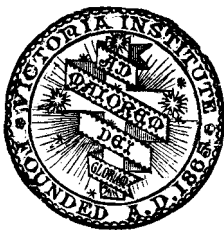
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VOL. LX.

JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute,  
OR,  
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

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VOL. LX.



LONDON:

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1928

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ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

## PREFACE.



IN a day when literature and criticism are found to sustain relations ever more intimate, it is hardly surprising that progressive thought should deal with the Sacred Scriptures no less vigorously than with other writings, ancient and modern. As works designated "classical" are not free from examination, which in some cases assumes a form that is manifestly destructive, so also documents which make their appeal to man's deepest nature are subjected to a scrutiny corresponding with that extended to writings whose general aim may be to stir men's passions and excite their prejudices on the lower scale of life.

In the sphere of faith one may well object that unfriendly hands should be laid upon concerns which are rightly held to be spiritual; but seeing that the precious things of truth are broad-based upon facts, and therefore capable of logical demonstration, one may not regret that "the things most surely believed" are put to the proof equally with other (and more ordinary) things met with in daily life. All the same, one may reasonably claim for spiritual things a treatment suited to their essential nature; and, moreover, do one's part in safeguarding them against wanton misrepresentation. Just here we recognize the object of the Victoria Institute—in the first place, to investigate, in a reverent spirit, important questions of philosophy and science, especially those bearing upon Holy Scripture.

Surveying the contents of the present volume, one must in the first place make mention of the contributions made to the Transactions of the Victoria Institute by Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., its honoured President. This exponent of science has once more shown himself to be an adept in the discrimination of philosophical theories, and a reliable leader in thought as it tends to confirm the Christian faith. His paper on "Number in Nature and in the Biblical Literature, indicating a Common Origin in a Supreme Intelligence," was

welcomed as an utterance calculated to stabilize many a wavering mind, while his Annual Address, delivered at the close of the Session, on "Relativity and Reality," was acknowledged to be a masterly exposition of a profound subject.

For the most part, the lectures of the session had a bearing, more or less direct, upon the Holy Scriptures. The Gunning Prize Essay, "Christ and the Scriptures," by Dr. Parke P. Flournoy, stands out in this connection; and the same may be said of other papers—"The Miraculous in Holy Scripture," by Rev. A. H. Finn; "Science in the Book of Ecclesiastes," by Mr. Avary H. Forbes; and "Sennacherib's Invasion of Judah," by Rev. Charles Boutflower. Another essay of definite value was "The New Testament Era in the Sequence of Prophecy," by Dr. W. Bell Dawson.

In another class may be placed—"The Influence of the Mythology and Heathen Practices of the Canaanites upon the Hebrews," by Dr. T. G. Pinches; "The Doctrine of Forgiveness through the Cross of Christ," by Canon B. K. Cunningham; and "Protestantism and Rationalism in France," by Dr. R. Saillens. The first of these lectures bears witness to long years of labour on the part of a distinguished Assyriologist; the second is by an author belonging to a school not often heard before the Institute, and therefore subjected to criticism at once prompt and candid; the third registers the impressions of an Evangelical stalwart, who is at once a loyal Protestant and a patriotic son of *la belle France*.

Speaking generally, the papers were subjected to discussion with truly helpful results. In some instances, beyond all question, the criticism presented by members gave unity and completion to the utterances of scholars whom it was a privilege to welcome as lecturers before the Institute.

JAMES W. THIRTLE,  
*Chairman of Council.*

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# VICTORIA INSTITUTE.

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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1927.

READ AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, MARCH 19TH, 1928.

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## 1. *Progress of the Institute.*

The Council beg once more to present their Annual Report to Members and Associates. It is the fifty-ninth since the commencement of the Society, so that the year we have now commenced is our Diamond Jubilee of the Victoria Institute.

The Session began with a paper of unusual interest by Professor J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., on "Evolution and Revelation," in which the lecturer emphasized the difference between the wonderful applications of science at the present and the theories of science, which do not always rest on a basis of ascertained facts, but which borrow a fictitious authority from the undoubted advantages of the former. Such a paper is greatly needed and cannot but have a salutary effect on many in the times in which we live. Amongst the many excellent papers which followed it may be permissible to name those by Squadron-Leader Wiseman, R.A.F., on "Ancient Babylon," of Rev. A. H. Finn on "The Predictive Element in Holy Scripture," and Dr. Kyle's on "The Site of the Cities of the Plain."

## 2. *Meetings.*

Twelve ordinary Meetings were held during the Session 1926-27. The papers published were:—

"Evolution and Revelation," by Professor J. A. FLEMING, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.

Dr. James W. Thirtle, M.R.A.S., in the Chair.

“Man and his God : The Origin of Religion among Primitive Peoples,” by Captain T. W. E. HIGGENS.

Lieut.-Colonel F. A. Molony, O.B.E., in the Chair.

“The Comparative Chronology of Ancient Nations in its Bearing on Holy Scripture,” by G. B. MICHELL, Esq., O.B.E.

Lieut.-Colonel F. A. Molony, O.B.E., in the Chair.

“The Identification of the Pharaohs of the Pentateuch,” by the Rev. G. A. FRANK KNIGHT, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.E.

Avary H. Forbes, Esq., M.A., in the Chair.

“Babylon in the Days of Hammurapi and Nebuchadrezzar,” by Squadron-Leader P. J. WISEMAN, R.A.F.

Professor Theophilus G. Pinches, LL.D., M.R.A.S., in the Chair.

“The Completed Legend of Bel-Merodach and the Dragon,” by Professor THEOPHILUS G. PINCHES, LL.D., M.R.A.S.

Dr. James W. Thirtle, M.R.A.S., in the Chair.

“The Predictive Element in Holy Scripture,” by the Rev. A. H. FINN.

William C. Edwards, Esq., in the Chair.

“The Place of Woman in Islam,” by the Rev. SAMUEL M. ZWEMER, D.D.

Robert Caldwell, Esq., F.R.G.S., in the Chair.

“Ancient Sodom in the Light of Modern Science,” by the Rev. President MELVIN GROVE KYLE, D.D., LL.D., Xenia Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

Alfred W. Oke, Esq., LL.M., F.G.S., in the Chair.

“A Restatement of the Argument for Theism from Design,” by Lieut.-Colonel F. MOLONY, O.B.E.

Dr. James W. Thirtle, M.R.A.S., in the Chair.

“The Radical Criticism of the Psalter,” by Professor R. DICK WILSON, D.D., of Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

The Rev. Charles Gardner, M.A., in the Chair.

“Time and Eternity,” by ALFRED T. SCHOFIELD, Esq., M.D. (*Vice-President*).

Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S. (*President*), in the Chair.

3. *Council and Officers.*

The following is a list of the Council and Officers for the year 1927 :—

*President.*

Professor J. A. Fleming, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.

*Vice Presidents.*

Lieut.-Col. George Mackinlay, late R.A.  
 Alfred T. Schofield, Esq., M.D.  
 Professor T. G. Pinches, LL.D., M.R.A.S.  
 Right Rev. Bishop J. E. C. Weldon, M.A., D.D.

*Trustees.*

Alfred William Oke, Esq., B.A., LL.M., F.R.S.  
 Sir George Anthony King, M.A.  
 Martin H. F. Sutton, Esq., J.P., F.L.S., F.R.G.S.

*Council.*

(*In Order of Original Election.*)

Sydney T. Klein, Esq., F.L.S., F.R.A.S.	Lieut.-Col. Hope Biddulph, D.S.O., late R.F.A.
J. W. Thirtle, Esq., M.A., LL.D., M.R.A.S., F.R.G.S., <i>Chairman of Council.</i>	Sir George Anthony King, M.A.
Alfred William Oke, Esq., B.A., LL.M., F.G.S.	Wilson Edwards Leslie, Esq.
Sir Robert W. Dibdin, F.R.G.S.	Avary H. Forbes, Esq., M.A.
H. Lance-Gray, Esq.	Professor Arthur Rendle Short, M.D., M.S., B.Sc.
John Clarke Dick, Esq., M.A.	The Rev. Harold C. Morton, B.A., Ph.D.
W. Hoste, Esq., B.A.	William C. Edwards, Esq.
Alfred H. Burton, Esq., B.A., M.D., C.M.	Robert Duncan, Esq., M.B.E., I.S.O.
Lieut.-Col. F. A. Molony, O.B.E., late R.E.	Louis E. Wood, Esq., M.B., D.P.H.

*Honorary Treasurer.*

Sir George Anthony King, M.A.

*Honorary Editor of the Journal.*

Dr. James W. Thirtle, M.R.A.S.

*Honorary Secretary, Papers Committee.*

Lieut.-Col. Hope Biddulph, D.S.O., late R.F.A.

*Honorary Secretary.*

William Hoste, Esq., B.A.

*Auditor.*

E. Luff-Smith, Esq. (Incorporated Accountant).

*Secretary*

Mr. A. E. Montague.

#### 4. *Election of Officers.*

In accordance with the rules, the following Members of the Council retire by rotation :—Alfred W. Oke, Esq., LL.M., F.G.S., Sir Robert W. Dibdin, F.R.G.S., and Alfred H. Burton, Esq., M.D., C.M., the two former of whom offer themselves and are nominated by the Council for re-election.

The Council also nominate the Rev. J. J. B. Coles, M.A., as a Member of Council.

#### 5. *Obituary.*

The Council regret to announce the deaths of the following Members and Associates :—

Dr. J. J. Acworth, F.C.S.; the Rev. Canon W. H. M. Aitken, M.A.; the Rev. D. A. Arnström; the Rev. W. Dawson, M.A.; Miss A. B. Dreaper; Dr. H. B. Guppy; the Rev. J. S. Lewis, M.A.; W. H. Pibel, Esq.; the Rev. M. Nachim; Mrs. Duff-Watson; Miss E. E. Whitfield.

#### 6. *New Members and Associates.*

The following are the names of new Members and Associates elected up to the end of 1927 :—

MEMBERS.—Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S.; Professor Theo Graebner; Captain T. W. E. Higgins; Miss Jessie B. Monro; the Rev. H. C. Morton, Ph.D.; Dr. W. H. Pettit.

LIFE ASSOCIATES.—The Rev. W. L. Baxter, D.D.; the Rev. Parke P. Flourney, D.D., Litt.D.

ASSOCIATES.—F. C. Appleby, Esq., C.E.; Harold P. Barker, Esq.; the Rev. Donald G. Barnhouse, Th.M.; the Rev. W. E. Boggs, B.Th.; Frank Cockrem, Esq.; the Rev. R. E. Dowle; Mrs. Robert Duncan; Miss Agnes J. Grant; the Rev. Canon A. R. H. Grant, C.V.O., D.D.; the Rev. George Hanson, D.D.; G. Hewett, Esq.; Commander Paul Hewett, C.B.E.; Patrick K. Irwin, Esq.; Herbert Brand John, Esq.; Miss R. M. Kemble; Lieut.-Colonel A. H. C. Kenney-Herbert; the Rev. A. J. Lundgren; Herbert Michell, Esq.; Professor J. Mueller, Ph.D.; Frank H. Nutter, Esq.; Mrs. Ethel A. Powell; Professor Percy V. Roberts, Ph.D.; Don O. Shelton, Esq., LL.D.; Alan Stewart, Esq., M.Sc.; the Rev. Alfred Swann, M.A.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATE.—Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, U.S.A.

#### 7. *Number of Members and Associates.*

The following statement shows the number of supporters of the Institute at the end of 1927:—

Life Members	...	...	...	14
Annual Members	...	...	...	104
Life Associates	...	...	...	51
Annual Associates	...	...	...	302
Missionary Associates	...	...	...	12
Library Associates	...	...	...	29
				—
				512
				—

8. *Donations.*

In order to stabilize our financial position, the President, Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., inaugurated a Special Fund with a donation of £50. Other sums received are:—Anonymous, £4 4s.; Col. A. W. C. Bell, 5s.; Col. Harry Biddulph, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., £2 2s.; Lt.-Col. Hope Biddulph, D.S.O., £1; Dr. A. H. Burton, £2; Miss E. H. Bolton, £2; G. R. Christie, Esq., 10s. 6d.; J. C. Dick, Esq., M.A., £2 2s.; R. Duncan, Esq., M.B.E., I.S.O., £1 1s.; William C. Edwards, Esq., £2 2s.; A. Greenlees, Esq., £1 1s.; W. Hoste, Esq., £1 1s.; Albert Hiorth, Esq., C.E., £1 14s. 6d.; Sydney T. Klein, Esq., £2 2s.; Miss H. Law, 6s.; Miss M. A. Laurence, £2 2s.; W. E. Leslie, Esq., £1 1s.; F. T. Lewis, Esq., £2; Lt.-Col. G. Mackinlay, £2; Lt.-Col. F. A. Molony, O.B.E., £2 2s.; the Rev. H. C. Morton, Ph.D., £2 2s.; Sir Charles Marston, J.P., £5; Mrs. J. M. Montgomery, £1; Alfred W. Oke, Esq., LL.M., £2 2s.; Prof. T. G. Pinches, LL.D., £1 1s.; E. Rapp, Esq., 4s.; W. R. Rowlatt-Jones, Esq., £1 1s.; H. P. Rudd, Esq., £1; W. Wardle Sales, Esq., £2 2s.; Col. W. Sidebottom, J.P., £2 2s.; the Rev. Roland A. Smith, £5; Martin H. F. Sutton, Esq., J.P., £1 1s.; Miss C. Tindall, £2 2s.; Dr. James W. Thirtle, £1 1s.; The Rt. Rev. Bishop Welldon, D.D., £1 1s.; the Rev. H. Temple Wills, £2; Dr. Louis E. Wood, £10; C. E. Baring Young, Esq., £50.

This fund still remains open, as we have at present only received about £180 of the £250 we proposed; and it is hoped that a few members may come forward to complete the sum needed.

9. *Finance.*

The income of the Society has increased somewhat this year, so that with above donations the financial position is more favourable. It is hoped that ways may be found for further improvement in the current year. The Council would be glad of the co-operation of all Members in bringing the work of the Society before those of their friends who would be desirous of becoming members. The membership, which was five hundred last year, shows a slight increase.

10. *The Gunning Prize.*

The subject for this triennial competition, limited to Members and Associates of the Institute, was—

“CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.”

What may we gather from His attitude and instruction ?

What are the implicates involved in these, and in His use of the Old Testament Scriptures ?

If His ministry called for the New Testament, in what way and how far did He pre-authenticate it, and enable a true doctrine of the Canon, and view of inspiration to be propounded ?

The prize-winner was the Rev. Parke P. Flournoy, LL.D., etc., who had already won the prize on a previous occasion. A second prize was allotted by the Council to the Rev. F. W. Pitt for his paper, which by its excellence seemed to deserve this special recognition.

#### 11. *Conclusion.*

In conclusion, the Council would heartily thank all those at home and abroad who have contributed papers, or who by their presence and interest have helped to maintain the meetings and the discussions. The Council hope that more Members will make it their custom to take part in the discussions. Any who wish can have an advance proof of the papers on payment of a few shillings for the Session, and thus make themselves acquainted with the subject before the reading of the papers.

The Council are earnestly desirous that the good and widespread work of the Institute, perhaps more needed to-day than ever, may be continued with energy and efficiency. To that end they invite the practical co-operation of Members and Associates, in inviting their friends to come forward as candidates, in spreading the literature of the Society, the Tracts for New Times, etc., and in being present whenever possible at the Meetings.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

JAMES W. THIRTLE,  
*Chairman of Council.*



BALANCE SHEET, 31st DECEMBER, 1927.

LIABILITIES.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID IN ADVANCE	....				10	10	0
<b>SUNDRY CREDITORS for:—</b>							
Printing and Stationery	....	157	17	5			
Rent, &c.	....	16	4	2			
Audit Fee	....	3	3	0			
		-----			177	4	7
<b>LIFE SUBSCRIPTIONS:—</b>							
Balance at 1st January, 1927	....	103	19	0			
Additions	....	13	13	0			
		-----			117	12	0
<i>Less</i> Amount carried to Income and Expenditure Account	....	10	10	0			
		-----			107	2	0
<b>TRACT FUND:—</b>							
Balance at 1st January, 1927	....	95	13	0			
Add Sales	....	5	18	10			
		-----			101	11	10
<i>Deduct:—</i>							
Amount transferred to Income and Expenditure Account	....	77	0	5			
Printing and Postage	....	18	12	7			
		-----			95	13	0
					-----		5 18 10

ASSETS.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
CASH AT BANK ON CURRENT ACCOUNT	....				134	0	4
Ditto "Gunning Prize" Account	....				60	5	4
Ditto "Langhorne Orchard Prize" Account	....					19	6 5
STAMPS IN HAND	....					0	19 11
<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS IN ARREARS:—</b>							
Estimated to produce	....					22	1 0
<b>INVESTMENTS:—</b>							
£500 2½ per cent. Consolidated Stock (Market value at 55½ = £277 10s.)	....						
<b>Gunning Fund:—</b>							
£673 3½ per cent. Conversion Stock at cost	....					508	0 0
<b>Langhorne Orchard Fund:—</b>							
£258 18s. 3½ per cent. Conversion Stock at cost	....					200	0 0
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT:—</b>							
Balance at 1st January, 1927	....	280	0	0			
Add Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year 1927	....	113	9	7			
		-----			393	9	7
<i>Deduct:—</i>							
Donations received	....	172	15	0			
Amount transferred from Tract Fund	....	77	0	5			
		-----			249	15	5
					-----		143 14 2



"GUNNING PRIZE" FUND ( <i>per contra</i> )	....	....	....	508	0	0
Balance at 1st January, 1927	....	....	....	113	5	3
Add Dividends received	....	....	....	21	3	11
Income Tax refunded	....	....	....	4	14	2
				<hr/>		
				139	3	4
<i>Deduct</i> :—		£	s. d.			
Prize awarded to Rev. P.						
P. Flournoy	....	....	....	40	0	0
Prize awarded to Rev. F.						
W. Pitt	....	....	....	20	0	0
Expenses....	....	....	....	18	18	0
				<hr/>		
				78	18	0
				<hr/>		
				60	5	4
"LANGHORNE ORCHARD PRIZE" FUND						
( <i>per contra</i> )	....	....	....	200	0	0
Balance at 1st January, 1927	....	....	....	10	5	3
Add Dividend received....	....	....	....	9	1	2
				<hr/>		
				19	6	5
				<hr/>		
				£1,088	7	2
				<hr/>		

£1,088 7 2

I have examined the foregoing Balance Sheet with the Cash Book and Vouchers of the Victoria Institute and certify that it is correctly made up therefrom. I have verified the Cash Balances and Investments. A valuation of the Library and Furniture has not been taken.

15, Old Queen Street, Westminster, S.W.1.  
5th March, 1928.

E. LUFF-SMITH,  
*Incorporated Accountant.*

# THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

## VICTORIA INSTITUTE

WAS HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, MARCH 19TH, 1928,  
AT 3.30 P.M.

DR. JAMES W. THIRTLE, M.R.A.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The notice convening the Meeting was read by the HONORARY SECRETARY, and then the Minutes of the last business Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that, as the Report was in the hands of Members, it should be taken as read, adding a few words of comment and encouragement. He then invited the Auditor to make a statement as regards the financial position.

The AUDITOR pointed out that the position is somewhat better, but unfortunately the improvement is due to measures that are temporary, and there are still arrears that should be dealt with. He added that an increase of membership ought to be the steady aim of the Institute during the present year.

The CHAIRMAN then moved the first resolution :—

“ That Mr. A. W. Oke, LL.M., F.G.S., and Sir Robert W. Dibdin, F.R.G.S., retiring Members of Council, be re-elected, and that the Rev. J. J. B. Coles, M.A., be elected on the Council ; also that Mr. William C. Edwards be elected Treasurer, in the place of Sir George King, deceased ; also that Mr. E. Luff-Smith, I.A., be re-elected as Auditor at a fee of three guineas.”

This was seconded by the HONORARY SECRETARY, and carried unanimously.

Mr. H. P. RUDD moved the second resolution :—

“ That the Report and Statement of Accounts for the year 1927, presented by the Council, be received and adopted, and that the thanks of the Meeting be given to the Council, Officers, and Auditor for their efficient conduct of the business of the Victoria Institute during the year.”

This was seconded by Mr. W. N. DELEIVINGNE and carried unanimously.

Mr. AVARY H. FORBES then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was seconded by the HONORARY SECRETARY and carried unanimously.

704TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, 1927,

AT 4.30 P.M.

DR. JAMES W. THIRTLE, M.R.A.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections:—As a Member: Dr. W. H. Pettit; as a Life Associate: the Rev. Parke P. Flournoy, D.D., Litt.D.; and as Associates: The Rev. A. J. Lundgren, Miss Agnes J. Grant, Charles E. Howkins, Esq., the Rev. Donald G. Barnhouse, Th.M., Frank H. Nutter, Esq., the Rev. Principal W. E. Boggs, B.Th., Professor Percy V. Roberts, Ph.D., the Rev. George Hanson, D.D., Mrs. Edith A. Powell, Dr. Don O. Shelton, and Miss R. M. Kemble.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced the President, Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., to read his paper on "Number in Nature and in the Biblical Literature indicating a Common Origin in a Supreme Intelligence."

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*NUMBER IN NATURE AND IN THE BIBLICAL  
LITERATURE INDICATING A COMMON ORIGIN  
IN A SUPREME INTELLIGENCE.*

By DR. J. A. FLEMING, M.A., F.R.S. (*President*).

1.—NUMBER IN NATURE.

**I**N our scientific study of the physical universe we find everywhere numerical phenomena or effects which require number to describe them completely. In some cases this involves merely a pure number as in the statement of the number of days in a year or a month. In other instances it requires the use of a unit, as when we state the velocity of light to be 299,796 kilometres per second, or the distance of the earth from

the sun to be about 93 millions of miles. Here the kilometre, second, and mile are units of space and time.

The object of scientific investigation is to understand and predict phenomena, and this can only be done when we have precise numerical knowledge of them.

The growth of scientific information has convinced us that all phenomena in the material world manifest in some way exact measure, proportion, or amount, and that there is in truth nothing casual, disorderly, or indefinite. Hence scientific men are willing to spend the labour of a lifetime in ascertaining or improving our knowledge of the numerical constants of Nature.

Very often surprising discoveries have been made as a consequence. Fifty years ago every chemist would have asserted that the atmosphere of our earth comprised only the gases oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, and water vapour. The late Lord Rayleigh made some exact measurements of the density of nitrogen, and found that when obtained from air it was half of one per cent. greater than when the nitrogen was obtained from chemical substances. The result of this fact was to reveal the presence of a previously unsuspected gas called Argon in the air, and the late Sir William Ramsay later on discovered four more constituent gases, viz. Helium, Neon, Krypton, and Xenon, and so opened up an entirely new chapter in chemical science.

The progress of research continually provides fresh means of making exact measurements, not only of the extremely large things in Nature, but of the extraordinarily small ones. The broad result of all this quantitative or metrical work in the last three-quarters of a century has been to show us a marvellous unity combined with diversity in Nature, and that things most different in properties and powers are yet structures composed of elements identical or similar in character. Moreover, there is a certain common pattern pervading the whole which presents powerful indications of a single source or origin.

## 2.—NUMBER IN ASTRONOMY.

Beginning with the great things in the physical universe, we find that it is composed of discrete or separate masses of matter called stars or nebulae which, however vastly different in size and motion, are composed, as the spectroscope tells us, of some of the same constituent elements as those occurring in our earth.

The stars, though differing in bulk, have very roughly about the same mass. Up to quite recently we knew next to nothing about the actual sizes of the stars which appear as mere points of light in the most powerful telescopes. The invention of an instrument, called an Interferometer, by Michelson, enabled the first measurement to be made in 1920 of the true size of *Betelgeux*, one of the bright stars in the constellation of Orion, and it was found to be a mass of gas about 273 million miles in diameter, large enough to include not only our sun and the earth in its orbit, but even to overlap the orbit of the planet Mars. Further researches have shown that all visible stars may be broadly divided into two classes now called giants and dwarfs. The giants are enormous masses of incandescent but rarified gases, but the dwarfs are smaller and have greater density. Nevertheless, though stars differ from one another in glory and in the particular elements found in them, as well as in size and density, many are yet constructed on the same general plan as our sun and of much the same materials. The life-history of a star, from its genesis as a mass of rotating gas—at first getting hotter as it contracts and radiates, then cooling and returning to the state of a dark or invisible star—has generally been made out. But the life-history of our own sun and its attendant planets, as well as the earth-moon system, involves some difficulties, and has not been yet explained by the same general principles which seem adequate to account for the innumerable binary and multiple-star systems which fill our galaxy. The giant and dwarf states represent probably the initial and final stages of an evolution through which many stars pass.

The observations on the so-called parallax of the stars, that is the apparent shift in position of the star as seen from opposite sides of our earth's orbit, have given us some idea of the immensity of stellar distances. The mile, or even a million miles, is far too small a unit to employ in dimensioning the appalling abysses of space. Astronomers employ a measuring line called a *Light-year*, equal to the distance travelled by a ray of light in one year. It is approximately six million million miles. Yet even this far-reaching line is too short for some soundings, and a unit called a *par-sec* is employed equal to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  light-years in magnitude. The nearest star to our solar system is *Alpha Centauri*, which has a distance of  $4\frac{1}{4}$  light-years from our earth. It appears clear that our own sun is a dwarf star rather past middle age, and is a member of a group of stellar bodies of very similar constitution

called Solar stars. These are distributed, it may be, in a globular cluster or ring, at 5 to 50 light-years distance from our sun. Outside and far beyond are the giant and dwarf stars of other clusters comprised in the so-called Milky Way. The stars composing this galaxy are distributed over a space of a lens shape, according to a recent estimate 40,000 light-years in thickness and 300,000 light-years in diameter, hence it extends farther in a lateral than in a vertical direction. Outside and mostly in the direction of the short axis of the galaxy lie the spiral nebulae which are probably "island universes" or systems of stars in process of creation.

There are strong arguments in favour of the view that the total mass of all the stars is not infinite, and that the space itself in which they are distributed, though unbounded, is not unlimited in amount. This can only be the case if our four-dimensional space-continuum is curved in a fifth dimension. This notion, however, introduces us to some very recondite ideas in connection with the theory of Relativity.

### 3.—NUMBER IN ATOMIC STRUCTURE.

Passing then to the opposite end of the scale of magnitudes, we notice the great progress made in the last few years, or since 1896, in exploring the structure and sizes of atoms. Not only is the visible universe composed of discrete masses of matter we call stars, but all matter is built up of discrete or separate units called chemical atoms. We have discovered about 88 or 89 different kinds of atoms, and there are some reasons for thinking not more than 92 or perhaps 100 different kinds of atoms do exist.

These atoms are built up of two discrete or separate kinds of smaller particles called electrons and protons, and are constructed on the same general plan as the Solar system, with its central controlling body or sun and attendant planetary electrons rotating round it. Every atom, in short, is a microcosm. The electrons taken collectively form what we call negative electricity and the protons the positive electricity. The protons are probably much smaller in size than the electrons but vastly more dense. A proton has about 1,800 times the mass or weight of an electron; they are analogous to the dwarf stars. The central part or nucleus of the atom contains all the protons held together by a certain number of electrons into a small, very compact mass;

around this in various orbits the planetary electrons revolve. The total number of these planetary electrons in an atom is called the *Atomic Number*, and it is a very important quantity, as on it the chemical properties of the atom depend.

These planetary electrons are arranged in certain numbers in their various orbits, which are called the K, L, M, etc., orbits. It seems that there are always 2 electrons in the innermost or K orbit, and in the outer orbits various numbers up to 18 or more. The electrons in the outermost orbit are, however, generally fewer than 8, but it is a curious fact that most atoms seem to desire to make up the number to 8 in the outermost orbit, and when they can satisfy this octet appetite they become neutral or indifferent to combination with other atoms.

Thus, for instance, one of the most important elements is Oxygen which forms one-fifth part of the air we breathe. It is the life-giving element, and unless oxygenated blood is continually supplied to the brain, we become unconscious in a few minutes and death supervenes shortly after. The Oxygen atom has 8 planetary electrons, 2 in the K ring and 6 in the L ring, and it is very desirous to possess 2 more to make up its outer orbit to 8 electrons. The atoms of the metallic elements have few electrons in their outer orbits, and these they seem rather anxious to get rid of than retain. Thus an atom of Calcium has two such loosely attached outer electrons, but if it comes across an atom of Oxygen desirous to take up two they come to some kind of bargain to transfer them.

The loss of 2 electrons by the Calcium atom upsets its electrical neutrality and it becomes positively charged. The gain of 2 electrons by the Oxygen atom gives it an equal negative charge, and the mutual attraction of these two opposite charges holds the atoms together and, combined, they form a molecule of Calcium Oxide or quicklime.

We find then that the total number of planetary electrons in these atoms of various kinds increases by 1 as we proceed up the series, from 1 in the case of the lightest atom of Hydrogen to 92 in the case of the heaviest, viz. Uranium.

We can arrange all these known kinds of atoms in a table called the Periodic Series (*see* p. 17), having 9 columns and 12 rows. Each column contains two series of elements of similar chemical and physical powers. The zero column is peculiar; it contains all the rare atmospheric gases—Helium, Neon, Argon, Krypton, and Xenon. The ninth column, or

Group VIII, contains all the elements of marked magnetic power such as Iron, Cobalt, Nickel, and two other groups of three metals. Everywhere in this Periodic Series the digits 8, 10, and 12 are remarkably conspicuous.

On examining the table it will be seen that certain places in it are unoccupied; these belong to a few missing elements which may some day be found. We can tell even now to some extent what the properties of these missing elements will be. There are, therefore, nearly 90 known or possible substances called Elements, because they are not made up of anything simpler nor can be resolved at present into other substances. There is, however, some proof that the nucleus of each atom is made up of the nuclei of Helium and of Hydrogen. The number against each element is its Atomic Number or total number of its planetary electrons. The group in which it stands—I to VIII—tells us the number, actual or possible, of the electrons in its outer orbit. The row, 1 to 12, in which it is placed determines in a more specific manner its chemical and physical properties.

It will be seen that, excluding Hydrogen, there are 11 actually known elements in nearly every column. This table, however, should be written on a cylinder and not on a plane sheet, so that the zero column and the VIIIth are identical.

Anyone who looks at this table with even a small knowledge of Chemistry, will see the wonderful symmetry of it in the changes in atomic properties as we pass from column to column or row to row.

Passing along any row, we see in each successive column a single planetary electron is added with marked change in properties. As we proceed downwards in any column, the planetary electrons are added in groups of 8, 10, or 18, but the addition of the 8 does not change essentially the properties. There is a marked similarity of character which is preserved all down the column. Can all this be possibly the result merely of an unconscious physical agency called Evolution? Is it not evidence of some marvellous mathematical design in the building of the atom which makes it, as Sir John Herschel said long ago, clearly "a manufactured article." Some great Enumerator evidently here exhibits His profound Thought as well as Creative power.

We see then here a marvellous symmetry and unity of idea. The atom itself composed of two kinds of smaller particles, protons and electrons, is the pattern on which the Solar system and possibly also other systems of stars are built. Our sun has



THE PERIODIC TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS.

Group 0.	Group I.	Group II.	Group III.	Group IV.	Group V.	Group VI.	Group VII.	Group VIII.		
							1 Hydrogen			
2 Helium	3 Lithium	4 Beryllium	5 Boron	6 Carbon	7 Nitrogen	8 Oxygen	9 Fluorine			
10 Neon	11 Sodium	12 Magnesium	13 Aluminium	14 Silicon	15 Phosphorus	16 Sulphur	17 Chlorine			
18 Argon	19 Potassium	20 Calcium	21 Scandium	22 Titanium	23 Vanadium	24 Chromium	25 Manganese	26 Iron	27 Cobalt	28 Nickel
—	29 Copper	30 Zinc	31 Gallium	32 Germanium	33 Arsenic	34 Selenium	35 Bromine			
36 Krypton	37 Rubidium	38 Strontium	39 Yttrium	40 Zirconium	41 Columbium	42 Molybdenum	43 Massium	44 Ruthenium	45 Rhodium	46 Palladium
—	47 Silver	48 Cadmium	49 Indium	50 Tin	51 Antimony	52 Tellurium	53 Iodine			
54 Xenon	55 Cæsium	56 Barium	57 Lanthanium	58 Cerium	—	—	—			
—	—	—	—	72 Hafnium	73 Tantalum	74 Tungsten	75 Rhenium	76 Osmium	77 Iridium	78 Platinum
—	79 Gold	80 Mercury	81 Thallium	82 Lead	83 Bismuth	84 Polonium	85 —			
86 Radon	87 —	88 Radium	89 Actinium	90 Thorium	91 Brevium	92 Uranium	93 —			

A COMMON ORIGIN IN A SUPREME INTELLIGENCE.

The elements whose Atomic Numbers lie between 59 and 71 inclusive lie in Group III under Lanthanium. There are 2 known and 1 missing.

The number written over each element is the Atomic Number.

circulating round it eight major planets and a host of smaller ones called asteroids. These rotate in the same direction, and their motions are conditioned by the law of gravitation, which, as far as we know, holds throughout the universe. Our own Solar system comprises, as it were, 8 planetary electrons in the form of the major planets and some hundreds of smaller asteroids.

Moreover, each of these Solar planets is built on the same general plan, and 6 out of the 8 major planets have satellites or moons revolving round them. The Earth has 1 moon, Mars has 2, Jupiter 9, Saturn 10, Uranus 4, and Neptune 1, as far as is known. The wonderful rings of Saturn are (as Clerk Maxwell first showed) only a vast number of small satellites, meteoric dust or stones circulating in close array round the planet. Indeed, the same kind of ring seems to exist on a larger scale in the cloud of asteroids which revolve round our sun in the space between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

All these stars are in motion, and the astronomer Kapteyn proved as the result of his investigations that the nearer stars form themselves into two great groups moving in opposite directions through space. These stars, as far as visible to us in our great telescopes, number upwards of 10,000 million, and they are scattered over a space the radius of which is perhaps about a million light-years. Our imagination fails us in the effort to grasp the meaning of these stupendous numbers, but we can at least obtain some faint conception of the magnitude and majesty of the physical universe in which we live.

At the opposite end of the scale our measurements bring us in contact with dimensions of inconceivable minuteness. A usual scale for atomic measurements is the Ångström Unit, which is a hundred-millionth of a centimetre. The majority of atoms have a diameter of 2 to 3 Ångström units. At this rate it would require about 200 million atoms placed in a row in contact to make up a length of a single inch.

But all our measurements show that an electron is vastly smaller, probably a hundred-thousandth time less. On this scale it would be as much smaller than an atom of Hydrogen as a mote of dust in the air floating in a sunbeam is smaller than the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.

But the study of late years of the minute astronomy of the atom has revealed extraordinary numerical relations between its parts. It has been found that a planetary electron cannot revolve round its atomic nucleus at any distance, but only in certain

orbits which are called quantum orbits. In these orbits the energy of the revolving electron diminishes as the size of the orbit increases by regular and fixed steps or decrements, so that these energies are in the ratio of the reciprocal squares of the natural numbers, viz. 1,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{9}$ ,  $\frac{1}{16}$ , etc.

An electron cannot revolve in any intermediate orbit but can jump from one orbit to another, and when it does so it either absorbs energy or else gives it out in the form of light or radiant heat.

There is a technical term used in mechanics called *Action*, which must be explained. When a material body, whether electron, atom, or planet, is in motion, it possesses what is called kinetic energy. If its kinetic energy is changing, and if we multiply together the number representing it by the length of the short interval of time during which it may be considered as unaltered, and sum up these products—viz. time, multiplied by energy—we obtain what is called the Action during that whole period of time. In cases in which the body is moving freely under the action of forces depending only on the distance, the Action is less than it would be if the body were constrained to move along any other path. This principle of “Least Action” seems only to be one aspect of a more general principle of Economy in Nature. Thus a ray of light always travels from one point to another, no matter how much it may be reflected or refracted, in the least possible time.

The study of the laws of radiation has led to the remarkable conclusion that Action must exist only in exact multiples of a very small unit of Action. There are therefore no vague or indeterminate quantities in Nature. For everything that can be measured there appears to be some natural unit in multiples of which we must describe any other quantity of it. Every created thing or process is subject to number, magnitude, and measure.

Another field in which a striking order and numerical order is found is in the arrangement of atoms in solid bodies into lattices and the lattices into crystals. The employment of the X, or Röntgen, rays has enabled us, as it were, to look inside metals and other materials and find out the emplacement of the atoms in them. Thus, in diamond, the carbon atoms are arranged at the corners of a four-sided figure called a tetrahedron, and in many metals at the 8 corners of a cube. These lattices are packed together into larger aggregations called crystals, and a very common type of crystal is the octohedron with 8 faces formed of

8 similar triangles. Another is the cube, with 8 corners, 6 faces, and 12 edges. Even metals which apparently are uniform in structure may, in fact, be made up of multitudes of minute crystals compacted irregularly together.

#### 4.—NUMBER IN LIVING ORGANISMS.

Passing then from the non-living to living matter, we find in the same manner that there is a unit, so to speak, which forms the atom of organic life. In this region of fact Number is again predominant.

The physical basis of life is a material called protoplasm, but this exists, not in unbroken masses, but in small discrete particles called cells. All vegetable and animal organisms are built up of cells, and each cell comprises in general a little particle of protoplasm round which there may be formed non-living material. The living cell contains a body called the nucleus, which plays a very important part in its growth and activities. The growth consists in the gradual multiplication of cells by a process in which each cell divides into two, and each of these again into two, and so on. This growth is conditioned by the cell having certain nourishment supplied to it from some surrounding medium, and also having a certain environment as regards temperature, moisture, and absence of other disturbing causes.

One chief characteristic of living organism, as we ascend the scale of life, is the gradually increasing complexity of structure. The mass of cells produced by the process of subdivision and growth is not disorderly, but in each case built up according to a certain plan in which cells in different parts take on special functions and continue to produce similar cells. Moreover, it does not continue indefinitely. The process proceeds until a certain individual or specimen, vegetable or animal, is produced, and then stops and fails, and finally disintegration or death takes place.

The second great characteristic of living organisms is their power to reproduce their kind, and pass on to another generation, whether plants or animals, that power of body-building according to a certain type they themselves possess.

Modern researches have then made it clear that there are two kinds of cells in all living organisms, viz. those concerned with the growth and development of the body or individual, called body-building cells, and those concerned with the reproduction of

the individual, called genetic or generative cells. The controlling agency in both of these classes is the nucleus of the cell. The nucleus contains a material called chromatin, because it can be stained by certain coloured dyes, and this chromatin is arranged, at a certain stage of growth, in rod-like bodies called chromosomes. The remarkable thing is that the number of these chromosomes determines, or is determined by, the nature of the individual. There is one number, 48, characteristic of the cells of a human being; another number, 38, of an ox; another, 12, of a house-fly; and another, 24, of a lily. Thus an ox-cell can never produce a man or a fly-cell a lily.

When a body-cell divides into two, the first step is that all the chromosomes divide lengthways into two and the two parts move to opposite sides of the cell, so that, when the latter divides, each daughter-cell has its own proper number of chromosomes, and this process continues at each fission.

The reproductive cells behave differently. In nearly all cases reproduction involves the union of two cells, one from each sex. Hence, in order that the proper chromosome number may be kept up, the generative cells must first reduce their proper chromosome number to half, and then when the union of the two cells from the two different sex-individuals takes place, the proper chromosome number is restored. In all parts of this wonderful process of cell-growth and cell-reproduction in living organism we see the domination of Number as a factor.

##### 5.—NUMBER IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Let us, in the next place, consider some of the numerical facts which present themselves, in Holy Scripture. It is generally recognized that the various digits, 1, 2, 3, etc., have each a certain spiritual suggestiveness in the Bible. The number *Seven* carries with it the idea of perfection. We are told that the work of Creation occupied six great periods of Divine operation, and was followed by a Seventh day of Divine rest. Under the Theocratic Dispensation of Israel the appointed system of worship was septenary in character. There were Seven Feasts of the Lord at intervals during a sacred year of Seven Months. The Seventh year was to be Sabbatic, and the Seven-times seventh year a Jubilee. The Desolations of Israel covered a period of Seventy years, and the Coming of the Messiah was foretold to Daniel in the great prophecy of the "Seventy Weeks."

The completeness and perfection of the Divine Government is everywhere associated with the numbers *Seven* and *Ten*. The Seven seals, Seven trumpets, and Seven vials, of the Apocalypse, the Lamb having Seven horns and Seven eyes. The 119th Psalm has as its keynote the perfection of the Divine Law: "O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Seven words especially characterize this Psalm, viz. Law, Testimonies, Judgments, Statutes, Precepts, Commandments, and Word. Also the number 119 is Seven times seventeen, and these are the only two numerical factors of 119.

It is remarkable how closely the number 17, or 7 plus 10, is associated with important Biblical events.

We are told that the Flood began on the 17th day of the second month and ended on the 17th day of the seventh month (Nisan), when the Ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (Gen. viii, 4). On the 17th day of Nisan the Israelites crossed the Red Sea at the Exodus and commenced their national life; and on the 17th day of Nisan the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, having completed his work of redemption for humanity. The last miracle recorded in St. John's Gospel is the miraculous draft of 153 fishes. Now 153 is the sum of the first 17 numbers, 1 to 17, and 153 is also the product of 17 and 9. Those 153 fishes evidently symbolized the completed number of the redeemed, for the fish (*ichthus*) was an early well-recognized symbol of the Christian believer.

The digit *Six*, which is one less than Seven, connotes imperfection, and is associated therefore with the government of Man by himself. The image which Nebuchadnezzar set up for worship on the plain of Dura symbolical of himself was 60 cubits high and 6 cubits broad.

The human military empires of this world are termed "Beasts" in prophetic scriptures. The "number of the Beast" is given as 666, which is the sum of the first 36 ( $= 6 \times 6$ ) numbers. The duration of these "Beast" empires is given as 1,260 "days," and 1,260 is  $6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6 - 6 \times 6$ .

Then the digit *Eight*, which is one more than Seven, is connected with the idea of a new covenant or creation or restored life. At the Flood there were only Eight people saved in the Ark, when a new covenant was made with mankind. Only Eight persons are mentioned by name in the Bible as restored to life after bodily death, and our Lord was the Eighth. There

are only Eight writers of books in the New Testament or New Covenant mentioned by name.

Every male Hebrew child entered into a special covenant relation with God on the Eighth day of his life, "circumcised the Eighth day." The Resurrection took place on what might be called the Eighth day of the week. The Crucifixion for the Sin of Man was on the Sixth day of the week, the Rest in the Grave on the Seventh, and the Resurrection on the Eighth day, or First day of a new week.

In the number *Nine* we have a suggestion of finality. It is the last digit. Our Lord breathed out His Spirit at the Ninth hour on the Cross, and cried, "It is finished!"

We shall see presently that the word "Amen," the final word of prayer, has associated with it the number 99.

It can also be shown that the digit *Five* is united closely to the ideas of Grace and Redemption. It makes its appearance in all parts of the dimensions and furniture of the Tabernacle in the wilderness as well as in the sacred wounds of our Lord's Body.

There were Five significant articles in that Tabernacle in the part accessible to the public and the priests, viz. the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Laver, the Table of Shewbread, the Seven-branched Candlestick, and the Altar of Incense, all of which had typical reference to the stages of justification and sanctification in the redemption of humanity.

#### 6.—GEMATRIA OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS.

We may in the next place note that in the Greek and Hebrew alphabets every letter had its numerical value, and therefore every word its *gematria*, or sum total of these numbers. Our digits of to-day, universal in use with Western nations, were introduced from Arabia in the eighth century, and the Arabs probably derived them from India.

Although the classical nations had words for numbers such as 10, 50, 100, etc., they signified them also by letters of the alphabet, as may be seen by consulting any Greek lexicon in which the numerical value of each letter is given.

Thus, for the Greek Alphabet we have the following numerical values for each letter :

Greek Letter.				Numerical Value.	English Equivalent.
Alpha	..	$\alpha$	.. ..	1	a
Beta	..	$\beta$	.. ..	2	b
Gamma	..	$\gamma$	.. ..	3	g
Delta	..	$\delta$	.. ..	4	d
Epsilon	..	$\epsilon$	.. ..	5	e (short)
Zeta	..	$\zeta$	.. ..	7	z
Eta	..	$\eta$	.. ..	8	e (long)
Theta	..	$\theta$	.. ..	9	th
Iota	..	$\iota$	.. ..	10	i
Kappa	..	$\kappa$	.. ..	20	k
Lambda	..	$\lambda$	.. ..	30	l
Mu	..	$\mu$	.. ..	40	m
Nu	..	$\nu$	.. ..	50	n
Xi	..	$\xi$	.. ..	60	x
Omicron	..	$\omicron$	.. ..	70	o (short)
Pi	..	$\pi$	.. ..	80	p
Rho	..	$\rho$	.. ..	100	r
Sigma	..	$\sigma, \varsigma$	.. ..	200	s
Tau	..	$\tau$	.. ..	300	t
Upsilon	..	$\upsilon$	.. ..	400	u
Phi	..	$\phi$	.. ..	500	ph
Chi	..	$\chi$	.. ..	600	ch
Psi	..	$\psi$	.. ..	700	ps
Omega	..	$\omega$	.. ..	800	o (long)



Thus, for instance, the Greek word *Logos* signifying "Word," and applied to the Second Person of the Trinity, has a *gematria* of  $30 + 70 + 3 + 70 + 200$  signified by the letters, *l, o, g, o, s*. The sum of these numbers is 373. The 3 is spiritually significant of the Triune Deity and 7 of Perfection, which conveys the idea of the Perfect Deity of the *Logos* or *Word of God*.

The same is true of the Hebrew. The letters of that alphabet had each a numerical value.

In the case of Latin, only six or seven of the letters, viz. I, V, X, L, C, D, and M, had numerical values, and other numbers were made up by placing these in juxtaposition and by the ingenious device that relative position should mean addition or subtraction. Thus, XI = 11, but IX = 9; XC = 90, CX = 110, etc.

Confining ourselves to the Greek of the New Testament, we may notice that the *gematria* of certain Names, Titles and words or phrases have factors which are significant with respect to them. Thus a large number of the Names and Titles of the Saviour of Mankind have *gematria* which contain the factor 8. For example, take the Supreme Title, *Lord Jesus Christ*. The Greek words are *Kurios Iēsous Christos*. Translating these letters into numerical values, we have :

<i>K</i> = 20	<i>I</i> = 10	<i>Ch</i> = 600
<i>u</i> = 400	<i>ē</i> = 8	<i>r</i> = 100
<i>r</i> = 100	<i>s</i> = 200	<i>i</i> = 10
<i>i</i> = 10	<i>o</i> = 70	<i>s</i> = 200
<i>o</i> = 70	<i>u</i> = 400	<i>t</i> = 300
<i>s</i> = 200	<i>s</i> = 200	<i>o</i> = 70
		<i>s</i> = 200
—	—	—
= 800	= 888	= 1480
= $8 \times 10 \times 10$	= $8 \times 3 \times 37$	= $8 \times 5 \times 37$

If we add all the *gematria* we have 3,168, which is  $8 \times 99 \times 4$ .

It may be noted in passing that the word *Amen* has a *gematria* of 99. It is significant that this factor 99 then occurs in the Name of Him who speaks of Himself as "The Amen" (Rev. iii, 14).

Then, again, numerous other titles which our Lord gives to Himself, or is given, have in Greek a factor of 8 in their *gematria*. Thus :

Saviour = *Sotēr* = 1408 =  $8 \times 8 \times 2 \times 11$ .

Messiah = *Messias* = 656 =  $8 \times 2 \times 41$ .

King = *Basileus* = 848 =  $8 \times 2 \times 53$ .

There was no Title our Lord applied more often to Himself than "Son of Man" = *huios tou anthropou*. The gematria of this is  $680 + 770 + 1510 = 2960 = 8 \times 10 \times 37$ . Note here the recurrence of the numbers 8 and 37 as in the factors of *Jesus* and *Christ*.

Also the following self-applied Titles have gematria having a factor of 8 in the gematria of the Greek words :—

"I am the Good Shepherd" =  $1592 = 8 \times 199$ .

"I am the Door of the Sheep" =  $3944 = 8 \times 493$ .

"The Bread of Life" =  $2264 = 8 \times 283$ .

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John xiv, 6). The total gematria of all this sentence is  $6192 = 8 \times 4 \times 193$ .

"I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev. xxii, 13). The gematria is  $7200 = 8 \times 9 \times 10 \times 10$ .

Nearly all the long-sentence Titles our Lord gives to Himself in the messages to the Seven Churches of Asia, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea are the same, viz.  $13352 = 8 \times 1669$ ;  $6920 = 8 \times 865$   $6808 = 8 \times 851$ ; and  $7216 = 8 \times 902$ .

There is an important New Testament word, *Theotēs*, which means Deity or Godhead (see Col. ii, 9). The gematria of this is  $592 = 8 \times 2 \times 37$ . Notice again the 8 and the 37 numbers. We have seen that the gematria of *Iēsous* is  $8 \times 3 \times 37$ , of *Christos* is  $8 \times 5 \times 37$ , and of *huios tou anthropou* is  $8 \times 10 \times 37$ . We then notice that the last is equal to the sum of the gematria of Jesus Christ and Deity. When our Lord put the important question to his disciples at Cæsarea Philippi: "Whom say ye that I the Son of Man am?" Peter earned his benediction by the reply, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

We have in the above fact, with regard to the gematria of these words, an arithmetic endorsement of this cardinal truth.

These instances are capable of many extensions, but at this stage we may pause to express the opinion that these gematria properties cannot be merely an accident. It cannot be merely the "long arm of coincidence."

We can write down twenty Names and Titles of our Lord, the gematria of which all have as a factor that number 8 which we have seen is connected with the idea of a New Covenant or life-giving Power. We have seen that 8 is the Atomic Number

of the life-giving element Oxygen. There are 8 major planets revolving round the life-giving agent, our Sun, and it can hardly be a mere coincidence that this digit 8 is also a fundamental factor in the gematria of Him who is the Source and Author of Eternal Life. It could easily be shown, if time permitted, the laws of the mathematical Theory of Probability are against it being the result of chance.\*

#### 7.—NUMBER IN SOLI-LUNAR CYCLES AND IN PROPHETIC PERIODS.

There are other departments of numerical fact in Nature and in the Scriptures between which there is a close relation, viz. in astronomical Soli-Lunar cycles and the Prophetic Periods or Times.

The Moon and the Sun appear to move over the celestial vault like the "hands" of a vast clock. Apart from the diurnal motion of the Earth which causes them both to rise and set, the Moon moves from West to East over the stars and goes through its phase in 29·5306 days, and the Sun completes a similar apparent motion over the stars in 365·2422 days. The first is called a Lunation and the second a Solar year.

It is clear that 12 Lunations (called a Lunar year) are less than a Solar year by 10 days 21 hours nearly. This difference is called the Lunar Epect. The question then arises, In what periods of time do the Epects add up to an exact or integral number of Lunations, days, or solar years? These periods of time are called Soli-Lunar Cycles.

The first of these, discovered by Meton a Greek, in 432 B.C., is the 19-year cycle called after him the Metonic cycle. Meton discovered that 235 Lunations occur in nearly 19 Solar years. In that time the Epects add up to nearly 7 Lunar months, since  $19 \times 10 \cdot 875 = 7 \times 29 \cdot 5306 =$  nearly 206·65 days.

A more exact Soli-Lunar cycle was discovered in the eighteenth century by M. de Cheseaux, a Swiss astronomer, and it is 315 Solar years. In 315 Solar years the Lunar Epects add up to almost exactly  $116 = 4 \times 29$  Lunations, and this last cycle is more exact than the Metonic, for in the de Cheseaux cycle the sun

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\* Those who wish to follow up this subject of the Scripture gematria will find assistance in two little books published by C. J. Thyne, of 28, Whitefriars Street, London, E.C.4, viz. *Spiritual Arithmetic*, by Reginald T. Naish, and *Verbal Inspiration Demonstrated*, by Ivan Panin.

and moon come round into the same relative position to each other within 1 hour and 48 minutes. In 315 Solar years there are almost exactly 3,896 Lunations or synodic months. M. de Cheseaux then noticed that this cycle of 315 years is one quarter of a period of 1,260 years.

Now, reckoned on the year-day theory, that is a year for a day, this 1,260 years is identical with a prophetic period mentioned 7 times in the apocalyptic books of Daniel and Revelation under the titles "A thousand two hundred and threescore days" (Rev. xi, 3; xii, 6), "Forty and two months" (Rev. xi, 2; xiii, 5), and "A time, and times, and half a time" (Dan. vii, 25; xii, 7; Rev. xii, 14).

The Lunar Epacts add up in this time to 37·511 Solar years, or to  $7 \times 66$  Lunar months and 60 days, or to 66 Metonic cycles of 19 years and 6 years over. There is, in fact, a peculiar sextuary character about this Soli-Lunar cycle. We have already seen that as a number it is remarkable in that respect, since  $1260 = 6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6 - 6 \times 6$ .

The number 2520, which is double 1260, is equal to  $7 \times 360$ , and is also the least common multiple of all the nine digits. In the period of 2,520 Solar years the Lunar Epacts add up to almost exactly 75 Solar years, so that 2,520 Solar years contain 2,520 Lunar years and 75 Solar years over. It is therefore also a Soli-Lunar cycle. This cycle is nowhere directly mentioned in Scripture, but it is suggested by the use of the phrase "seven times." M. de Cheseaux was then led to examine another prophetic period mentioned in Dan. viii, 14, viz. "Two thousand three hundred days." He found that the Epacts in 2,300 Solar years add up to 25,012·5 days, or almost exactly to 847 Lunations, or  $12 \times 7 + 7$  Lunations, or  $121 \times 7$  Lunar months. Bearing in mind that under the Mosaic Law the Sacred year was a period of 7 Lunations, which period we may call a *Festal*, it is seen that the total Epacts in the Metonic cycle of 19 years is 1 *Festal*, whilst in the prophetic period of 2,300 years it is 121 *Festals*, or  $11 \times 11$  *Festals*.

M. de Cheseaux made the further discovery that the difference between 2,300 and 1,260 Solar years, viz. 1,040 Solar years, is the most exact Soli-Lunar cycle known. The Epacts in this time add up exactly to 11,310 days, or to 383 Lunations.

As Dr. H. Grattan Guinness showed long ago, this cycle is so exact that it can be employed to predict astronomical events over long periods. Mr. Walter Maunder, in his book *The Astronomy*

of the Bible, pointed out that 2,300 Solar years not only contains an exact number of Lunations, but also an exact number of anomalistic months, each of the latter being the time the moon takes to pass from the perigee in its orbit round again to the perigee.

The difference between 2,300 and 315, or 1,985 Solar years, is also an exact Soli-Lunar cycle, as in this period the Epacts add up exactly to 731 Lunations. The 2,300-year cycle has also a relation to a period called the "life" of a Solar eclipse.

It was known, even to the Babylonian observers, that eclipses of the Sun of the same type repeat themselves at intervals of about 18 years, or more exactly 18 years and  $11\frac{1}{3}$  days. This period is called the *Saros*. At each recurring *Saros* the eclipse in question happens at a slightly different latitude on the earth as well as longitude. The whole time in which the complete set of 65 eclipses of one group happen so as to be visible somewhere on the earth covers a period of about 1,150 years; which is half of 2,300, and this is called the life of a total eclipse.

It is clear, therefore, that these prophetic times mentioned in the apocalyptic books of the Bible have a close relation to important astronomical periods. At the date when these books were written, the length of the Solar year and of the Lunation were not known with sufficient exactness to bring these Soli-Lunar cycles within the range of the then human knowledge. How then did such periods become incorporated in the prophetic books? How also were the remarkable arithmetic properties of the gematria, to which attention has been directed, in New Testament words and phrases brought about? It is beyond question that it was not due to the skill or ingenuity of the authors of those books, and is indeed quite beyond human powers in any age. Here then is a question for our Modernist advocates of the theory of a purely human origin of the Biblical literature to consider carefully.

The only answer that can be given is that they were not solely the product of human intelligence, but that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

#### 8.—THE UNITY OF DESIGN IN CREATION.

A broad survey of the structure of the physical universe in the light of modern scientific research reveals then a general unity of design and pervading idea extending over things great

and small. It is impossible to admit that this can be the result merely of chance or of an impersonal, unconscious, self-acting agency called Evolution, rather than that it is the product of the Thought and Will of a single Almighty Mind. We find that same organic unity of idea, although with progressive development, in the Biblical literature. The rationalist view, that this literature is solely the result of human thought and compilation by various editors, is inconsistent with the harmony and close inter-connection of writings and events separated by time-intervals extending over a thousand years or more.

We find in all parts of this literature references to future events, that is future to the time when they were predicted, and mention of time intervals which have a correspondence with periods marked out by astronomical phenomena.

The Bible is not, however, a scientific treatise on astronomy, physiology, or psychology. Each part of this literature has the "colouring" of the age in which it was produced. Its inspiration is not of a mechanical kind which made use of the human authors simply as pens with which a superior power could write. Its writers were ambassadors sent to convey a message couched in the language of the day, not always fully intelligible to the messengers themselves, but nevertheless *God-breathed*, in that it was the vehicle of information quite beyond the power of the unassisted human mind to ascertain, yet in closest contact with absolute truth and reality.

In all parts of it, both in the Old and New Testaments, there are numerical characteristics which could not possibly have been due to the human writers, but give significant suggestion that its inspiration proceeds from the same Source as that of the universe of material things. Its primary purpose is not, however, to convey information, but to impart life, and to restore to humanity the lost image of Him who is "the image of the invisible God." He is known by many Names and Titles. There is one Title, however, which seems to have special reference to the subject here considered. In a vision granted to Daniel, described in the eighth chapter of his book, the prediction of the 2,300 days, or "evening-mornings," which were to elapse before the cleansing of the sanctuary is pronounced by a Speaker who is called in the Authorised Version a "certain saint which spake." The marginal reference, however, gives the words "Palmoni," or the "Wonderful Numberer," as an equivalent (*see* Dan. viii, 13). In the vision granted to Daniel described in the tenth, eleventh, and

twelfth chapters of his book, the Holy Speaker who announces future events and prophetic Times is described as regards His appearance (*see* Dan. x, 5, 6) in terms which are identical with those in the description given in the Book of Revelation (i, 13, 14, 15) of the Glorified Son of God who appeared to John in Patmos.

Hence there seems to be some ground for the view that this "Wonderful Numberer" in the Book of Daniel was the Second Person of the Trinity; in other words, He was one of the Theophanies or manifestations of God, under the Old Testament dispensation. He alone is able to predict future events. He alone knows the Times and Seasons which have been appointed for the probationary periods of mankind and their relation to the great astronomical periods approximately marked out by the Sun and Moon, owing to the incommensurable ratio of the length of the month and year.

When Belshazzar made his impious feast, and employed the sacred vessels of the Temple for it, we are told the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote on the palace wall the words *Mene, Tekel, Peres*, which Daniel interpreted as *Numbered, Weighed, and Divided*. But the same words are in a sense written across the pages of Nature and the story of the human race. They are the sign-manual of Him who "telleteth the number of the stars and calleth them all by their names" (Ps. cxlvii, 4), and has taught us "so to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. xc, 12). That wisdom is partly derived from scientific investigations of the physical universe, but still more in the serious study of the Word of God which alone is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ.

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN: Once again it has been our pleasure to listen to a lecture by Professor Fleming—this time as President of the Victoria Institute. Again he opens a new session; and whereas last year he dealt with "Evolution and Revelation"—thus bringing the fact of GOD into the scheme of the Universe—now he follows on to indicate traces of the majestic movements of the ETERNAL, first in connection with Nature, and then in connection with the Biblical literature. It is after the manner of a man of science that he treats of Number in Nature; and it is from a point of view that is equally exacting that he examines Number in Scripture; and in the result he

maintains that the things observed conspire to indicate a common origin for Nature and Revelation, with a supreme intelligence presiding over all.

Dr. Fleming has unfolded before us marvellous things, as observed in Nature, both among the great and the small ; and whether in the field of Astronomy or the recesses of Atomic Structure, he finds numerical harmony and symmetry—a truly marvellous mathematical design, exhibiting One whose profound thought and creative power spell the short word GOD. Who can fail to have been impressed by the deliberate statement of our distinguished lecturer, that “There are no vague or indeterminate quantities in Nature . . . . For everything that can be measured there appears to be some natural unit in multiples of which we must describe any other quantity of it. Every created thing or process is subject to number, magnitude, or measure ” (p. 19). Passing from non-living things to those that are living, the lecturer impresses us with the corresponding truth that “In all parts of the wonderful process of cell-growth and cell-reproduction in living organism we see the domination of Number as a factor ” (p. 21). Marvellous as are the constituent details, the facts in their volume and as a whole are significant in a high degree, and should call forth gratitude from the thoughtful Christian, that in this, as in other ways, God has not left Himself without witness.

Proceeding to deal with Number in Scripture, the lecturer has shown himself content with the larger and more evident observations of research in this regard. While thanking him for the striking summary he has given us of the significant digits that lie embedded in Bible story, we recognize the cautious man of science in the acceptance of certain words only in the body of gematria applied by some to the New Testament Writings. Some have carried gematria to a length that divests it of any definite value, and makes it to yield results that are more fanciful than convincing. But not so our honoured President ; and we thank him for the manner in which he confined himself to Names and Titles of our Lord, the gematria of which may rightly command the sober attention of Christian people.

The subject of Number in Soli-Lunar Cycles, and in Prophetic Periods, as treated in the lecture, sets forth in few words investigations of real value, as students of prophecy for two generations or more



have not failed to recognize. The bearing of this section upon the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse of John is of deep importance. At the time when these books were written the length of the Solar year and of the Lunation were not known with sufficient exactness to bring the Soli-Lunar Cycles (therein recognized) within the range of the then human knowledge. How then did such periods become incorporated in the prophetic books? The New Testament definition of inspired prophecy furnishes the explanation—"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

From time to time great and valuable utterances have been given forth from the Presidential Chair of the Victoria Institute; but it would not be easy to recall an occasion on which so commanding a deliverance has been made as that to which we have listened to-day. From first to last the treatment has been in confirmation of the Faith which we have received to hold, which we hold to defend, which we defend to promulgate in the world; and we are grateful for the words, in the last section, in which, while lifting divine inspiration free from the confusing misrepresentations of unbelievers, the lecturer says of the Bible writers: "They were ambassadors sent to convey a message couched in the language of the day, not always fully intelligible to the messengers themselves, but nevertheless *God-breathed*, in that it was the vehicle of information quite beyond the power of the unassisted mind to ascertain, yet in close contact with absolute truth and reality" (p. 30).

From what we have heard this afternoon there will emerge, for some at least, a new note of confidence in regard to the Holy Bible, as to some parts, some features. The time has assuredly arrived when doubters should shake themselves from all manner of questioning in regard to Daniel and the Apocalypse. Unbelievers have said their worst; but they cannot gainsay the fact that these Books are, in the nature of things, invested with marvellous features such as belong to stars, atoms, cells, and the rest, all of them wonderful, and not one of them without its definite witness to God and relation to Christ who revealed Him among men. And in regard to the solemn story, the majestic record, as it has been unfolded before us this afternoon—in an address that has been equally cogent, versatile, and brilliant—we may, with adoring praise, use the words of Job of ancient days: "Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways;

and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job xxvi, 14, R.V.).

In conclusion, the Chairman moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer, and the same was accorded with acclamation.

Lieut.-Col. A. H. C. KENNEY-HERBERT: We may congratulate ourselves on the relative simplicity of a paper which has introduced to our notice a subject of vital importance in these days. I can only hope that it will act as an inducement to those who have the leisure to pursue the subject further, in order that their researches may add to the common stock of knowledge.

Perhaps one of the best books to begin with would be Bullinger's *Number in Scripture*. It is one of the pioneer works, presenting much accumulated research from which the student can strike out his own line. *The Greek Cabala*, by Messrs. Bond and Lea, shows how gematria was once used to express geometry, and contains many suggestions of interest.

The time-limits imposed by our rules will only permit of a few statements which may add to the interest created by the paper, while contributing to the probability of its conclusions; even though the time-limit prevents any proof in support of these statements.

Let us apply number in proof of the plan which can be detected underlying the true Bible Chronology.

I think that it can be shown that the visible new moon which marked the New Year Day of 2008 (Adamic reckoning) was Abram's official birthday, and divides the period from Adam to the Conception of the Lord into two parts, in the ratio of mean solar and prophetic years, the first part being 2,008 mean solar years, the second 2,008 prophetic years. From Conception to the Birth was 37 weeks; note that the paper suggests, and I believe rightly, that 37 is the Lord's number.

Again, from the Covenant with Abram (Gen. xv) to the actual birth is four exact periods of 69 sevens of prophetic years. In comparing this with the flood date, 1656—which was four periods of 69 sixes of ordinary years—we note that the sevens and the sixes, as well as the ordinary and the prophetic years, indicate different scales on which similar numeric periods of four sixty-nines are marked.

True Bible Chronology is stamped with numeric design, a collateral proof of accuracy.

Let us apply number to the text of the New Testament. The 1st Epistle of St. Peter is contained in  $69 \times 5 \times 5$  words; the 2nd Epistle is  $69 \times 4 \times 4$  words; the two in  $69 \times 41$  words. Note the recurrence of 69 in text and Chronology.

The Second and Third Chapters of The Revelation contain 5,238 letters, which are grouped into 1,162 words. The sum of these numbers is 6,400. Here the 7 overcomers, the Lord being an 8th, find  $8 \times 8 \times 10 \times 10$  to be the expression of a most glorious resurrection. Both of these examples have been taken from Mill's text, just as it stands, published many years ago. Many similar facts could be quoted, tending to prove that God has safeguarded the text, independently of the confusion created by the textual critic.

Lastly, we might apply this language of number to the solution of the problem of the Great Pyramid. If we do, I think we shall find that the true solution is very different from that recently suggested in the columns of the *Morning Post*, which created so much interest in the public mind. It can be shown that the Core Masonry covered a base which suggests the first thought of the Bible—"in the beginning GOD——" This was hidden by a casing extension, suggestive of the last word of the Bible, in Greek, AMEN—99. This base was modified by the Fall, and the basic numbers of Gen. iii are factors in the measurements. These things were recorded in stone some four or five hundred years before Moses was born. As a monument the Great Pyramid certainly indicates the same main dates as those of the chronology already referred to.

It is interesting to note that these base dimensions can be obtained in quite another way, the factors of which are 6,660 lunar years reduced to mean solar years—the whole modified by the factor found in the story of the Fall. For this calculation, the mean lunation and the mean solar year as determined by Grattan Guinness (*see* p. 28) are necessary.

Mr. W. E. LESLIE: Dr. Fleming invites us to draw teleological inferences from the numerical characteristics of the Universe as distinct from its forms, but his paper blends them. Are they finally separable? Some structures are necessary, and from these no argument for design can be drawn. For example, any three given points

will be found to be at the angles of a triangle, and, at the same time, to lie in the circumference of a circle. No teleological inference can, however, be drawn, because any three points (not in the same straight line) must necessarily be so arranged. This is a very simple case, but, if the time factor be added, and the points are in mutual translation, we could probably get more complicated cases.

The Doctor then refers to gematria. This system was developed with immense ingenuity by the Rabbis, but their labours led nowhere, because they were not based on sound inductive methods. Dr. Fleming states that twenty of our Lord's titles are characterized by the factor 8; but he does not tell us how many of the titles have not this characteristic, nor does he tell us how the percentage of titles containing this factor compares with the percentage of words containing it in the rest of the New Testament. We are consequently left without sufficient data to formulate a judgment.

With regard to the Soli-Lunar phenomena, would Dr. Fleming state whether there are any exact equations? All those he gives appear to be approximations. Johannes Lepsius stated, in the *Expositor* in 1912, that the difference between 480 Julian and Apocalyptic years amounted to 2,520 days, while the difference between 500 Julian and Apocalyptic years amounted to the sum of 1,290 and 1,335 days. Are these figures exact?

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF: We shall all be in agreement that this lecture is learned, unique and remarkable. Professor Fleming has placed Bible students under a debt of obligation by the many facts he has adduced. The arguments, moreover, in their sum, mark a decided step forward in framing a powerful case to exhibit the operations of one great and mighty Designer of Nature and the Bible.

With regard to the section of the paper which deals with the phenomenon of the gematria, it seems that this matter is susceptible of wide extensions. But it is of the utmost importance that a study of this kind should be pursued with thoroughness, patience, and scientific accuracy. If a vast number of instances can be cited in support of the unvarying evidence of gematria, pointing with mathematical precision to concurrence in certain numerical powers and co-related truths, this will afford valuable supplemental evidence of the Divine and plenary inspiration of the Bible. But it is essential

that the evidence should be uniform and not casual, based not on a few but on many instances.

The statement on p. 22 that "only eight persons are mentioned by name in the Bible as restored to life after bodily death, and our Lord was the eighth," does not appear to be supported by facts. There are nine recorded individual cases, viz. : (1) The Widow's son (1 Kings xvii) ; (2) the Shunamite's son (2 Kings iv) ; (3) a man in Elisha's sepulchre (2 Kings xiii) ; (4) Jairus' daughter (Mark v) ; (5) the widow of Nain's son (Luke vii) ; (6) Lazarus (John xi) ; (7) Tabitha (Acts ix) ; (8) Eutychus (Acts xx) ; and (9) the Lord Jesus Christ. There is also in Matt. xxvii, 52, the mention of "many bodies of the saints which slept arose." I understand the Professor to cite the fact of eight named persons restored to life in support of the view that 8 points to a New Covenant. Now if the digit 8 is employed in connection with restored life, then it is necessary to take into account every record of restored life. The case is neither strengthened nor weakened by the fact that the restored person is named or unnamed ; the essential fact is, was the person under consideration restored to life ?

On p. 13, Professor Fleming refers to *Betelgeux* as having been "found to be a mass of gas about 273 million miles in diameter." In a recent remarkable book by Professor A. S. Eddington, entitled *Stars and Atoms*, the author says, referring to *Betelgeux* : "The diameter is about 300 million miles. *Betelgeux* is large enough to contain the whole orbit of the earth inside it, perhaps even the orbit of Mars. Its volume is about 50 million times the volume of the Sun." Perhaps the lecturer will kindly explain whether the figures he gives are approximate, round figures, or whether the difference is accounted for by recent research.

Mr. R. DUNCAN : Perhaps the following may serve as further illustrations of the statement in the paper that the number *Six* connotes imperfection :—

- (1) *Six* is the atomic number of Carbon, the central element in the structure of the organic world, over all the glory and beauty of which, as we know only too well, the signature of death is written.
- (2) The joyful procession homewards of the returned Ark was tragically interrupted by the death of Uzzah.

On resumption of the journey three months later we are told that, when they had gone *six* paces, seven bullocks and seven rams were sacrificed. The procession moved on then in gladness and rejoicing. Was there not in all this some intuitive recognition of man's essential imperfection as a follower of the law of God, and of the perfect sacrifice through which he is brought into joyful reconciliation with the law-giver?

- (3) The gematria of the name "Jesus," and the number of the Beast, or the man of sin, have the factors 3 and 37 in common. But in the former the additional factor is the extra-perfect number *Eight*, and in the latter (not without significance surely) the imperfect number *Six*.

I would hazard the suggestion that Number has its place and use in the spiritual world as well as the physical. Are not faith, hope, and love forms of spiritual energy capable, as experience shows, of varying in their amount or intensity? Why should they not be measurable therefore in terms respectively of some unit, and is there not a hint of this in Our Lord's words, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed"?

The designation "Wonderful Numberer," taken from the margin in Daniel, is applied in the paper to the Second Person of the Trinity. Is there not some witness to the truth of this identification in Our Lord's own words, "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered"? His disposition to think in tens may also be noted. Of this many illustrations will occur—ten talents, ten pounds, ten pieces of silver, an hundred sheep, and so on.

Mr. C. F. HOGG: If the Scriptures are indeed "inspired of God" (and how else can they be accounted for?) there is every reason to expect to discover in them the characteristic marks of divine workmanship. Whether the paper demonstrates that Number is such a characteristic is another matter, but in any case it makes a not inconsiderable contribution to the material on which a judgment may be formed.

I desire to put a few questions to the author of the paper, in hope of eliciting information on some points that seem to me to be important.

(1) On p. 21 it is stated that there is a characteristic number of chromosomes in the body-cells of different animals. Illustrations are given, but the characteristic number of chromosomes in the body-cells of the anthropoids is omitted. Will Dr. Fleming be kind enough to supply this to enable a comparison to be made with those of man ?

(2) On p. 22, the Psalms have from time to time been numbered differently. It is at least precarious to attempt to find a gematria in the number of the 119th, which is the 120th in the LXX. In a series of 150, seven, or any other primary number, is bound to have repeated influence. For example, we might be attracted by 147 with its factors  $7 \times 7 \times 3$ . But what conclusion could be drawn therefrom germane to the subject of the paper ? Then Dr. Fleming finds seven words for God's law. But usually ten are identified, as by the Massorah which associates them with the Ten Commandments. The Massorah adds to Dr. Fleming's list, "Word" (which translates two Hebrew words, and therefore is to be counted as two) and "righteousness," while other writers make a different list. Plainly there is nothing here to support the argument of the paper.

(3) On p. 22: "The fish was an early well-recognized symbol of the Christian believer." Not Christians, but CHRIST, was symbolized by the fish; hence it is not immediately evident on this ground that the number 153 suggests "the completed number of the redeemed." Moreover, the factor 8 is absent from 153, while the gematria of *ichthus* is 1219, an awkward number to reduce to factors; it yields neither 3, 7, 9, nor even 17 or 37.

(4) On p. 26, the description the Lord so frequently used of Himself as represented in the Gospels is *ho huios tou anthrōpou*, the gematria of which is 3030, not 2960. Dr. Fleming secures his result by omitting the article which, however, is an integral element in the title. Then why should "I am" be omitted before "The Bread of Life," but included with each of the other items in the list in which it appears ?

In view of these discrepancies it is well that we are able to dispense with "the arithmetical endorsement of" the New Testament doctrine of the Deity and Humanity of the Lord. Moreover, the Lord frequently spoke of Himself as "The Son"; here the gematria is 750, in which 8 is not a factor, nor is it in *logos* = 373, nor in "the Son

of God" = 2004. *Monogenēs theos* = 780, in which 8 is not a factor, *monogenēs huios* = 1176 ( $8 \times 148$ ), may comfort adherents of the *Textus Receptus*! But the statement that "twenty names and titles of our Lord, the gematria of which all have (8) as a factor" requires examination; these instances do not seem to warrant it.

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Dr. A. T. SCHOFIELD: I have read with much pleasure Dr. Fleming's remarkable paper, which, after many years at the Victoria Institute, I consider to be one of the best papers ever read.

I am much struck with the constant number of the rods in germinating cells, but most of all with the accuracy with which he exposes the now "fatal fault of current evolution, that it eliminates 'Mind.'" He shows that no fortuitous combination of mechanical forces could produce the constant numbers that rule the universe—that the postulation of an Almighty mind is a necessity. This leads on to Theism and God. But the Professor goes a step further, and does not conclude his wonderful paper till he leads us on to Christ and Christianity in a way not common among scientists.

Mr. MARTIN H. F. SUTTON: I have read with great satisfaction and deep interest the wonderful paper prepared by Dr. Fleming, each section of which is absorbingly interesting. I wonder if Dr. Fleming holds the view, which has been expressed on several occasions, that the Pleiades are, as it were, the *Axis* of all the universes, and the Seat of God's Authority.

Lieut.-Col. G. MACKINLAY: I rejoice that a lecturer has arisen who is able to meet scientific men on their own ground, and who is also, like so many of the men of a former age, a simple believer.

Our President has proved his point of harmonious design in the things of Nature, and has given us much food for serious thought. I observe that he has quoted Ivan Panin, and should be glad to know if he thinks that—in case of doubt regarding the form of any passage of Scripture—it would be possible to test the same by the principle of gematria. Panin does this to prove the authenticity of the last verses of Mark xvi.

Mr. R. McCORMACK: Dr. Fleming is deserving of grateful thanks for his illuminating and instructive paper, and for calling attention to



a subject which has not received the consideration its importance merits. Among every ancient people, especially in the East, importance was attached to numbers, Greek philosophy laying it down that "the elements of numbers are the elements of all things"; and the study of numbers, whether in Nature and Natural Science, or in the Bible, will be found both interesting and fascinating, and will well repay the student.

Dr. Fleming points out that certain numbers have a spiritual suggestiveness, and this symbolical meaning is true both in Nature and in the Bible. My own studies have been mainly in the number *Seven*, but I found that it was practically impossible to deal with *Seven* in Nature without taking in also the number *Four*, so interwoven were they together, more so indeed than any other two numbers. For it is generally agreed that, symbolically, *Four* is the number of Nature, of the World. Thus there are four seasons, four quarters of the earth, four phases of the moon, and so on. *Four* follows three and proceeds from it, and *Three* is the numerical symbol of the Triune God. Now three and four make *Seven*, so that *Seven* is the number used by God in His dealings with the world.

In none of the Natural Sciences does Number play a more important part than in chemistry. Everything is governed by laws, and these laws are chiefly numerical. Dr. Fleming has dealt with the Periodic Law of the Elements, a remarkable discovery, which excited ridicule when first propounded. Then the Law of Multiple Proportions is based upon numbers, and so important is it that it has been said that "the study of chemical composition would be unmanageable without it." Crystals, again, so far from being shapeless masses, consist of well-defined geometrical forms, and have been divided into 7 systems and into 32 ( $4 \times 8$ ) symmetry classes. There are 7 colours in the rainbow (3 and 4), 7 notes in music (also 3 and 4), 7 parts in the human body (head, neck, trunk and four limbs), and so on throughout Nature.

When we come to the Bible, Numbers are equally prominent, *Seven* taking easily the first place. The signs of the four Covenants were (1) with Noah, the 7-hued rainbow; (2) with Abraham, circumcision, which took place on the eighth day, *i.e.* when the child was 7 days old; (3) with Moses, the seventh day Sabbath (Exod. xxxi, 13, 17); and (4) of the Christian Covenant, Christ Himself, whose titles Christ

and Messiah both contain (in the Greek) 7 letters, the human name Jesus having only 6 (man's number). But just as the 7 Words from the Cross are not found in any one Gospel, but must be searched for, so we must search for the number 7. Thus the word "Covenant" occurs 7 times in Gen. ix (of Noah's covenant), and 14 times in Gen. xv, xvii (of Abraham's).

As minerals are sometimes found outcropping on the earth's surface, but for the most part have to be searched for underground, so, both in Nature and in the Bible, the number 7 and other numbers have to be searched for under the surface. It has only recently been discovered that the sentences, words, and letters in the true original text of Scripture are exact multiples of 7. Full particulars are given in my book "*The Heptadic Structure of Scripture, with a chapter on Seven and Four in Nature.*" Thus the words of the eminent geologist, Hugh Miller, are fully justified, that "it was He who created the worlds, that dictated the Scriptures," both indicating, as Dr. Fleming says, "a common origin in a Supreme Intelligence."

#### THE LECTURER'S REPLY.

Dr. J. A. FLEMING wrote: In making a short reply to some of the remarks and criticisms on my paper which have appeared in the discussion, one or two preliminary suggestions may be perhaps permitted which apply especially to objections raised to certain points by Mr. Leslie, Mr. Ruoff, and Mr. Hogg. One of these is that the doctrines and latent truths in Scripture are not given to us with such complete, unexceptionable proof as to compel intellectual assent without possibility of refutation.

All that we are afforded are powerful indications or converging lines of argument which give influential suggestions and provide an opportunity for the exercise of faith. In the next place we do not find either in Nature or in the Scriptures that absolute uniformity of events or statement which leave no room for difference of opinion. Hence to demand the complete demonstration without exception of uniformity in any of these gematria phenomena is to ask what is not possible, or at any rate not granted.

It is, of course, essential to ascertain that we are not "following cunningly devised fables" or pretending to detect an order which

we ourselves have created. All that is essential is to try to discover whether that order or numerical phenomena are of human or super-human creation.

Coming then to the particular objections: Mr. Leslie has asked the pertinent question, how many of the titles of our Lord have gematria which have not a factor of 8? It is impossible to answer this question definitely, because the appellations themselves refer to different attributes and powers. The digit 8 has reference to a new creation and new Covenant, and it should therefore not be expected as a factor in every title. I confess I have been surprised not to find it in certain very characteristic titles such as "The Lamb" (to *arnion*), or in "The Lamb of God," or in any equivalent words.

Mr. Hogg asks why the definite article (*ho*) is omitted before *huios tou anthropolou*, and why the "I am" is omitted before "Bread of Life"? These are perfectly fair criticisms, and I cannot say that I am prepared with any conclusive argument in reply. Everyone, however, must judge for themselves how far the instances quoted justify any attention being paid to these gematria properties or how far they are really due to chance. Anyone who will carefully read the books which have been published on the subject, such as Mr. Naish's *Spiritual Arithmetic*, or Mr. McCormack's *Heptadic Structure of Scripture*, or the books mentioned by Lieut.-Col. Kenney-Herbert, such as Bullinger's *Number in Scripture*, will find it very difficult to agree with the opinion that it is a mere accidental effect.

I disagree with Mr. Hogg's suggestion that the word *ichthus* applies to our Lord. The fish was an undoubtedly early symbol for the Christian believer, and the plural *ichthues* (= fishes) for believers in general under covenant. This last word has a gematria of  $1224 = 8 \times 153$ . With respect to Mr. Hogg's question about chromosome numbers, the books on Cytology state that any particular characteristic number of one species is not exclusive. Thus the monkey of South America has 54, but the Asiatic or African has 48. But no valid conclusions can be drawn from the identity of this last number 48 with that of man, for the chromosome number of the ox and the mouse is the same, viz., 38, and that of the opossum and female grasshopper of North America is 24.

Mr. Ruoff questions a statement in my paper that only 8 persons are mentioned by name in Scripture as having been restored to life.

He instances the man in Elisha's grave, and those who came out of their graves at the Crucifixion. We are not told that these last-named persons came back to ordinary bodily life for any time, as we have reason to believe was the case for the 7 others named. In reply to Mr. Ruoff's question about the size of *Betelgeux*, the diameters given in different books vary. The measurement is very difficult, and there may be unavoidable discrepancies.

Mr. Leslie refers to the question of the exactness of Soli-Lunar cycles. In the paper I have stated that the difference between 2,300 and  $1,260 = 1,040$  Solar years is the most exact cycle known. Since the reading of my paper I have had my attention drawn to a very important pamphlet by Mr. W. Bell Dawson, M.A., D.Sc., published in *The Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Vol. XI, § III, 1905, in which he proves that the mean of 2,300 and  $1,260 = 1,780$  Lunar years  $= 1,727$  Solar years, is even more exact than de Cheseaux's cycle of 1,040 Solar years. Its error is only 1 day in 16,920 years.

I think this must be sufficient by way of answer to criticisms as far as space permits. Let me in conclusion thank very heartily our Chairman (Dr. Thirtle) and other speakers for their kind remarks, and also express to the audience generally my grateful acknowledgments for their appreciation of my effort to render interesting the subject of "Number in Nature and Scripture."

705TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 2ND, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

ALFRED W. OKE, ESQ., LL.M., F.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections:—Professor Glenn G. Cole, Sc.D., Ph.D., as a Member, and H. H. Goodwin, Esq., Life Associate; as Associates: Alfred Corner, Esq., Vincent N. Cooper, Esq., Lieut.-Col. T. C. Skinner, and Alfred Norris, Esq.; and as a Library Associate: London University.

In the absence of the Rev. Dr. Flournoy, the CHAIRMAN read the paper for him, entitled "Christ and the Scriptures: What may we gather from His Attitude and Instruction?" being the Gunning Prize Essay for 1927.

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GUNNING PRIZE ESSAY.

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*CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES:  
WHAT MAY WE GATHER FROM HIS  
ATTITUDE AND INSTRUCTION?\**

By THE REV. PARKE P. FLOURNOY, D.D., LITT.D.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

**I**N studying the momentous subject, "Christ and the Scriptures," it is well to realize that we have before us the greatest Person this world has ever known, and to recognize His connection with the Old Testament, which Christians believe pointed forward to Him as our Redeemer from sin and its consequences. The bare mention of this theme, the highest which the human mind can contemplate, bids us bow in humble

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\* For descriptive title of Essay, as set out in competition circular, see p. 76.

acknowledgment of inability to comprehend it adequately, and yet with gratitude for ability by divine grace to cry, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." For we have before us the promises, the covenants, the types and shadows in the Old Testament; and we have Christ's own words about all these in the New Testament.

In our study of "Christ and the Scriptures," we naturally think of His use of the Scriptures, what He says about them, and what they say of Him. Thus we ascertain what was His attitude toward them and find His instructions about them.

For one striking instance of this we may well turn to a scene in Nazareth "where He had been brought up." We read: "He entered, as His custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.' And He closed the book and gave it back to the attendant and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, 'To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears.' And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth."

But then they began to cavil and tried to kill Him. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Thus we see how Jesus of Nazareth told the Nazarenes, his fellow-townsmen, that He was the Anointed, the Messiah, the Christ.

On the day of His resurrection, the first Lord's Day, another remarkable scene meets our eyes. Two of his followers were walking towards Emmaus, in utter disappointment and dejection on account of His death on the cross. He joined them, unknown to them in his changed condition, and—"beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27). Then, at the table in Emmaus, He revealed Himself to them in the blessing and breaking of bread. "Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight."

In this never-to-be-forgotten walk of Christ with the two, He had instructed them in the true meaning of the Scriptures

showing them the meaning of the cross, and that it "behoved the Messiah [the Christ, the Anointed] to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory." In their new joy their home, which they had sought in their sorrow (as in our griefs we all do), could hold them no longer: "And they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them, saying, 'The Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Simon.' And they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread."

"And as they spake these things, He Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.'" After thoroughly convincing them of His resurrection in the morning of that day, He said: "These are My words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their minds that they might understand the Scriptures."

Let us turn to a list of prophecies in the Old Testament the fulfilment of which we find in the New Testament for instance:—

*Gen. 3 : 15* : After God's curse upon the serpent, comes what contains a promise to Eve, though addressed to Satan: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise His heel." This was spoken of a woman, and has been fulfilled through the Son of a woman, blessed above all others. In it we may see an epitome of the world's history from the gates of Eden to the gates of glory, when Christ's triumph over Satan shall have been completely accomplished.

*Gen. 12 : 2, 3* : God's promise to Abraham, which we see in process of fulfilment in the progress of the Gospel among the nations of the earth.

*Gen. 49 : 10* : God's promise, uttered by Abraham's grandson, Jacob, on his death-bed, to Judah: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . till Shiloh come. To Him shall the obedience of the peoples be."

Then we have the promise to Israel through Moses in *Deut. 18 : 15*: "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee like unto me, unto Him ye shall hearken." Christ said: "He (*i.e.* Moses) wrote of Me." (See also *John 5 : 39, 45-47.*)

Then we have the great promise to David through Nathan, the prophet (2 Sam. 7 : 8 ff.). After this the Messianic *Psalms* were written, and in these we have Christ presented in the various parts of His redemptive work. The second *Psalm* shows "Jehovah and His Anointed," as "King of kings." In *Ps.* 22 : 1 ff. we see the Crucifixion; in *Ps.* 110 : 1 ff. Christ is the Supreme Ruler and "Priest forever." (Note also *Ps.* 118 : 22.)

Finally, there are the numerous passages in the Prophetical Books, such as :—

*Isa.* 52 : 13–53 ; 7 : 14 ; 9 : 6–7 ; *Jer.* 23 : 5–6 ("Jehovah, our Righteousness"); *Ezek.* 37 : 25 ("David, my servant shall be their Prince forever"); and in ch. 34, Jehovah is called "the Good Shepherd" (see *John* 10 : 11). Also in *Dan.* 9 : 24–26 ; *Micah* 5 : 2–4 ("Thou Bethlehem," etc.); *Zech.* 9 : 9, 10 ; *Mal.* 3 : 1–3 ; 4 : 2–3 (see *John* 1 : 1–5).

Space cannot be claimed for a full discussion of all these, or of many others ; but attention may be directed, especially to *Ps.* 22, with its picture of the Crucifixion ; to *Isa.* 53, with its presentation of "The sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow"; to *Ps.* 110, and its fulfilment—*Mark* 12 : 36 ; to *Ezek.* 37 : 25, in which Christ is called "David"; to *Isa.* 7 : 14 and 9 : 6, 7 ("A virgin shall bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel. . . . The government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, set upon the throne of David"), to *Dan.* 9 : 24–26, in which it is prophesied that the time of His coming "is to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness," etc. ; and, finally, to *Mal.* 4 : 2–3, the last prophecy of our Old Testament, with its portrayal of Christ's coming as the "Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings" of light, without which there would be outer darkness and death ; *with* it, the glorious light of life everlasting.

Having before us these prophecies about Christ it will be well to recognize a fact which troubles some minds, namely, that there are many prophetical utterances in the Old Testament which do not refer directly to Christ. To account for this, it is only necessary to remember that the prophets were the divinely chosen teachers of their contemporaries as well as "seers" of things to come in the distant future ; and that we may not be able to understand clearly their instructions addressed to those of their



own times, because we may not know their state of mind, and the circumstances and conditions among which these contemporaries lived. A traveller among mountains and vales, looking backward or forward from some lofty peak, may see clearly the heights in the sunshine, while the lower grounds in their shadows are seen less distinctly, or not at all.

So we may find that most of the prophets' views are, to us, on these lower grounds, so to speak; that is, below our range of vision, and in dim shadows: but now and then, one after another of the prophets rises to some mountain-top of vision, and sees the great future and Him who is coming, the Light of the World, to illuminate it.

The first of them, Abraham, by God's promise and inspiration, through a vista of twenty centuries, as Christ tells us, "rejoiced that he should see My day; and he saw it, and was glad." (R. V. *margin*.)

Through the ages afterward, many prophets, from mounts of spiritual vision saw it too, and through their golden words shining on the pages of the Old Testament thrill our hearts with joy, as we see their fulfilment in the New, which gives us the testimony of His "witnesses."

And here we cannot but think of that Mount of Moriah as if raised to a loftier height of vision, where, with a heart wrung with anguish, Abraham offered up Isaac, his son of promise, giving us a glimpse of that infinitely higher gift of love by the Father who "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."

In Rev. 19: 10, we have a significant utterance about prophecy, which from Genesis to Malachi points to Christ. "*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*" When the spirit has left a human body we find the body dead. The testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Messiah, the Christ who was to come, was the *very spirit, the very life*, of that testimony; and when the Jewish teachers attributed it not to Jesus, but to an imaginary Messiah, a militarist king who should deliver Israel from Rome, they took Jesus out of the Scriptures, divesting it of the spirit, the life, of that testimony. Alas! the teachers of the Jews, leading them to reject Christ, have their successors in our day in those who teach that Jesus, though the greatest of teachers, and the greatest exemplar and social reformer, was only this, and nothing more. They deprive Prophecy of its spirit, *its very life*, and leave it a cadaver for them and their followers.

Critics have boldly contradicted our Saviour; asserting that there is no predictive prophecy in the Old Testament. But we have these prophecies before our eyes, and know that they were recorded hundreds of years before the Christian era; we know that they were predictive, and we are just as sure that they were supernatural as that we have the ability to think, and that there is an indissoluble relation between cause and effect.

The Weather bureau can tell what to-morrow's weather will probably be; they judge from a wide area of observations through telegraph or radio. But even with this knowledge they are sometimes mistaken. The acute politician also often predicts who will be the next president or the next local magistrate; but we find him mistaken sometimes, in spite of his acuteness and all his knowledge of conditions.

But when we find the great number of prophecies of the Old Testament, made by many writers at widely separated periods, all of them hundreds, and some thousands, of years before their fulfilment, we know that these predictions are true, and that they are supernatural; because we know that the human mind which knows not what the morrow will bring forth, is incapable of revealing such things as these, centuries, and, in some cases, millenniums, before they occur. In other words, we are sure that they are guided by Him who alone knows the end from the beginning.

What is the necessary deduction from all these particulars as to the authorship of the promises to Abraham and of the covenant sealed with an oath? It can be no other than that they are of God, who "knoweth the end from the beginning," and has omnipotence to bring to pass what He has promised. The world's history of four thousand years is the proof of the fulfilment. This world stands up as witness, and its testimony is indubitable. For we know that Christ Jesus has been the supreme blessing to the sinful, suffering world, and this record—the Word of God—utters its message in more than eight hundred languages and dialects.

Is not this miraculous? We do not see a Lazarus rising from the grave; but millions untold have heard the call, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." He has given it. (*See* John 12: 35, 36.)

No normal, unprejudiced mind can fail to see that here is God giving His word of promise, and numberless spiritual miracles in saved sinners and transformed lives attest it. We read the

prophetic promises made to Abraham, Moses, and David thousands of years ago, and we see their fulfilment all around us.

Whatever may have been said against the Scriptures of the Old Testament by men of all the centuries of the Christian era, from the Gnostics of the first to the Higher Critics of the nineteenth and twentieth, there are two great facts seen on its pages staring us in the face: the Ten Commandments, and the prophecies of the Messiah, Christ, the Anointed; and these latter, from early words of Genesis to the last page of Malachi, history shows fulfilled in part.

At the gates of Eden, we see the age-long contest between the seed of the woman and the progeny of Satan beginning and continuing till the final triumph at the gates of glory. (Gen. 3 : 15.)

In the twenty-fourth Psalm we hear the shout of triumph, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." Then the question, "Who is this King of Glory?" Then the answer, "The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle." Then, on the last page of the Old Testament, we read: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Those who have felt these healing beams know who this is. The horizon to be gilded by His rising was four centuries distant, but those who feared His name were filled with joy as Simeon, who took the Babe in his arms, "And blessed God and said: 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord, according to thy word, in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.'" "This man was righteous and devout, looking for the Consolation of Israel." And aged Anna, the prophetess, "Coming up at that hour, gave thanks unto God, and spake of Him unto all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." (R.V.)

The link which binds the Old and New Testaments together is more than four centuries long. But is it therefore easily broken? Looking at prophecies in the Old Testament and seeing their fulfilment in the New, we behold the miracle of the ages, a miracle of mind—of omniscient mind.

Can this long link which binds the two Testaments together as the Word of God be severed? We must answer "No, because it unites the covenants, the Old and the New, making them the one Covenant, which God, in His good pleasure made with His own of the former and of following ages; He made it

in infinite love, and welded it with an oath, and then with His Son's blood. Satan with all his anti-Christian 'seed' cannot break it, for He who made it is the Almighty. Knowing this, unless a veil is upon our hearts, we cannot fail to see and feel that through our Lord Jesus Christ we 'have everlasting life.' (John 3: 16).

Even some of the most distinguished Higher Critics have spoken decidedly as to Christ and the Scriptures. The late Dr. Cheyne, speaking against this questioning of Christ's authority in what He said of the Scriptures, was one of these. In his book, "The Prophecies of Isaiah," we find the following:— "It is at least not irrational to maintain that the 'prophetic voices' which announce the Messiah in the Old Testament, are so definite, so distinct, and in such agreement with history, as to prove that God has in very deed revealed Himself to Israel . . . in a fuller sense than to other nations." On the same page he had just written: "Everything in the Old Testament stands in some relation to Christ, whether definitely or not." (Vol. II, p. 94.)

As to Christ's "authority" in His references to the Old Testament, Professor Cheyne says: "If, again, you believe in the true, though veiled, divinity of Jesus Christ, and humbly accept His decrees on all points essentially connected with His Messiahship, you will feel loyally anxious to interpret the Old Testament as He, beyond question, interpreted it. You will believe His words when He says: 'The Scriptures . . . are they which testify of me.' You will reply to non-Christian critics: 'In spite of modern criticism and exegesis, there must be some sense in which the words of my Lord are true . . . He who received not the Spirit by measure, cannot have been mistaken in the Messianic character of Psalms and Prophecies.'"

Another eminent critic, Sir George Adam Smith, has this to say ("The Book of Isaiah," p. 267): "This brings us to the culminating passage (ch. 52: 13—53). Is the Servant still a personification here, or, at last and unmistakably, a Person? It may relieve the air of that electricity which is apt to charge it at the discussion of so classic a passage as this; and secure us calm weather in which we examine exegetical details, if we at once assert, what none but prejudiced Jews have ever denied, that this great prophecy, known as the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, was fulfilled in One Person, Jesus of Nazareth, and achieved in all its details by Him alone."

## II.—TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The question asked by many doubters in the matter of "Christ and the Scriptures" is, "Are these writings genuine and authentic?"

It is true that the original records in both Old and New Testaments have passed through the hands of innumerable copyists in the ages of their existence, and that some of these transcribers may have failed to make *perfect* copies of the original records, or of the copies of these which lay before them. This would have been impossible without a great number of inspired copyists through the ages; and there were none. The consequence is that in the texts we have many "various readings." But this is the case with all ancient writings that have come down to us from the times before the invention of printing.

The advantage of the Scriptures over all other ancient books is, that we have a vast number of copies of these, in the handwriting of different ages, to compare with each other, and thus we may trace and winnow out mistakes by comparing manuscripts one with another. In this the Scriptures have the pre-eminence over all other ancient books which have gone through the process of transcription through long ages. Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, Ph.D., Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, tells us: "We owe our knowledge of most of the great works of Greek and Latin literature—Æschylus, Sophocles, Thucydides, Horace, Lucretius, Tacitus, and many more—to manuscripts written from 900 to 1,500 years after their authors' deaths: while of the New Testament we have two excellent and approximately complete copies at an interval of 250 years."

Then, we are to remember that the *number* of manuscripts of the Latin and Greek classics bears no comparison with that of the New Testament, as just stated. As to the various readings in the New Testament, Westcott and Hort, the learned editors of the Greek New Testament, say: "If comparative trivialities, such as the changes of order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names and the like, are set aside, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt can hardly amount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament. . . . In the variety and fulness of the evidence on which it rests, the text

of the New Testament stands absolutely and unapproachably alone among ancient prose writings."

This is the testimony of scholars of our own day as to the preservation of the purity of the text of our Greek New Testament, through the Christian centuries, in spite of the host of copyists who handled it before printing began. Besides, we have a vast number of quotations of the New Testament in the works of the early Christian writers, from the close of the first century onward, and translations of the New Testament in various languages.

### III.—CHRIST, THE AUTHOR OF THE PROPHECIES.

After studying the prophecies concerning Christ, perhaps some of us have failed to think of one great fact—their authorship. John tells us that, "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1 : 18).

The Apostle Peter speaks of the Prophets studying their own prophecies to find out the full meaning of them, foretelling the great salvation; "Searching what time and what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ which was in them* did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them" (1 Pet. 1 : 11. R.V.).

Peter says again: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1 : 21). So, the Holy Spirit by whom the prophets were "moved" was the Spirit of Christ. Christ who "declared" the Father whom no man has, at any time, seen, but was "declared" by Christ, when He was here on earth, and said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and "I and my Father are one." He also manifested Him through the prophecies, of which He said: "These are they which testify of Me."

John tells us: "All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." If all creation, "the heavens and the earth," which God created, were made through the agency of His Son, so it seems that He it was through whom the prophecies were inspired by His Spirit—the Spirit of Christ which was in them.

So we find Christ in the Scriptures, not only as their central subject but also as their author. This seems to be in keeping with the theophanies, such as God walking with Adam in Eden,

in the form of a man, standing with Abraham as "the Lord," when the two that were with him had gone to Sodom. Was not this Christ ?

This brings us to the greatest of all mysteries—The Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit, not separate, but *one—One God*.

And yet, Christ, the Son of God, the Son of man, prays to His Father ; suffers, dies, arises from the tomb ; ascends to the throne in glory ; and the Holy Spirit, according to the promise of the Father, is sent by the Father and the Son on the day of Pentecost ; sent to give the needful enlightenment and power to the "witnesses" of Christ.

One of the old Christian fathers speaks of the Father, as *hê pégê Theotêtos*, "The Fountain of Godhead." This suggests to us, as an illustration, a spring, away up at the summit of some great mountain, utterly inaccessible, so that no man hath, at any time, seen it. Yet we know it is there ; for a stream flows down from it, and the stream we *do* see. And along that stream, even though it may run through a desert, like Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, we see the borders of it full of life, flowering into exquisite beauty and fruitfulness. Under them at their roots, the stream is invisible, but not inactive. In their roots there is a living power from this unseen moisture.

The fountain, the stream, and the invisible moisture *are all one water*, but in different conditions. No man hath seen God at any time ; but many have seen Christ, and millions know Him as their Saviour. No man has seen the Holy Spirit ; but millions have felt His life-giving power in the very roots of their being ; and all men see in true Christian characters and deeds the fruits and flowers of pure and beautiful lives.

#### IV.—THE NEW TESTAMENT NECESSARY.

Of the necessity of a New Testament to follow the Old, after the coming of Christ, there can be no doubt. It was necessary that the personality, deeds, and teaching of Christ, and of those whom He chose to be His "witnesses," should be recorded for the evangelistic work among the Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles of the early days of Christianity, and for all the world for following ages.

It was necessary that this divine teaching should be *recorded*, in order to its preservation, and to save it from the fate of

such oral versions of it as we have in the so-called "*Logia of Jesus*," which have been discovered in our times, and are evidently distorted. It has always been necessary, as affording proof of the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and for giving to men of all ages the Word of God in its completeness, as the "sword of the Spirit," for the conquest of Satan and the salvation of believers. "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently . . . searching what *time* or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you by them that preached the Gospel unto you, by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into." (R.V.)

Does not this show the need of a New Testament to solve the mystery of these prophecies? It shows us clearly why Christ was obliged to suffer shame, tortures, and the cross, and then to enter the scene of the glories which followed, needed in order that He, our Prophet, Priest and King, may bring us to them, too, saved and sanctified through the *Word of God*, fully given in the New Testament.

We find the New Testament used in foreign missionary work by Quadratus and others who succeeded the Apostles whom they had known. (See Eusebius, "*Eccl. Hist.*," ch. 37, p. 123.) "These, as the holy disciples of such men, also built up the churches whose foundations had been previously laid in every place by the Apostles. They augmented the means of promulgating the Gospel more and more, and spread the seeds of salvation and of the heavenly kingdom throughout the world . . . Afterwards they performed the office of evangelists to those who had not heard the faith, whilst with a noble ambition to proclaim Christ, they also delivered to them *the books of the Holy Gospels.*"

Christ's ministry called for the New Testament, and He pre-authenticated it. See especially the great promise (John 14 : 25, 26); of inspiration: "And the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me" (v. 24). "But these things I have spoken unto you being present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will



send in My name, He shall teach you *all things* and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever *I* have said unto you" (vv. 25, 26).

If, after Christ had gone, there had been no Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, if there had been no New Testament written, and no Church of Christ established, it would have been easier for agnostics and sceptics to imagine that these words were not the Father's, spoken through His Son; but when we find that the promised Spirit *was* given, that there *was* a New Testament written in due time (the record of a New Covenant with His people), and that this Gospel, this good news, has filled the hearts of myriads and millions with a new joy and new power for holy living—and of service true unto death—published now in many hundreds of languages—the greatest power for the good of this sinful world, it is very hard to believe that these words are the utterance of a mere enthusiast. If they were such, could there ever have been a Paul? But there *was* a Paul, of whom our Lord said: "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake."

And this "chosen vessel" is still, through his writings, after all these centuries, bearing that name above all names, with its sweet odours purifying increasing multitudes from the corruption of sinful hearts in a sinful world. "As it is in truth the word of God"\* (1 Thess. 2:13—Paul-inspired). Here we see that His attitude toward the Scriptures was that of absolute authority. For He spoke His Father's words.

#### V.—NEW TESTAMENT OF THE MARTYRS.

In Harnack's "What is Christianity?" the English translation of which was published in 1901, we find him saying—"In particular, the Fourth Gospel, which does not emanate or profess to emanate from the Apostle John, cannot be taken as an historical authority in the ordinary meaning of the word" (p. 31).

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\* Eminent critics are turning back to divine inspiration. "The Biblical Review" (New York), October, 1925; Möller, König, and others.

But suppose we go back about eighteen centuries, and see what a man born at Sychar (about the time of this Apostle's death) thought of this Fourth Gospel. This man was Justin Martyr, who "witnessed unto blood" in Rome, A.D. 163. He addressed two "Apologies" (defences of Christians) to the Emperor Antoninus Pius; and these "Apologies," as well as Justin's "Dialogue," we have in their original Greek. What do we find? That Justin quotes the Synoptic Gospels quite extensively, and undoubtedly uses the Fourth Gospel also. Who can doubt this last when we find such expressions as these: "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Here we have words from John 3:3, 5. These are followed by the words of Nicodemus, who thought there could not be a second birth ("First Apology," 61:15).

Again, in the "First Apology," 67, we also have a reference to John 1:3. Justin speaks of the Christians worshipping on Sunday—"the Day of the Sun"—*Heliou hēmera*—and of the reading of the "Memoirs" of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets, showing that these "Memoirs" (which in another place he calls Gospels, were regarded as Holy Scriptures. Justin also speaks of "the Apostles and their followers," as the writers of these Gospels. We know of Matthew and John as Apostles, and of Mark and Luke as their "followers," and this accords with the authorship of the Four Gospels, as reliable tradition from the first century assures us. The validity of this tradition is made sure by the testimony of Justin and his eminent contemporaries.

The late Dr. Basil Gildersleeve, Professor of Greek in Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, author of "The Apologies of Justin Martyr," says in his Introduction to this volume (xxxvi): "If Justin was acquainted with the Fourth Gospel, the whole fabric of a great historical school falls to the ground." He refers, of course, to the Tübingen school, of which Ferdinand Christian Baur was the leader. Baur held that Paul wrote the four Epistles—to Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, and Galatians—and that John, the beloved disciple, wrote the Apocalypse; but that the other books of the New Testament were spurious productions, and especially that the Four Gospels, containing the facts which are the basis of Christianity, were written long after the death of their reputed authors, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So he concluded that Matthew may have been written about A.D. 130; Luke about A.D. 150; Mark could not have

originated earlier than the decade A.D. 150-160; and that John must have been written in the decade A.D. 160-170!

Here we have an amazing instance of the follies of the wise, and of the possibility of mistakes made by the very learned, and that in the line of their own chosen studies. Baur relied, not on facts, but on theories, especially the fanciful theory of Hegel, that such writings are produced in three stages—thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. But facts are more reliable than fancies, though they be of rainbow beauty and brightness.

Justin was joined in Rome by another man, who wore the Greek philosopher's cloak, and had travelled much in studying the various phases of philosophy in various countries. Having studied the Greek philosophies, he was inclined to Platonism; but, under Justin's instructions, he became a convert to Christianity about A.D. 150. Like Justin, he continued to wear his philosopher's cloak, considering that in Christianity he had found the truest philosophy.

This man, Tatian, seems to have remained in Rome with Justin until the latter's martyrdom in A.D. 163; and somewhere in that thirteen years (in co-operation with Justin, as the late Dr. Sanday thought) he produced one of the most remarkable works of early Christian literature which has come down to us, "The Diatessaron of Tatian."\* After eighteen centuries of unrecognized existence, hidden from sight and forgotten, "The Diatessaron" has come to light in our times; and it has proven to be the axe lying at the root of the Tübingen theories; it has brought down the tree whose poisonous fruits have been fatal to many souls. It is a cause for joy and gratitude to know that (to use the expression of Professor Gildersleeve) "the whole fabric of a great historical school falls to the ground."

It is wellnigh inconceivable that Justin, Tatian's guide, and almost certainly his co-labourer, should have been ignorant of this Fourth Gospel, of which Tatian, at his side, made such extensive use. It has been well said that the "*Diatessaron* is the key to Justin." On the basis of extracts from the four Gospels, Tatian made a biographical narrative of our Lord's life in Palestine, His Death upon the Cross, His Resurrection and Ascension; he took 96 per cent. of the Gospel of John, 76·5 per

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\* "Diatessaron" ("Through Four") is made up of extracts from the Four Gospels interwoven to make a continuous account of Christ's words and works.

cent. of Matthew, 50 per cent. of Mark, and 66 per cent. of Luke.\* Hence, all the Four Gospels must have been fully accredited by the Apostles and their fellow-Christians for a considerable time before a harmony like "The Diatessaron of Tatian" could have been thought of. The work was named "*Through the Four*," indicating that these Four Gospels, and none others, were thus accredited and used by the churches of the time.

We must also hear another eminent writer—one who was born about A.D. 150, fifty years after the death of the Apostle John, many of whose oldest contemporaries must have been younger contemporaries of the Apostle. Hippolytus is one of the saints of the Roman calendar, his *festa* being marked in the Breviary as August 22nd. His statue in the Vatican bears inscribed on its base, "Episcopus Portuensis" (*i.e.* Bishop of Portus, "the port" at the mouth of the Tiber). He was the martyr who gave his life for the Lord on the island of Sardinia.

Hippolytus, according to Bunsen, uses or refers to every book of the New Testament except the Second Epistle of Peter.† Here Bunsen seems to have been mistaken; for speaking of two heretics, Zephyrinus and Callistus, Hippolytus uses language which suggests 2 Pet. 2 : 22 as its origin.‡ The important point is that Hippolytus held by the authority of the New Testament. Bunsen says: "The expressions of Hippolytus on the paramount authority in all matters of faith and doctrine are as strong as those of the Reformers." This is by no means an exaggeration; for Hippolytus speaks of the New Testament writing as "The Holy Scriptures" and "The Word of God."

He writes: "There is one God, my brothers, and Him we know only by the Holy Scriptures. . . . Thus, all those who wish to practise the divine wisdom will not learn it from any other source than from *the Word of God*." Further on he adds: "Not according to our own will, not according to our reason, nor forcing what God has given; but let us see all this as He has willed to show it by the *Holy Scriptures*."

Now, why do we bring the testimony of Hippolytus to bear on the early production and acceptance as Holy Scripture of the New Testament writings? Partly because he was a man of unusual eminence and ability. Born only about fifty years after the Apostle John died, and brought up under the tutelage of

\* "Ante-Nicene Fathers," vol. ix, p. 39.

† "Hippolytus and His Age," vol. ii, p. 144.

‡ "Wallowing in the mire," is the expression.

Irenæus, who quoted the Scriptures, and the New Testament books as part of them, just as Hippolytus, his pupil, has been found to do. As instructor in his youth, he had Irenæus, who was brought up in Asia Minor, where John spent his last days among the seven churches of Asia, he could become familiar with all that was told by the martyr Polycarp, who was a contemporary, for fifty years or more, of the Apostle John. We know from a letter which Irenæus wrote to Florinus, a man who had been his fellow-student under Polycarp's instruction, how Polycarp was accustomed to tell these young men about John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." In this way Hippolytus drank of the pure stream of knowledge very near its fountain-head, before it became contaminated by the traditions of designing men.

"The *Philosophoumena*" of Hippolytus is written largely on the same subject as the book "Against Heresies," which his teacher, Irenæus, had written. He seems to have amplified notes taken from lectures of his teacher, adding, of course, what had come later in this time of rank heresies, thirty-two of which he deals with, or mentions in his "*Philosophoumena*."

Of these three men, lineal descendants, so to speak, two died as martyrs for Christ—Hippolytus and Polycarp; while the other, Irenæus, went to Gaul to fill the breach made by the martyrdom of Pothinus, the venerable leader of the Christians in what we now call France. It has been asserted that he too died a martyr's death; but there is no reliable evidence of this.

Lightfoot says of Irenæus: "He assumes throughout, not only that our four canonical Gospels alone were acknowledged in the Church in his own time, but that this had been so from the beginning."

He was a contemporary of Polycarp for perhaps more than 30 years, and Polycarp was a contemporary of the Apostle John for probably more than 50 years. At his martyrdom in A.D. 155 at Smyrna, he said he had served Christ for 86 years,\* and the Apostle John had been dead then only about 55 years. What book among the Latin and Greek classics has such testimony to genuineness as these Gospels? Let any scholar attempt to tell us.

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\* He seems, from the various expressions about his extreme old age at the time of his martyrdom, to have been nearly, if not quite, 100 years old (86 + 14 = 100), if he began this service at 14 years of age.

Let us read from the "Letter of Irenæus to Florinus," who had been his fellow-pupil under Polycarp: "For I remember the events of those times better than the events of recent occurrence, as the studies of our youth growing with our minds become one with them; so that I can tell the very spot where the blessed Polycarp, being seated, used to discourse; his out-goings and his in-comings; his manner of life; the form of his body; his conversations with the people, and his familiar intercourse with John, as he was accustomed to tell; as also with others who had seen the Lord. How also he used to relate their discourses and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord; also concerning His miracles and His doctrine [teaching].

"All these were told by Polycarp in consistency with Holy Scripture\* [see how he speaks of the Gospels!] as he had received them from those who had been eye-witnesses of the life of the Word." (This is the title which is given Christ in the first verse of John's Gospel, as we all know.)

Here we see that what Polycarp told Irenæus, his pupil, and Florinus, his fellow-pupil, and probably many others who were under his instruction, came directly from the Apostle John himself. We can form some judgment, as to what John told Polycarp about Christ, from what John tells us in His Gospel—for instance, such things as the following:—(Gospel of John, 1:14) "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father." And this, from his First Epistle: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you."

Now when Irenæus (in the remnant of his works which we have) quotes the Gospels five hundred times and almost every book of the New Testament,† we may be very sure that he had very full information about them. He would not have called them "the Gospels" of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, if he had not known that they were the Gospels of the Four Evangelists.

We have the Greek and Roman classics, as we call them;

\* Of the writings of Polycarp all are lost except his "Epistle to the Philippians," which, according to high authority, is "chiefly valuable as a means of proving, by its use of scriptural phraseology, the authenticity of most of the books of the *New Testament*."

† See "Lives of the Fathers," by Dean Farrar, pp. 100 ff.

have we any such evidence that they came from Xenophon, Herodotus, Euripides, Thucydides, or Cæsar, Horace, Plautus, as this testimony of Hippolytus, Irenæus, and Polycarp, about the Gospels ?

#### VI.—THE NEW TESTAMENT A RELIABLE WITNESS FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Many are saying, or implying, that the Old Testament is not a trustworthy witness, and some would feel freer and relieved of anxiety if both Testaments were proven false. In the nineteenth century, German criticism (which soon became world-criticism) to a large extent asserted that the Four Gospels were not written until the second century, and therefore, could not have been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But discoveries made, especially in the fourth quarter of the last century, show quite plainly the falsity of this, and that the Gospels and the writings that follow them in the New Testament yield the highest proof of genuineness.

As to the dates of the Synoptic Gospels, we now have the testimony of Professor Adolf Harnack, probably the most prominent of all German Higher Critics, who was the successor of Ferdinand Christian Baur, the founder of the Tübingen school in days antecedent to the discovery of "The Apology of Aristides," the "Four Gospels in Syriac Recovered from Mount Sinai," and "The Diatessaron of Tatian." Let us hear Harnack:—

In 1911 he wrote "The Date of the Acts and of the Synoptics." In ch. i, he discussed "The identity of the author of the 'we' sections of the Acts with the author of the whole work," and proceeds (p. 34): "He (Luke) did not, at all events, invent the central fact (Council at Jerusalem, Acts 15) that the leaders on both sides came to an agreement that was temporarily satisfactory, and that the mission to the Gentiles was thus recognized." (P. 93) "I have now come to believe that there is a high degree of probability in favour of an early date for the Lukan writings. I am therefore compelled to attack the problem afresh, and to come to a definite decision. If the solution which I propose must have the effect of revolution within the sphere of criticism, the revolution is only one of chronology. The conclusion of the Acts (28:30-31) must always form the starting-point for an attempt to ascertain the date of the work; it runs as follows

(see the passage, 'Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, receiving all that came unto him, preaching the kingdom of God,' etc.). It has never been questioned, so far as I know, that these words proceed from the author of the complete work, even though they have the appearance of a post-script—the real conclusion of the book is 28 : 25–28. Moreover, in content and form they agree so closely with the Lukan style that from this point of view strong arguments can be produced in favour of their genuineness."

Again (p. 97): "The more clearly we see that the trials of St. Paul, and, above all, his appeal to Cæsar, is the chief subject of the last quarter of the Acts, the more hopeless does it appear that we can explain why the narrative breaks off as it does, otherwise than by assuming that the trial had actually not yet reached its close. Moreover, we note that nowhere in the Acts is either St. Peter or St. Paul so treated as if his death was presupposed; we, indeed, rather receive the contrary impression. Neither is the slightest reference made to the martyrdom of St. Paul, nor one word said concerning the final destiny of St. Paul (and of St. Peter)! Is this natural?"

Further (p. 99): "We are, accordingly, left with the result *that the concluding verses of the Acts of the Apostles, taken in conjunction with the absence of any reference in the book to the result of the trial of St. Paul and to his martyrdom, make it in the highest degree probable that the work was written at a time when St. Paul's trial in Rome had not yet come to an end.*" (Italics Harnack's.)

Harnack goes on to show that the Acts must have been written before A.D. 70, because it contains no mention "of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, of Nero's persecution of the Christians, and of other important events that occurred in the seventh decade of the first century." "*This means that the Acts of the Apostles, taken by itself requires of us that we set its composition before the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of St. Paul. We thus arrive at a terminus ad quem for the dating of the Synoptic Gospels, at least for St. Mark and St. Luke.*" (Italics Harnack's.)

He repeats, (p. 133): "The view gained by our investigation of the Lukan writings is that St. Mark must have written his Gospel during the sixth decade of the first century at latest."

The Aramaic Gospel of Matthew which Papias, Bishop of Sardis (who had conversed with presbyters of the Apostolic age) mentions, was earlier still. Even the Gospel of Matthew, in Greek,



which we have, seems to have been more widely known, and at an earlier time, than Mark and Luke. Papias is said to have been "the hearer of John and the companion of Polycarp" (see Caspar René Gregory's "Canon and Text of the New Testament").

This "revolution" in the views of Professor Harnack, who was the most prominent opposer of the traditional date of the Gospels, is the most remarkable occurrence in the history of New Testament criticism. An uncompromising leader of the Tübingen school founded by Baur, an antagonist of Zahn of Erlangen, the great leader of those who held to the genuineness of New Testament writings, he lived to become convinced of his mistake, especially through the discovery of the Sinai Palimpsest found by Mrs. Lewis in the St. Katharine convent on Mount Sinai, and of "The Diatessaron of Tatian," and also, by the discoveries made by Sir W. M. Ramsay in Syria and Asia Minor, confirming the traditional dates of the Acts and the Synoptic Gospels.

Since this "two whole years in his own hired house" indicates the completion of the Acts in A.D. 62, and there is not the slightest hint in the document of Paul's condemnation, or of Nero's persecution of Christians, Harnack's conclusion as to the date of the Acts, and, of course, the earlier date of Luke's Gospel, which he is sure must be later than Mark's, is certainly true.

He also points out that Luke, who had written the account, in Acts 7, of the martyrdom of Stephen with such sympathetic vividness, could not have failed to portray the condemnation and execution of Paul, his own companion and dearest friend, in a similar way, if these had been accomplished before he wrote. When we read, in 2 Tim. 4 : 6-8, Paul's triumphant salutatory, we cannot imagine Luke's omission of his glorious exodus, if he had written the Acts after it.

And are we not more deeply impressed when we come to look at that picture of Stephen's martyrdom by Paul, while he himself stood "consenting to his death," and taking care of the robes laid off by his murderers, that they might hurl with more force the cruel stones while the martyr prayed: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge?" (Acts 22 : 20.) Can any one imagine that Luke would have recorded this without a word about Paul's own cruel death, if he had already been slain when he wrote "the Acts"?

It is to be hoped that sufficient evidence has been given to convince unsophisticated readers of the genuineness of the New Testament. The external proofs, providentially greatly

augmented by recent discoveries, make the book to be unique among ancient writings which have survived to our day. But it should not be forgotten that the crowning evidence of the divine inspiration and trustworthiness of the New Testament and of its reliableness as a witness for the Old Testament is *internal*—the unique quality of the book constitutes an irrefutable witness—indeed, becomes the chief witness. External evidences may be important for those who have read the lucubrations of Higher Critics and the journalistic flings of writers of periodical literature, who seem ignorant of the true state of the case.

But those who, like Timothy, have known the Scriptures from childhood, believe because they have experienced the “unspeakable gift” which God has given through His Word. Hence, in the writings they behold Christ, with unveiled faces, and rejoice in the hope of seeing Him face to face. To believers, Christ in the Scriptures is no indistinct figure of the imagination, but the Lord of Glory, who became the Son of Man, our Redeemer, our Saviour; He is Prophet to teach, Priest to atone, King to control; and by the power of His Holy Spirit we shall overcome, conquer, become “more than conquerors,” in the great battle with Satan and self.

We seek to make plain that the writers of the New Testament continually bear witness to the Old Testament as the Word of God; but above their voices is that of Christ Himself speaking with “authority,” possessed and owned by Him who is not only the supreme subject of the ancient writings, but their Author, through the agency of His Spirit given to them. They all bore record of Him who was to come.

## VII.—INSPIRATION AND THE CANON.

Attention must now be turned to two subjects which are far more difficult to treat satisfactorily than have been those with which we have been engaged, namely, the Inspiration of the Scriptures and their Canonical authority.

The word “inspiration” is used in literature in various ways. An address or a book may be called inspirational, because it inspires us with new earnestness in the pursuit of ends and accomplishments to which it points; and some are saying that while they do not believe the Bible to have been divinely *inspired*, it is *inspiring* beyond most other books. This denies the unique

character of the Bible as the Word of God. As to the inspiration of the Scriptures, it is something radically different, something far beyond this, though, all the while to millions it is the most inspiring Book in the world, and has inspired, and still inspires, vast numbers to the accomplishment of difficult deeds, the bearing of heavy burdens, and facing continually loss, and death itself.

On the other hand, inspiration is not mechanical dictation ; certainly not always so. Even in such cases as it is where we read "Thus saith Jehovah," or where some such indication of it is plainly given, we can hardly think of it as dictation to a typist. In large part, the Scriptures reveal the individuality of its writers, while at the same time—and this is the important point—they are guided by an influence, which is none other than that of the Spirit of God—"the Spirit of Christ which was in them."

Consider the vast number of prophecies, and contemplate the types in sacrifices and priests, also in prophets—Moses, for instance, was the type of Christ, the Prophet of prophets ; David, in spite of human weaknesses and sins, was, in his kingly office, a type of Him who in the fulness of time, was to come as King of kings and Lord of lords. Do we not see herein what God alone could have known, because He alone could bring it to pass, and cause it to have place in Scripture ? The Bible is the Book of Christ—it foreshadows Him in the former part, and declares Him in the latter part.

The formation of the Canon of the Old Testament is a subject with regard to which we have no reliable information of a historic character. It is probable that, for ages, the various writings were in separate rolls of parchment or cylinders, the oldest from the time of Moses, and the end of the forty years of Israel, and their entry into the land of promise. From that time the books were written one after another, until the fifth century B.C. Just when the whole were gathered together to form the Bible of the Hebrews we do not know. Some would persuade us to believe that the Mosaic writings were not codified until the time when Ezra, and after him, Nehemiah, came to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile.

The Good Samaritan came to the help of the wounded Jew on the road to Jericho, and Samaritans of a much earlier time had something which still exists, and which comes to our aid in this exigency. It is nothing less than the Samaritan Pentateuch,

which Mr. Gladstone is reported to have said is the rock on which destructive criticism will be wrecked. For it has been quite plainly shown that the Samaritan Pentateuch was in the hands of the Northern Kingdom, the Israelites, long before the capture of the city of Samaria by Sargon II, in 722 B.C. Thus proof is afforded that the Pentateuch was used by them for an indefinite period before the time of Ezra. (*See Victoria Institute "Transactions,"* vol. lii, p. 142.) If the Samaritan version was so old, then the Israelite original was still older.

As to the Canon of the New Testament, we have already seen that the collection of writings was in almost universal use in the Church long before its official recognition by the council of Carthage in A.D. 394. It is expressed by a high authority, thus:—

“This decision was not made by any man or men, at any given time or place, by express resolution or decree, as a vote is passed. It was a natural and universal public opinion of Christians. . . . This process was rapid and decisive; it had, in all probability, become substantially complete before the death of John, the last of the Apostles.”

There were many apocryphal writings of the second and later centuries, as is well known. But these were never accepted by the Church. Any one reading them will see their inferiority; and, besides this, their later dates condemn them.

In the “Canon and Text of the New Testament,” by the late Caspar René Gregory, Ph.D., we have the following, which is interesting and suggestive:—

“It is not the case that a great gap separates the time of Paul from the time of Papias, for example. The years were closely interwoven with threads of human lives. Paul stayed several days in Philip’s house in Cæsarea, and Philip’s four prophesying virgin daughters must then have been more than mere children, else they would not have prophesied. At least two of the daughters, and perhaps all the four lived later with Philip in Hierapolis. Can we suppose that they had forgot that Paul had spent several days at their house at Cæsarea? They might well have spoken of Paul to Papias, if Papias, when he saw them was more than a little boy. . . . Whether or not Philip had seen Jesus we do not know. It is possible [I would say, probable] that he had seen him. It is further to be kept in mind that Papias was not a mere lay member of the church at Hierapolis,

but its bishop, one, therefore, who will have had every opportunity of and every right to have searched out carefully all the memories of the past in those circles." (Papias refers to presbyters, or elders who had furnished him with important information. That was due, and proper tradition.)

We have a similar reference in Irenæus . . . what they have to tell us about the Books of the New Testament, Irenæus writes, for example :—

"As I heard from a certain presbyter [Polycarp ?] who had heard from those who had seen *the Apostles*."

#### VIII.—INSTRUCTIONS.

To give a full account of our Saviour's instructions about the Scriptures would take more space than can be allowed. Therefore they can but be referred to in brief.

The chief of them were doubtless made to His Apostles privately, and are therefore not all recorded. But we may be sure that they had the advantages of the greatest theological seminary, so to speak, that has ever been known.

His words to the multitude who heard the "Sermon on the Mount" were such as no man had ever spoken, or could speak. To the towns and cities to which He went preaching, we only know that His subject was "the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom of Heaven." The substance of what instructions He gave to individuals—Nicodemus, in the night (John 3 : 1 f.) ; Simon, the Pharisee at his table (Luke 7 : 47) ; Mary and Martha of Bethany ; the two on the way to Emmaus ; and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, for instance, all of infinite importance—can only be mentioned, while those He addressed to the false teachers—scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, "lawyers"—have a judgment-day terror in them. But for us poor sinners, the most precious of all were about the way to be saved from sin and its inevitable consequences if continued in.

The absolute necessity of repentance, taking the yoke of service, the cross of suffering, sacrifice of self, and, above all, faith in Himself, we find everywhere in His teachings ; but one of the most impressive lessons as to the spirit we should have, is in an act, when He "called a little child unto Him and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Verily, I say unto you, except ye be

converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.'”

So, every one of us who believes on Him has found that “pearl of great price,” which all the world with its wealth could not buy from us. We may not know all about the casket in which it has been transported to us through all the centuries, and all its wrappings; but we know by experience the preciousness of the pearl, and would not part with it for a thousand worlds.

#### DISCUSSION.

MR. AVARY H. FORBES said: Christian Evidence is a good servant, but a bad master. It is a dangerous subject in which to *specialize*, as an old sexton found by experience. “Well, John, your vicar, I understand, was on Christian evidence all last year. Did you hear his sermons?” “I did, sir, the whole fifty-two of them; and, thank God, I’m a Christian still.”

To me Dr. Flourney’s paper contained many new and valuable things. I wish, however, only to illustrate the difficulty—the impossibility, I may say—of forecasting even the immediate future, and that with every facility for doing so, without Divine guidance.

(1) In 1792, just before the great Napoleonic wars broke out, which were to devastate Europe for over twenty years, Pitt, in his budget speech, said: “Unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country, when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than at the present moment.”

(2) When the war had broken out, Grenville wrote to his brother, of the episode of Toulon (1793): “I am much mistaken if the business at Toulon is not decisive of the war.” Pitt was of the same opinion: “It will be a short war,” said he, “and certainly end in one or two short campaigns.”

(3) A century later our statesmen were just as much at sea in prophesying: “We recollect that, in January, 1914, Mr. Lloyd George proclaimed that never had there been a more suitable time for disarmament.” (*Morning Post*, September 19th, 1922.)

(4) It is now well known that Cobden converted the English to Free Trade by a false prophecy. Over and over again he promised the people that, if they adopted Free Trade, there would

not be a tariff in Europe that would not speedily follow the British lead. And in January, 1846, he said: "You might as well tell me that the sun will not rise to-morrow as tell me that foreign nations will not adopt Free Trade in less than ten years from now." Yet, ever since then, the chief foreign nations have been steadily building up prohibitive tariffs!

How different is Scriptural prophecy! The moment we go into details the danger of erring is immensely increased; and if the details are improbable, how much more immense is that danger! Yet such are numerous Scriptural prophecies. Take one example (Isa. 53): "And they made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death" (R.V.). The grave before the death! how improbable, and how true! The Romans used to dig the grave in front of the cross, so that the poor victim might have his agony increased by looking into it. Our Lord, however, was not buried in "His grave"; for He was "with the rich in His death"—in the "new tomb" of the "rich man of Arimathea."

Lieut.-Col. F. A. MOLONY said: Our discussion of this paper will probably centre round what its author has said about Inspiration. It is natural for Christians to take a deep interest in this subject. In the army, men often discuss how far the orders they receive really convey the wishes of their commander-in-chief, or how far they only emanate from his staff. So the interest that people take in the question of Inspiration shows that they recognize their duty to obey God's commands, and this is a healthy sign.

But I observe that the views of many about Inspiration depend more on their wishes than on the evidence. Those who are thinking about meeting the needs of sympathetic inquirers would fain have the Bible verbally inspired from cover to cover, so that the quotation of a single text may settle a matter. Those who have entered into discussions with sceptics are aware that there are passages, particularly in the oldest books, which can scarcely be defended as they stand, and they, therefore, prefer to look on the Bible as essentially inspired only. Probably both parties come to faulty conclusions, inasmuch as their prejudices tend to blind them to what the evidence shows.

Our author has tried to go by the evidence. As the books of the Bible reveal the individuality of their authors, Inspiration cannot

be mechanical dictation. There is evidence that Moses used earlier writings, and we must allow that other men added to the Pentateuch. How far is much disputed.

I am glad that our author referred to that very remarkable paper and discussion on the Samaritan Pentateuch dealt with here in 1920. Though many learned men discussed that paper from many points of view, nobody defended the absurd position that the Samaritans accepted that Pentateuch from the Jews *after* the two nations had begun to quarrel.

I understand our author to maintain, that, while the inspiration of the Scriptures by God is intensely real, it varies in degree. There is good evidence that Ps. 22 and Isa. 53, to which he specially refers, were almost verbally inspired. But it is unwise to try and maintain the same in the case of the historical books. Yet, even in the case of Judges, we seem to trace something more than good history written by an able man who desired to record the truth.

I beg to add my thanks to the author of this able paper.

Mr. W. HOSTE : Members will realize that the full title for the essay went much further than our Lord's attitude toward the Scriptures (*see* p. 76 ) ; but the author has dealt with that side of the subject in the opening pages, not by quoting every well-known reference of our Lord to the Scriptures, but by taking the initial incident of His ministry at Nazareth, when He applies to Himself the Messianic prophecy of Isa. 61, and the closing incidents of the walk to Emmaus and the Upper Room at Jerusalem. Then, in resurrection life, He confirmed all His previous teaching as to Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. Surely in this would be included the authentication of the prophets Daniel and Jonah.

While acknowledging that this essay and the one gaining the second prize might conceivably be improved, yet, whatever their failings, they were in a class by themselves as regards the other essays sent in. The Gunning Prize is not offered for a sermon or a Bible-study, or even an exposition of a list of passages, important as these are in their place, but for an Essay on a broad subject. I think no one could read this essay with fairness without recognizing it to be a real contribution to the confirmation of the faith. I quite agree with the author's general position as regards Inspiration. Of course, it is necessary to distinguish between the infallible original records



and the work of fallible copyists. Could the Holy Scriptures, under the guiding hand of the Spirit, fail to attain to what is aimed at, often very successfully, even by human Acts of Parliament, wills and testaments, in which not a stop may be added nor a letter altered? Really there is no inspiration that does not take note of words and letters; it must be verbal, nay, literal, for sentences are made up of words, and words of letters. The principle that our Lord laid down is of broad application: "Not a *jot* or a *tittle* shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF: A careful reading of the paper seems to make it clear that the title is a misnomer.\* Whatever else the lecturer deals with, he passes by in a meagre discussion the salient facts implied in the title. In any adequate treatment of this subject it is essential, in determining Christ's attitude to the Scriptures, to examine the whole body of references He made, in order to form a true view of that attitude. The author has not attempted this.

It is also to be regretted that only scant reference is made to Christ's pre-authentication of the New Testament. Such a vital matter requires full and detailed examination, and cannot be considered complete unless this and other kindred words of Christ are explained: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will shew you things to come" (John 16: 13). Moreover, it appears obvious that the writings which claim to be apostolic and inspired of God must come under review to see whether their substance accords with Christ's adumbration of them. It should also be noted that the paper dismisses with a mere passing reference the important subject of the Canon.

Lieut.-Col. HOPE BIDDULPH, D.S.O., moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was passed by acclamation.

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

From Dr. A. T. SCHOFIELD: I cannot refrain from sending my tribute of thanks to Dr. Flournoy for his long and most able paper. I believe I proposed the subject at the Council Meeting, but fear I did not make quite clear what was in my mind. I have long wanted to know what was Christ's own Bible. From what source did He quote? I had an idea of a critical study of the old Hebrew

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\* See p. 76.

and Septuagint texts, with an explanation of such variations as appear in our Lord's usage. No doubt the present able paper will be of more general use to the Institute.

May I ask why (on p. 47) Dr. Flourney quotes the much-controverted passage, Gen. 49 : 10, as indubitably referring to Christ, when, as a fact, the sceptre had departed from Judah for at least four hundred years ?

From Dr. J. W. THIRTLE : To what Dr. Flourney has said with reference to our Lord's authentication of the New Testament Scriptures, I would like to add a few thoughts which can not have been far from his own mind, as I construe his remarks set forth on pp. 55 and 56 of his paper.

It is important not only to bear in mind our Lord's gracious undertakings to His disciples as they bear upon the New Testament revelation—then wholly a matter belonging to the future—but also to remember His early teaching, His entire attitude, as it looked forward to a further body of Scripture revelation.

As we study the Sermon on the Mount, we are brought face to face with thoughts—that is, with words of Christ—which could not but exercise the minds of the disciples as to their meaning in regard to conditions yet future. Obviously a new time was dawning, and the Law of Moses would be followed by some other body of revealed truth—another Book. Old things were passing away, and new things were coming.

When sending forth His disciples to teach and preach, the Lord plainly indicated the opening of an era distinct from the Mosaic dispensation. The men went forth *in His name*—a truly extraordinary fact ; and not only did they preach and pray *in His name*—and, what is more, in words and petitions of His own provision—but *in His name*—the Name of the newly-manifested Messiah—they cast out demons and wrought miracles of healing among the people. Here was a message and ministry such as Moses and the Prophets had never contemplated.

Further, when reporting on the reception accorded them by the people, the disciples showed that they were looking for a new time, and in so far as that was the New Testament dispensation, it was a time growing out of the words and acts of CHRIST. Thus even before it was an ordered body of doctrine, the New Testament Revelation

in general had its origin in Him who was the Instructor of the disciples and became the Founder and Head of the Church. Apart from any subsequent measures, we may find here an authentication by our Lord of words written by men whom He had called and ordained for a great work.

What the Lord's Name made certain—a new dispensation—the Lord's words of promise, specific and reassuring, explained and justified. The disciples could not but feel that the words preached and the acts performed were not theirs, but the Master's; and certain it is that in the coming days such words and acts would be Christ's in a manner still more manifest, following upon the Lord's Resurrection and consequent upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit afterward to be sent forth from the Father and the Son. In a word, while yet with them, the Lord assured His disciples of an equipment which would invest with a continuing vitality all that He had ever said to them, and place in a light true to His own design all such teaching as in the past they had received from His lips. Though He might not be with them in Person, He would bring all things to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit, and still further teaching would be theirs through the same unailing medium.

Thus we conclude that Christ's instruction given to His disciples anticipated the writings which the Apostles gave to the world: it was, in fact, a pre-authentication precise and complete. His words of promise and assurance, as found in the great High Priestly prayer, were these: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). Could anything more than this be required? Such teaching as had gone forth, following upon words and acts in Christ's Name, was hereby supported in a manner sufficient to cover all future days and every conceivable circumstance; and that the promises made by our Lord were fulfilled is matter of New Testament history, for, as the story of the Acts of the Apostles goes on to show, the Apostles continued to go forth in the Name of Christ, and as the witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ they saw signs and wonders which proved that the Lord was working with them in their later ministry equally as in earlier days.

As we relate the things of the Gospel records with the things of the Acts of the Apostles, we cannot fail to see evidence of such

pre-authentication as the words of Christ foretold. The words of our Lord, and His Person likewise, fully justified the disciples in that forward look—described as “New Testament times”—which is outlined in the books which follow the four Gospels.

Accordingly, in the New Testament as a whole, we have two things, or bodies of instruction—first, *the words of Christ*, handed on in the Gospels; second, the confirmatory *teaching of the Apostles*—men that were witnesses of His Resurrection. This latter teaching, as a whole, we find in the subsequent books of the New Testament. Notice with care how these two branches of instruction lie at the base of “the great salvation,” “which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard.” Here we have a starting-point of teaching in regard to the Gospel as it has come to us to-day. (Heb. 2 : 3). And that teaching, authenticated and pre-authenticated, was in the mind of Christ, both when instructing His disciples and when in definite terms He undertook to send upon them the Spirit to lead them into all truth.

#### REMARKS BY AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY.

I wish to thank all who took part in the discussion on my Essay—alike those who expressed appreciation of my efforts, and those who pointed out imperfections, of which I am sadly aware.

To one and all I may wish that when they approach their eighty-ninth year they may be as well and happy as is their grateful friend.

With reference to the question raised by Dr. Schofield, may I remark that, by recognizing the authority of the Sanhedrim, Pilate acted on the conviction that “the sceptre” had not “departed from Judah” before Christ came.

As set out in Competition Circular, the subject of the Essay was:—

“CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.”

What may we gather from His Attitude and Instruction ?

What are the implicates involved in these, and in His use of the Old Testament Scriptures ?

If His ministry called for the New Testament, in what way and how far did He pre-authenticate it, and enable a true doctrine of the Canon and view of Inspiration to be propounded ?

706TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH, 1928.

AT 4.30 P.M.

LIEUT.-COL. F. A. MOLONY, O.B.E., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections:—As a Member: William Tylter, Esq.; and as Associates: the Rev. George E. White, D.D., Miss E. M. Delevingne, and R. Biddulph, Esq., Royal Artillery.

In the absence of the author, Dr. W. Bell Dawson, his paper, on "The New Testament Era in the Sequence of Prophecy," was read by Lieut.-Col. F. A. MOLONY.

It was mentioned that Dr. W. Bell Dawson was the son of the well-known Scientist Sir Wm. Dawson, F.R.S., President of the British Association in 1881.

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*THE NEW TESTAMENT ERA IN THE SEQUENCE  
OF PROPHECY.*

By W. BELL DAWSON, Esq., M.A., D.Sc., M.Inst.C.E.

**I**T is difficult to make clear in a short title the purport of this Paper; and it may therefore be well to explain this concisely at the outset.

(1) We desire to point out that the salient years in the Life of Christ stand at the close of definite periods, which connect them with the era of the Captivity in Babylon and the ensuing era of Restoration. These two eras extend from the times of Jeremiah and Daniel, to Ezra and Zechariah. The life of Christ on earth, is thus in accord with definite time-lines in the general scheme of the Prophetical periods.

(2) The entire era of New Testament times extends from the Birth of Christ to the date when Revelation was written. In regard to the later part of this era, predictions were made by Christ which depicted the destruction of Jerusalem; and He also gave hints of a further divine communication which we have in the Book of Revelation.\* The dates of these, also stand at the end of definite periods, which run similarly from the Restoration era.

(3) These time-correlations bring to light a connected scheme under divine Providence; which has its beginning in the days of the Captivity when the great Prophetical periods were first revealed; which deal with future events in their relation to the people of God. In this Paper, however, we will narrow down the matter as closely as possible to the time-connections between the New Testament era and the earlier eras indicated.

It may be that dates and periods resemble only the skeleton or framework on which a living creature is built up. Yet without this, the vital structure would be unsupported and formless. The Prophetical periods, and the Scriptural dates which give them a basis, may stand in a similar relation to divine plans and purposes.

*The outlook from the Captivity era.*—To anyone who has read the Bible, it is evident that great importance is attached to this era, in which the Hebrew people were taken into captivity in other lands, and the monarchy which had continued from the days of David, came to an end. Three leading prophets, Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel lived in this era; and several other books of the Bible besides theirs, are associated with the Captivity and with the Restoration from Babylon which ensued.

We can hardly suppose that seven books of the Bible would be grouped around this era, unless it were something more than an outstanding episode in the history of the Hebrew people. When we inquire into the reason that so much importance attaches to the Captivity era, it appears chiefly to be that a fundamental change took place at that epoch, in the providential relation of God to His people. From the days of Abraham,

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\* See Luke 21; 20. John 16; 12-13. Also, John 15; 15, and Revelation 1; 1.

the Hebrew people had been independent; with the exception of the sojourn in Egypt. For a thousand years since the Exodus from Egypt, they had been under judges and kings of their own. But from the Babylonian captivity, a complete change was to take place; and the people of God were to be ruled over by a succession of Gentile powers, often more or less unfriendly and sometimes even persecuting.

At this era also, revelations were given to the prophets regarding the duration of these conditions. At the outset, the period of the captivity in Babylon was made known to Jeremiah. It was to last for seventy years. (Jeremiah 25; 11 and 29; 10.)\* The continuance of the great ensuing age known as the Times of the Gentiles can be inferred from the periods revealed to Daniel, which are taken up again in the Book of Revelation where they are further explained. It became evident that the people of God, whether Jew or Christian, were to remain under domination for an extended age; for in New Testament times, Christ refers to the conditions as still continuing, when He says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21; 24.)

If the periods in the prophecies are interpreted in the light of this outlook, and are taken to refer to a prolonged age, it can be recognized that the "three and a-half times" of Daniel and Revelation represent half of a complete series of Seven Times. And since the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Times are stated to be equivalent to 1260, each "Time" is to be reckoned as 360 years.† The whole of the series is thus 7 Times of 360 years each, making up a total duration of 2520 years for the continuance of the conditions so graphically portrayed in the symbolism of Daniel and Revelation; until the domination of worldly powers shall end, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

The foundational number 2520 which is thus deduced, is wonderfully divisible; because it is found to be the least common multiple of the first ten numerals. It is thus "a great fundamental number in arithmetic."‡ We find accordingly that all the periods mentioned in Scripture are exact fractions

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\* For the fulfilment of this predicted period, see NOTE A, appended.

† That a day in the prophecy represents a year, see NOTE B.

‡ Explained in *The Approaching End of the Age*; Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, 1882. Pages 440-442.

of it; such as 30 years, 40, 70 and 120 years.\* This number 2520 to which the prophecies point, may therefore be regarded as an inclusive one, which makes it permissible to look into its fractions; not only the half or 1260 years, but its other fractions such as the quarter, the seventh or the fourteenth part; which are 630 years, 360 and 180 respectively. May we not find in this a parallel with the moral sphere? For in the teaching of Christ, broad general principles are laid down from which detailed applications may be deduced.

This brief outline is given to show the relation of the period with which we wish specially to deal, to the prophetic periods in general. On this subject much literature is available.† Our present object, however, in this Paper, is to point out that the important dates in the New Testament era stand at a distance of 630 years from the series of events in the Captivity and Restoration eras. This period is one-quarter of the great age of 2520 years, and also half of 1260 years.

*The determination of dates.*—The successive steps in the captivity of Israel and Judah, when deported to Assyria and Babylon, together with their restoration to their own land and the rebuilding of the Temple, occupied in all about two centuries. It is not too much to say that the dates in those two centuries are the most definitely fixed in all ancient history. They are more reliable than in the times preceding them or in those following. We are not therefore feeling our way back into the centuries before the Christian era, with increasing uncertainty. The reason of this is that the Chaldeans and Persians had a method of fixing dates which is unsurpassed in all history. They correlated the years in the reigns of their kings with eclipses of the sun and moon.

On this Dr. William Hales, the eminent Bible chronologist, remarks: "Eclipses are justly reckoned among the surest and most unerring characters (*i.e.* marked points) of chronology; for they can be calculated with great exactness backwards as well as forwards. . . . There is no danger of confounding any two eclipses together, when the circumstances attending each

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\* Numbers 4; 3, and 14; 34. Jeremiah 25; 11. Daniel 9; 2. Genesis 6; 3.

† See *The Time is at Hand* by the present writer; and the standard works therein referred to. (Thynne and Jarvis, London; 1926.)



are noticed with any tolerable degree of precision.”\* In Haydn’s *Dictionary of Dates*, it is stated that the solar eclipse of 763 B.C. recorded in the Assyrian eponym canon, is the basis of Assyrian chronology. Dr. H. Grattan Guinness gives a list of seven eclipses between 721 and 491 B.C. which fix the reigns of Babylonian and Persian kings.† This interval extends from the captivity of the Ten Tribes to the time of Zechariah; and in secular history, this corresponds with the period from the accession of Nabonassar of Babylon (which is “the year one” in Babylonian chronology) until the invasion of Greece by the Persians. One of the eclipses may be cited as an example: “In the seventh year of Cambyses, between the 17th and 18th of Phamenoth, at one hour before midnight, the moon was eclipsed at Babylon by half the diameter on the north.” This eclipse, as now calculated, occurred at 11 p.m. July 16th, 523 B.C. The seventh year of Cambyses is thus definitely fixed; and his reign and even the kings immediately before and after him, can be confidently dated.‡

The dates are thus perfectly definite in this stretch of more than two centuries, which correspond with the Captivity of Israel and Judah and the prophets of those days. The Bible itself sanctions the use of these dates; for in the historical books as well as in the prophets, the kings of Judah and the events of those times are correlated with the kings of Babylon and Persia; and the years in which communications from God were made to the prophets, are frequently dated in the reigns of those kings.§ We may well regard the reliability of the dates in these times as providential, when it is here that the great prophetic periods have their beginning.

It is evidently incorrect therefore, to suppose that the dates in these eras are dependent on the Canon of Ptolemy, by using it to reckon backwards from later times; and it cannot be maintained that if any error is discovered in this Canon, the dates in these early eras must be reconsidered. It is also futile

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\* *A New Analysis of Chronology*; Dr. W. Hales, 1830. Vol. I, page 73.

† In *The Approaching End of the Age*, Guinness, 1882. Appendix, pages 585–588.

‡ The uncertainty in the much-discussed eclipse of Thales results from its being very vaguely described. Even the locality is undefined, which is essential in identifying a total solar eclipse.

§ For example, see II Kings 24; 8–12, and 25; 8. Jeremiah 25; 1. Daniel 8; 1. Zechariah 1; 1.

for the Higher Critics to attempt to alter the dates themselves that are cited in the Book of Daniel. They may disbelieve the book, and attempt to show by their literary methods that it is fiction written at a later epoch ; although recent archaeology authenticates all the incidental details given in Daniel, as pertaining to those times. In the attack upon Daniel, it is a serious matter to set aside the dated years on which a revelation from God was made to His prophet ; for such dates may have a high significance.

To illustrate the reliability of the dates in these times, the capture of Jerusalem is given by Usher as 588 and by Hales as 586 B.C. although at the Exodus these authorities differ by 157 years. The earlier Egyptian dates have often an uncertainty of a century or more, according to different authorities.\* In the other direction, the dates in the New Testament era have only been arrived at by modern research ; as the Romans had quite lost the earlier ideas of accuracy.

When a date is only given to the nearest year, there is a possible uncertainty of one year in placing it in the B.C. series. For, if a king began to reign in midsummer, say in 536 B.C., half of the first year of his reign lies in 536 and the other half in the following year 535, because of our reckoning from January to January. An event in the first year of his reign may be dated in either of these years B.C., unless the season of the year can be ascertained.

*Dates in these eras.*—Although empires do not rise in a day, the year 623 B.C. may be taken as the establishment of the Babylonian empire. Two years previously, Nabopolassar had asserted his independence of Assyria ; but in this year, both he and Nebuchadnezzar made important alliances which confirmed the rule of Babylon. This is considered the first year of the empire in contemporary usage ; for its “ thirtieth year ” is stated by Ezekiel to co-incide with the fifth year after the captivity of Jehoiachin, which occurred in 598 B.C. (Ezekiel 1 ; 1-2.)

Nebuchadnezzar succeeded to the throne while absent from Babylon, and his accession was in the following year. The date

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\* In the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, edition of 1910, it is noted as remarkable that up to that date “ no records of eclipses are known from Egyptian documents.”

that is counted as the first of his reign may thus differ by one year according to the reckoning in Jeremiah and in Daniel.\* The Dream of the Image in the second year of his reign, which was the first revelation of the great succession of Gentile powers, may best be placed in 605 B.C.

The captivity of Jehoiachin took place in 598 B.C. This was properly the end of the Jewish monarchy; for the succeeding king Zedekiah was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar and practically his vassal. (II Chronicles 36; 10.)

Thirty-seven years later, relief came to Jehoiachin, in 561 B.C. This is mentioned twice in Scripture; and its accurate dating to the day places emphasis upon it.†

After the fall of Babylon in 537 B.C. when it was captured by the Persians, two years elapsed before Cyrus reigned there in person. The decree of Cyrus, permitting the return of the Hebrew people to their land, in the first year of his reign, was thus in 535 B.C.

The rebuilding of the Temple, authorized by the decree of Darius in his second year, was carried out between 518 and 514 B.C.; and the *central year* of these, in the fourth year of Darius, is the date emphasized in Zechariah.‡ It is this central year also which is connected by definite periods with the dates in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah from which in turn the notable period of the Seventy Weeks has its beginning. There is thus a connected scheme all the way through; but this we cannot enlarge upon. We are here dealing only with the outstanding dates which we will have occasion to refer to.§

*The New Testament era.*—In contrast with the very definite dates considered, there is much discussion regarding the dates in this era; but the uncertainty in them has been narrowed down to about two years. The point most definitely dated in the Gospels, is when the word of God came to John the Baptist. (See Luke 3; 1-2.) This is dated by the year of Tiberius Caesar, by the ruling Governor and tetrarchs, and by the high priests then in office. The view is generally held that the

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\* Compare Jeremiah 25; 1 with Daniel 1; 1 and 2; 1.

† In II Kings 25; 27, and Jeremiah 52; 31.

‡ See Ezra 4; 24, and 6; 1, 12. Zechariah 7; 1, 5.

§ For the fulfilment of the 70 years, the predicted period of the Captivity in Babylon, see NOTE A, appended.

preaching of John the Baptist began in the spring, and the opening of the Ministry of Christ was in the autumn of the same year. Tiberius began to reign as the colleague of Augustus in 12 A.D. and succeeded Augustus on his death in 14 A.D. The 15th year of Tiberius was therefore either 26 or 28 A.D. The most competent investigators consider the year 26 the more probable. Rev. E. B. Elliott, author of the foundational commentary on Revelation, says: "Luke seems to have dated from Tiberius' association in the Empire with Augustus, which was two years before Augustus' death, and the beginning of Tiberius' sole reign."\*

The dates adopted for the Birth of Christ and for the opening of the Ministry must be thirty years apart, which affords a relative check upon them; because the Lord Jesus was 30 years of age when His ministry began. (Luke 3; 23.) The date of the Birth of Christ has been thoroughly investigated by Hales the chronologist; and with the aid of an eclipse of the moon which occurred during Herod's last illness, he places it in 5 B.C.† It is to be noted that in the A.D. and B.C. reckoning, there is no *zero year* where they meet, from which to count in the two directions; for in the scheme as devised, the years 1 B.C. and 1 A.D. are contiguous. This gives rise to a difficulty; for if an interval in years is found by adding dates before and after the Christian era, a unit must be omitted from the sum. Thus, from 5 B.C. to 26 A.D. is just 30 years.

In accordance with this basis, the Lord Jesus would attain His twelfth year in the autumn of 8 A.D. and His first Passover would be in the spring of 9 A.D. This was a memorable epoch in His life, when He first declared His sonship to the Father.

The dates of importance in the New Testament era beyond the Ministry of Christ, are the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. which is well authenticated; and the date of the Book of Revelation. This lies between 95 and 97 A.D., for Irenaeus assigns it to the close of the reign of Domitian during his persecutions, when the Apostle John was banished to Patmos. Elliott gives a discussion of this, and an exhaustive review of theories to the contrary; and concludes that the

\* *Horae Apocalypticæ*; Rev. E. B. Elliott, 1862. Vol. IV, p. 712, foot-note. The authorities for this are discussed in his *Warburton Lectures*, Appendix, p. 458.

† See *A New Analysis of Chronology*; Hales. Nearly all good commentators place the Nativity between 6 and 4 B.C.

date must be "near the end of the year 95, or beginning of 96 A.D." For Domitian was killed in September of the year 96.\*

*The connecting period.*—We now wish to point out that the New Testament era is connected with the earlier eras at the time of the Captivity, by a period of 630 years. It thus stands at exactly one-fourth of the distance along the march of the great Seven Times, or 2520 years, which have their beginning in the Captivity era. If we take the 1260 years as the period which is most definitely mentioned in Scripture, 2520 years is its double, and 630 years is its half. The connections which this period gives between the dates in the two eras, are here concisely shown :—

- 8 to 9 A.D.†—630 years from the establishment of the Babylonian Empire in 623 B.C. Also, 630 years from the noteworthy Passover in the 18th year of Josiah, in 622 B.C.
- 26 A.D.—630 years from the opening of the Book of Daniel and the Dream of the Image, in 605 B.C. ; when the great succession of empires was first revealed.
- 33 A.D.—630 years from the captivity of Jehoiachin when the monarchy fell, in 598 B.C.
- 70 A.D.—630 years from the uplift of Jehoiachin, at the extreme end of the Captivity era when the dawn of restoration began, in 561 B.C.
- 96 A.D.—630 years from the Decree of Restoration issued by Cyrus in 535 B.C. and also 630 *lunar years* from the rebuilding of the Temple in the Restoration era.

It is not possible to suppose that such correspondence throughout these two series of dates, is merely coincidence. It occurs between outstanding dates in the Captivity era which are fixed with astronomical accuracy, and the best authenticated dates in New Testament times. The reason and meaning of such a connection may well stir our thoughts and give us cause

\* See *Horae Apocalypticæ*, Elliott ; Vol. I, pages 32 to 47, and the copious foot-notes there given.

† The same year in the life of Christ includes parts of these two calendar years, as already pointed out.

to ponder. For, by taking the Bible as it stands, and investigating all that can be deduced from it, we are much more likely to discover further rays of truth for our illumination than by submitting it to adverse criticism.

The correlation of the first Passover of the Lord Jesus, when He was twelve, with the noteworthy passover in the reign of Josiah, is impressive; for its date is recorded, and it is said of it: "There was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did any of the kings of Israel keep such a passover." (II Chronicles 35; 18-19.) This one recorded occasion in the early life of Christ is thus illumined in its place in the connected series. The connection with the Babylonian empire may be a presage of the open manifestation of the kingdom of Christ which is to succeed the Four Empires; a presage thus brought to light at the time when the Lord Jesus first declared His divine Sonship.\*

The connection of the opening of the Ministry of Christ in 26 A.D. with the beginning of the prophecies of Daniel, sets before us a vista of inquiry. And in addition to this period of 630 years, there are others which terminate in 26 A.D. when Christ announced: "The time is fulfilled." There is just one of these that we may here indicate:—

26 A.D.—560 years from the Decree of Restoration issued by Cyrus in 535 B.C.

The length of this period is 70 less than 630, and it thus runs appropriately from a date in the Restoration era, which is 70 years later than the Captivity.† This connection with Cyrus corresponds with expressions in Isaiah which make him typical of Christ; for Cyrus is called the shepherd, the Lord's anointed, raised up to let His exiles go free.‡ In one of the earliest discourses of Christ, He says that He was sent "to preach deliverance to the captives," which He quotes from Isaiah. (Luke 4; 18.)

In the well-known prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, the Opening of the Ministry of Christ is also indicated, as the beginning of the "seventieth week." This is very generally recognized;

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\* See Daniel 7; 13-14, and Revelation 11; 15.

† Not only 70 less than 630, but also 70 more than 490, the period of the Seventy Weeks. 560 is thus the mean value between these.

‡ See Isaiah 44; 28, and 45; 1, 13.

but the close of this last week brings up a wide difference of interpretation. We would point out, however, that a definite interval of seven years subsists between the year 26 A.D. when the Ministry opened, and 33 A.D.; a year which falls in its place in the series that we are now considering. This is also the *central year* between the Birth of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., which further emphasizes its importance.

Many careful commentators hold that this interval of seven years represents the last "week" in the Seventy Weeks of the great prophecy.\* It would thus end with the martyrdom of Stephen when the rulers of the Jews, who had rejected Christ, rejected also the testimony of the Holy Spirit as Stephen so pointedly declared to them. (Acts 7; 51-52.) The Lord seems to consider this their final decision, as a nation; for thereupon He enlightens the Apostle Peter by a vision and sends him to preach to Cornelius, a Gentile; and the Lord also commissions the Apostle Paul to open the door to the Gentiles.† This juncture marks the close of the Jewish dispensation and the founding of the Gentile church; which would explain the outstanding character of the year 33 A.D. For the close of the Jewish dispensation is thus correlated by a definite period with the fall of the monarchy in the Captivity era.

The next connection to be considered, is between the relief to Jehoiachin and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This tragedy, which the historian may suppose to be the final end of Jewish nationality, and which is indeed the beginning of the great dispersion for centuries to come, is yet illumined by a ray of hope from its connection with the dawn of Restoration in the time of Jehoiachin. It is not final in the eyes of Jehovah; there is to be a restoration in the latter days.

The Book of Revelation may almost be considered as a continuation or amplification of the earlier revelation given to Daniel, as many have pointed out. The connecting period with the first year of Cyrus is a strong confirmation of this. For

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\* Hales the chronologist, states this explicitly as a conclusion in his researches: "The *one week*, or *Passion week*, in the midst of which Our Lord was crucified, began with His public ministry and ended with the martyrdom of Stephen." (See full discussion in *A New Analysis of Chronology*; Vol. I, pages 199-206.)

† On the date of this juncture, see explanations by Dr. C. A. Auberlen, in *Daniel and St. John*, 1856; in which he states that Bengel concurs. Also, Rev. E. P. Cachemaille, *Papers on Prophecy*, pages 88-89.

at the opening of the Book of Daniel, before the prophecies begin, it is said: "Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus." Historically, this is the culminating date in his book, when the decree of restoration was issued. He thus received an incipient answer to his appeal to the covenant-keeping God, which he based on a period revealed to a previous prophet regarding the desolations of Jerusalem.\* This response in the form of a historical occurrence, stood as guarantee that all the further predictions of periods which were made to him would likewise be fulfilled. It is surely significant therefore to find this definite connecting period between the culminating date in Daniel and the Book of Revelation; a period of just one-fourth of the great Times of Gentile domination which the Image depicts; and in accord with the solemn oath that these times would be limited.†

As though in confirmation of this, there is another connecting period of 630 years, on the lunar scale of twelve lunar months to a year.‡ This period runs from the central year in the rebuilding of the Temple (516 B.C.) to the date of Revelation in 96 A.D. The theme of that book is thus correlated with the culmination of the Restoration in the re-established worship of God, in the days of Zechariah and Ezra. (Regarding these two periods, see NOTE C.)

*Concluding Remarks.*—The explanations here given regarding the meaning of these connecting periods, may not by any means exhaust their significance. A much wider grasp of the matter would also be obtained if we could take time to consider the setting of this period of 630 years in its relation to the general scheme of prophetic chronology. But the fact that there is a series of connecting periods of the same length, cannot be questioned; for it is not possible that such a relation between the outstanding events in two different eras could be a coincidence. Nor are they events specially selected with a purpose; they are those to which the Scriptures themselves give prominence.

We may best take a reverent attitude towards these things, as showing that the appearance of the Messiah in history was when the fulness of the time was come; and that the ingathering

\* See Daniel 1; 21, and 9; 2-3.

† Daniel 12; 7, and Revelation 10; 5-7.

‡ The lunar year of twelve lunar months, or lunations, has been adopted by several Eastern nations as the year they reckon by.



from Gentile nations which followed the Jewish dispensation, as well as the final Revelation to man, are all in accord with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

If our finite minds cannot grasp fully the mysterious wisdom by which the Almighty moulds the events of history, under His providential rule, into subservience to His deep counsels, we may at least recognize the more obvious outcome of the present limited investigation :—

(1) The successive steps of downfall in the Captivity era were so spaced in time, that they are in accord with the successive points of uplift in the Restoration era ; with an interval of seventy years between them respectively. (See NOTE A.) This involves the providential over-ruling of the dates at which the attacks of Nebuchadnezzar were made, the date of the fall of Babylon, the decrees of Cyrus and Darius, and so forth.

(2) The whole series of dates in these two eras are so spaced in time as to be in accord with the outstanding points in the life of Christ and the remainder of the New Testament era. This brings out the parallelism of the earlier and later eras in its providential aspect, as all included in one divine plan.\* There is also a testimony in this to the Messiahship of Christ ; but this is more distinctly given in the predicted period of the Seventy Weeks, which we have here scarcely touched upon.

(3) Amongst the dates in the earlier eras, as well as in the New Testament era, there are several which are years that God Himself chose, on which to make a revelation to His prophet. These stand as the initial or terminal points of periods, and they thus fit into their place in the providential scheme. We may expect therefore to find special significance in any date in Scripture which marks a communication from God, as well as in all dates that are recorded.

When we bring these wide vistas of providential dealing before our limited apprehension, we may well bow before the wisdom and knowledge of God, and recognize that His ways are past finding out.

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\* In corroboration also, it is from the same basis that the system of periods stretches down the centuries to the Time of the End.

NOTE A.—The fulfilment of the Seventy years of the Captivity in Babylon was three-fold ; which is very instructive in showing the manner of fulfilment of a predicted period. The three starting points are :—

623 B.C.—The establishment of the Babylonian Empire.

606 B.C.—The first year of Nebuchadnezzar (in the reckoning from the first siege of Jerusalem, as in Daniel).

587 B.C.—The capture of Jerusalem and burning of the Temple.

From each of these starting points, the *seventieth year* is as follows :—

623—554 B.C. the vision of the Four Wild Beasts, corresponding with the Dream of the Image ; at a date chosen of God. (Daniel 7 ; 1.)

606—537 B.C. the fall of Babylon, when the kingdom was numbered and brought to an end. (Daniel 5 ; 26, R.V.)

587—518 B.C. the restored Temple begun ; the laying of the foundation being emphasized. (Haggai 2 ; 10 and 18. Ezra 6 ; 14-15.)

There is also a central period of 70 full years from the opening revelation to Daniel (the Dream of the Image in 605 B.C.) to the decree of Restoration proclaimed by Cyrus in 535 B.C.

NOTE B.—The principle that a *day* in the prophecies represents a *year* has not only the sanction of Scripture,\* but it is dealt with by many competent authorities. Sir Isaac Newton points out that all prophetic symbolism is in miniature, and so likewise a short period of time represents one much longer. Hales, that most pains-taking chronologist, in his voluminous work of 1830, explains the year-day system very thoroughly and convincingly. These investigations are carried forward in the elaborate foundational works written from 1830 onward ; †

\* See Numbers 14 ; 34. Ezekiel 4 ; 6.

† See the works of William Cuninghame, 1837 ; Professor T. R. Birks of Cambridge, 1843 ; Rev. E. B. Elliott, 1849 ; and Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, 1882. A good modern summary on these lines is given by Rev. E. P. Cachemaille, *Present-day Papers on Prophecy*, No. VII. 1911.

amongst the most valuable being those of Professor Birks of Cambridge, who brings to light the astronomical cycles which are associated with the prophetic periods.\* To his explanations and researches, Dr. Guinness acknowledges his indebtedness.

NOTE C.—The dates in the Restoration era which are the starting points of the two periods that terminate concurrently at the date of the Book of Revelation, include between them an interval that is significant. The one begins at the Decree of Cyrus, and the other at the rebuilding of the Temple; and between these initial dates there was a long series of delays and hindrances, so pathetically described in Ezra; till under the exhortations of the prophets, the people took up the work and completed the Temple. Yet this delay only served to bring about a further fulfilment of the predicted period of 70 years between the burning and rebuilding of the Temple.

This same interval of delay causes the two periods, from their respective starting points, to meet in 96 A.D. when Revelation was written; and thus carries forward the same conception into that Book; showing that even opposition and delay may serve ultimately to illumine the purposes of God. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints; though the time appointed may be long.

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN (Lieut.-Col. F. A. Molony) said: Whether we agree with the author of our paper or not, I am sure that we all think that we have listened to a very able lecture. The author knows exactly what he wants to prove, and marshals his arguments clearly and well. He has evidently given a great deal of thought and trouble to the matter, and I beg you to accord him a hearty vote of thanks. (This was given by acclamation.)

But I think I detect some weak points in Dr. Dawson's argument. There are no events mentioned in the earlier period which come 630 years before the Birth, Crucifixion or Resurrection of Christ, which were, of course, the outstanding events in the later period. The

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\* On this subject, see a Paper by the writer: "Solar and Lunar Cycles implied in the Prophetic Numbers in the Book of Daniel;" Trans. Royal Soc. of Canada, Vol. XI, 1906.

fourth connection, that between the uplift of JEHOIACHIN and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, seems to me to be weak. The first three connections are of *similar* events—the great Passover of Josiah and the first Passover attended by Jesus Christ, etc. But the fourth connection is a *contrast*, namely, the uplift of Jehoiachin with the fall of Jerusalem. The able wording of the third paragraph on p. 87 should not blind us to the weakness of the argument.

When a Christian man announces that he has discovered something that confirms Divine revelation, we should give his arguments careful consideration, but we should not be over-ready to accept his conclusions. For if an unproven proposition goes out from this Institute unchallenged, it is likely to do more harm than good in the end. So I invite you to speak your minds, and to give this paper a fair field and also some favour, in view of the fact that the learned author is unfortunately not present.

Rev. E. P. CACHEMAILLE said: I have long been in correspondence on prophetic topics with Dr. Dawson at Ottawa, but last year, when he came to England, I had the pleasure of making his personal acquaintance. He showed me a series of elaborate diagrams, resembling engineering diagrams, but representing in strict proportion the prophetic periods, with their dates. I mention this that you may rest assured that the paper to which we have been listening is no hasty or superficial production, but rests upon a wide and solid foundation of long and intelligent labour.

The writer of the paper deals especially with one section of a great subject. The visions of Daniel and Revelation are nothing less than history written beforehand by the Finger of God. Their symbolic language is easily understood if proper use is made of the clues that Scripture provides. Think what that means. Here is *true* history. All the really great and important events down the centuries are foreshown, each in its proper place and in its right proportion, for this is Philosophic History; in fact, God's own Philosophy of History. As an example, take such an era as that of the Reformation, the facts and events of which are common property. A Protestant will write its history from his own point of view, and a Romanist historian will write a history differing fundamentally from the other. Which of the two is true? Or which comes nearest to the truth? Now, in

Rev. 10, 11, God has given the true History of the Reformation, by which we may confidently test and correct all merely human versions. Or take such an event as the great French Revolution of 1789. An Englishman writes its history ; a Frenchman who took part in it will give quite a different impression. But God has foreshown it all, from the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet and onward. In these wonderful visions, then, we have Truth, because they are inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are written by the Finger of God. Here is indeed a treasure hid in the field, well worth making our own.

Mr. W. E. LESLIE said : In this paper two historic periods are compared. First, the interval between them is calculated ; then certain events in the two series are compared (*a*) in respect of their mutual character and (*b*) of their position in the series.

Consider, first, the length of the interval between the two series. Dr. Dawson bases himself upon what is known as the "year-day" hypothesis. This, therefore, requires first to be established, and that with a cogency and by critical methods suited to the wide circles to which the Victoria Institute addresses itself. Unfortunately, the author has not argued this point in the paper. Further, he does not consistently follow his own principle, for he takes the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy to be literal years. I fear he will not carry all Evangelicals with him, let alone the followers of men like Professor R. H. Charles.

Again, even if the "year-day" theory be accepted, no ground is shown for the assumption that 2,520 years is the length of the "Times of the Gentiles." Yet, again, if this point were established, the shorter period with which the author deals must be some fraction of that longer period. No reason is given for attaching special importance to the fraction one-quarter. I think this part of the paper is "not proven."

Now, take the relative position of the events in the series. The date of the birth of Christ is admittedly uncertain by about 3 years. Luke says that He was "about" 30 at the beginning of the ministry, thus introducing another uncertainty of about 3 years. Adding these together, we get an uncertainty of 6 years in the relative positions of the test events before the martyrdom of Stephen.

We now come to the events themselves. Are there such striking parallels between them that we can afford to ignore the uncertainty of dates? It may be agreed that the Passover under Josiah and our Lord's first Passover, present features that are striking in their character. The parallel between the commencement of the ministry and Nebuchadnezzar's first vision is less impressive. The next comparison (between the captivity of Jehoiachin and the stoning of Stephen) involves several assumptions. Dr. Dawson looks upon Jehoiachin as the last Jewish king, because his successor was appointed by the King of Babylon. He forgets that Josiah's successor was appointed by the King of Egypt. There will probably be differences of view as to the end of "the Jewish Dispensation"—a phrase that will hardly commend itself outside Evangelical circles. The last equation—between the lifting up of Jehoiachin and the destruction of Jerusalem—is, to say the least, somewhat slender. The last equation, between the last year of Daniel, is even more dubious.

I submit that the main thesis of the paper is not established. The subsidiary correspondences introduced all suffer from the weakness that they are not arrived at upon uniform inductive principles. Periods which happen to agree are treated as though this were necessarily due to design. It is, in my judgment, to be deplored that Dr. Dawson has ignored the far-reaching inferences as to the prophetic Scriptures that are being put forward by "liberal" students of Jewish apocalyptic literature.

Mr. W. HOSTE said: I have always felt it a real honour, as a young man, to have met Sir William Dawson, F.R.S., in London, and to have had some conversation with him. His books had a great vogue at that time, and ought now to be read more than they are. They served to stabilize the faith of many. That will be a better record to look back on, "when this passing world is done," than that of some of his successors in the Chair of the British Association, who seem to regard the Presidential Address as an opportunity for subverting the faith of many. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* did Sir William Dawson the honour of writing: "In his books on geological subjects he maintained a distinctly theological attitude, declining to admit the descent or evolution of man from brute ancestors, and holding that the human species only made its appearance on this earth within quite recent times."

Sir William was a great geological authority, and, like another, the American Dana, bore witness that the story of Creation is in harmony with the facts of geology. It is, therefore, a privilege for us to have a paper from his son—also a scientist of repute. On prophetic questions, unity of view is unfortunately difficult in practice. For instance, our lecturer adopts what is known as the “year-day” theory, that is, that where we have periods of days, *e.g.* 1290, 1335, 1260, etc., *years* are meant in each case, and this is taken as axiomatic; whereas others think it is better to understand “days” as “days,” and “years” as “years.” But as the Seventy Weeks of Daniel (ch. 9) have been referred to, someone may remind us that this passage is in itself taken to be proof of the “year-day” theory. This is true, but the proof is only in appearance. The Hebrew word *shávúat*, translated “weeks,” is, as Gesenius points out, a hebdomad, or period of seven—it may be months, or years, or days, according to the context. Here the fulfilment shows that they are “hebdomads” of years. A few lines on, in Daniel 10; 2 and 3, when Daniel is fasting literal “weeks,” as we call them, our A.V. has “full” or “whole weeks” where the Hebrew is “weeks of days,” thus obviating ambiguity with the “seventy weeks” just spoken of.

When did these seventy weeks begin? When we say that this was not with the decree of Cyrus, but of Artaxerxes, we are accused of faking the date. But no faking is needed. Cyrus’s decree was to build the house of the Lord (*see* Ezra 1), while it is that of Artaxerxes which corresponds with the proclamation here mentioned (Daniel 9; 25, and Nehemiah 2 and 3). Surely the interpretation of the Seventy Weeks is not so intricate as to defy a simple interpretation. The period of 490 years is divided into three sections, seven weeks or 49 years, the building period; 62 weeks or 434 years, ended by the great crisis of history, “the cutting off of the Messiah.” Why it should be said that He is cut off in the midst of the last week is truly inexplicable. “*After the 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off.*” One week is left, and not a word is said of its being fulfilled at the martyrdom of Stephen or in any other way. But before the completion of the prophecy (in *v.* 27) a period of “one week” is mentioned, and is it unreasonable to take that period of seven years as the week still over? Was not the cutting off of Messiah bound to affect the status of Israel as a people? Zechariah 11; 10, tells us that it did.

But they will be once more recognized as an independent people by the covenant made with them by the Roman Prince—the Man of Sin.

Most interesting as some of the parallels referred to by our lecturer are, between Old Testament and New Testament dates, *e.g.* the great Passover of Josiah and the first our Lord kept, which must have been to God the most wonderful ever observed, I am afraid I cannot feel that we are on very firm and scripturally convincing ground in building on such data. How, for instance, could the *date* of the Apocalypse, which is hardly certain, be considered important enough to serve as the chronological counterpart of Cyrus's Decree of Restoration (Ezra 1) ?

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Dr. J. A. FLEMING wrote : There are serious differences of opinion between Scriptural chronologers on important points, which it would seem to be necessary to clear up before we can reach certainty upon several matters. One of these is the interpretation to be placed on the chronological statement in the Gospel of St. Luke (3 ; 1, 2) : “ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar . . . the word of God came unto John, etc.” All are agreed that Augustus Cæsar died on August 19th, A.D. 14, and at that date his successor Tiberius entered on his sole reign. But Tiberius had for two years previously been associated with Augustus as co-regent, and the difference of opinion, therefore, turns on whether the 15th year of Tiberius is to date from August 19th, A.D. 14, or from A.D. 12.

The author of this paper assumes that “ the most competent investigators ” take its reckoning from A.D. 12, but Sir Robert Anderson, in his book *The Coming Prince*, scouts this idea, and he and others state that the only *possible* reckoning is from August 19th, A.D. 14. Sir Robert Anderson, in a footnote (*loc. cit.*) gives other arguments against the earlier date. This date in question, of course, determines the starting-point for our Lord's ministry, and by inference also that of His crucifixion, which last event Sir Robert Anderson assigns to the year A.D. 32. No exceptional authority can therefore be given to the statements of E. B. Elliott on this point.

In the next place, we have serious differences as to the starting-point for the prophetic period of the “ 70 weeks ” in Daniel. One of three dates has generally been accepted : (i) the decree of Cyrus in his 1st year—usually taken to be 536 B.C. ; (ii) another in the 7th



year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, usually taken as 457 B.C. ; and (iii) another in his 20th year, taken as 445 or 444 B.C. If we take "the going forth of the Commandment" in the Daniel prophecy to be the decree of Cyrus, and if we take that year to be 536 B.C., then it is impossible to make out a fulfilment of the prophecy.

Accordingly, most expositors have taken the commandment to be one of the decrees of Artaxerxes. Anstey in his *Romance of Chronology*, boldly cuts the knot by declaring that the received secular chronology of that time, which is based on the Ptolemy canon, is wrong by 82 years, and that the true date of Cyrus's 1st year is 454 B.C. = AN. HOM. 3589.

Until this wide difference of opinion is satisfactorily cleared up, we cannot reconcile Scriptural and secular chronology. The Scriptural chronology reckoned by genealogies is perfectly consistent, but it differs from secular, and we do not yet appear to have reached absolute certainty on such important dates as the fall of Babylon and the 1st year of Cyrus. Sir Robert Anderson shows that if the 1st Nisan in the 20th year of Artaxerxes is taken as the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, then it is exactly 69 prophetic weeks to April the 6th, A.D. 32, which he takes as the date for Christ's entry into Jerusalem in his Passion week, as "Messiah the Prince."

The differences of opinion of chronologers on all these important dates—viz., the Birth, the Crucifixion of our Lord, the initial date (or dates) of the 70 weeks' prophecy, and the dates of the Exodus, Flood, and other Old Testament events—are great and perplexing. We seem as yet to have no absolutely settled "fixed points," or datum-points from which to reckon the prophetic periods or the genealogical series.

From Lieut.-Col. G. M. MACKINLAY: The lecturer tells us that authorities agree in fixing upon 4 B.C. or 6 B.C., as the date of the Nativity. I have myself lectured on the subject before the Institute ; but I have never heard of such an agreement as that suggested. On the other hand, the year 8 B.C. has been spoken of in this connection, and I maintain that there is much to be said for that date. For one thing, it was the year of the taxing or enrolment, when large numbers would assemble at Bethlehem, which is only a few miles distant from Jerusalem.

## REMARKS BY THE LECTURER.

In preparing this paper, the writer supposed that he was dealing with matters of historical fact, which merely required to be pointed out, with an endeavour to explain their significance. He is rather surprised, therefore, at criticisms from such various angles, which would take too much space to discuss fully.

If all the careful conclusions of early investigators are to be set aside, and primary principles have all to be established afresh, any paper on a prophetic subject would become a treatise of inordinate length. In many cases, these investigators have brought to light all the historical material yet available on the questions they deal with.

In regard to the "year-day" principle, if the striking fulfilments of the prophetic periods, at their terminations during the last two centuries and up to recent years, are not recognized as proof, it is difficult to see how any evidence would be convincing. Regarding the dates in the Captivity era, the studies of the writer have led him to conclude that these are more reliable and less open to discussion than those in New Testament times; because they are definitely fixed by eclipses which were so accurately recorded as to be unmistakable.

Recent writers who would make sweeping changes in these dates, can hardly appreciate this aspect of the question, which has been well explained by competent authorities. As I have been careful to point out, Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates* has stated that the record of a solar eclipse in 763 B.C. is the basis of Assyrian chronology. In contrast with this (as I have also shown) there is little help from astronomy in fixing Egyptian dates; for, as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* of 1910 says: "It is remarkable that no records of eclipses are known from Egyptian documents."

As there is unfortunately considerable difference of view on the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, the writer avoided its discussion in the present paper. It could not well be passed by without mention; but it is here quite secondary, as it does not bear directly upon the main points dealt with in this paper.

The writer desires to thank the Chairman and the Members of the Victoria Institute, for the considerate manner in which his paper was received.

## 707TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. CANON MARMADUKE WASHINGTON, M.A.,  
IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections:—David Ramsay Smith, Esq., M.I.M.E., as a Member; and the Rev. A. E. Shorrock, B.A., and the Rev. H. K. A. Philp as Associates. He then announced that the Council wished him to communicate to the Meeting the sad news of the decease of the Treasurer, Sir George Anthony King, M.A., Chief Master of the Supreme Court Taxing Office, and for a considerable time a Member of our Council and a Trustee of the Institute.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that a resolution be forwarded to Lady King and other relatives, from the Meeting, expressing sincere sympathy with them in their heavy loss. Those who approved of the same were requested to rise.

The CHAIRMAN then called on the Rev. A. H. Finn to read his paper on "The Miraculous in Holy Scripture."

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### *THE MIRACULOUS IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.*

By THE REV. A. H. FINN.

**W**HILE the large amount of prediction in Scripture is hardly realized by most people, there is, on the other hand, some tendency to exaggerate the amount of the miraculous. Many seem to think that every page of Scriptural history is full of miracles. That is not the case. There are three great periods marked by an unusual profusion of miraculous events, and these are (1) the latter part of the life of Moses; (2) the times of Elijah and Elisha; and (3) the times of our Lord and of His Apostles. The Exodus period extends from the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt to their entry into the Promised Land; but all this really centres in the manifestation

of God at Sinai, and, therefore, has to do with the giving of the Law. There were prophets (notably Samuel) in the earlier days, yet Elijah and Elisha may fairly be taken as outstanding types of the long and brilliant line of Prophets. The third period is, of course, that of bringing in the New Covenant, the Gospel. Apart from these, the amount of miracles in Scripture is not large, and there are long stretches of Israelite history in which no miracle is recorded. Miraculous events yet to come—such as the cleaving of the Mount of Olives, the destruction of the Man of Sin, and the marvels of the Apocalypse—are indeed foretold, but these hardly fall within the scope of this paper, beyond noting that these are to usher in another great Era. The Scriptures, then, lead us to believe that periods of special miraculous activity are connected with the great stages of God's plan of Redemption, and are, therefore, charged with Purpose and Meaning.

It is sometimes rather taken for granted that a miracle is necessarily an interference with the ordinary course of Nature, if not an actual breach of the laws of Nature. There are, however (as we shall see), a good many events recorded, usually considered miracles, which were brought about by natural forces. Indeed, it is not easy to frame a definition of "a miracle." The word in itself means "something to be wondered at," and there is a Hebrew word, *Niphlaoth*, applied in Exod. iii, 20, to the Plagues of Egypt, and rightly translated "wonders." Yet evidently this is too wide a term, for there are (especially nowadays) many wonderful things which cannot be called miracles. The words most commonly used in Scripture are the Hebrew *Oth* (a sign) and *Mopheth* (a portent), corresponding to the Greek *σημείον* and *τέρας*, but these also are too wide. The rainbow was a "sign," and comets and eclipses have been looked on as "portents," yet these are not miracles. There is another New Testament word, *ἔργα* (works), used by our Lord Himself (John xiv, 10, 11, 12; xv, 24), but this, too, must be limited by understanding it to mean Divine, not human, works. The word "miracle," too, is often popularly used in a loose sense, as when one has emerged from imminent danger it is said "he escaped by a miracle," or when people talk of "the miracles of modern science." That only means something so unexpected or unprecedented as to have appeared antecedently impossible or at least highly improbable.

Since none of these words taken singly are quite satisfactory, perhaps the nearest approach to a definition of a true miracle

may be arrived at by combining the ideas conveyed by the various Scriptural terms. It would run somewhat thus :—

A miracle is a wonderful “work” wrought by God, whether mediately through some natural force or immediately by direct Divine power, sufficiently unusual and startling to be a “portent,” effecting some worthy purpose, and, therefore, charged with a meaning which would constitute it a “sign” to men.

Such a definition would exclude most, if not all, of the prodigies found in ancient secular histories, and perhaps many of more recent date.

Of the marvellous occurrences recorded in Scripture, a good many may be reasonably taken to have been brought about through means well within the realm of Nature. The Deluge is explicitly attributed to prolonged heavy rain and the breaking up of “the fountains of the great deep,” caused probably by submarine disturbances, seismic or volcanic. The dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, their sudden return, and the second flight of quails (Num. xi, 31) are accounted for by the action of strong winds. Recently the destruction of the Cities of the Plain has been attributed to the exhalation of bituminous and sulphurous vapours ignited possibly by lightning. Lightning may also account for the several descents of “fire from heaven”—the burning at Taberah (Num. xi, 1); the destruction of Korah’s associates (Num. xvi, 35); the consumption of sacrifices in the wilderness (Lev. ix, 24), at the inauguration of the Temple (2 Chron. vii, 1), and that on Carmel (1 Kings xviii, 38), and when the two companies of fifty were consumed (2 Kings i, 12, 14). Perhaps also Uzzah (2 Sam. vi, 7) may have been struck by lightning. The swallowing up of Dathan, Abiram and their confederates appears to have been by an earthquake, and that, too, might account for the fall of the walls of Jericho and the rending of the Bethel altar (1 Kings xiii, 5). Pestilences, too—such as that at Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. xi, 33), at Shittim (Num. xxv, 9), after David’s numbering of the people (2 Sam. xxiv, 15), and possibly when so many of the Assyrian army perished (2 Kings xix, 35)—are not out of the course of Nature. Nor are deaths caused by wild animals (venomous serpents, Num. xxi, 6; lions, 1 Kings xiii, 24 : xx, 36; bears, 2 Kings ii, 24) unaccountable. It was the glint of early sunlight on the water that misled the Moabites and led to their discomfiture (2 Kings iii, 22),

while sheer panic at an imaginary danger caused the unlooked-for raising of the siege of Samaria (2 Kings vii, 6). Thunder at harvest-time in Palestine (1 Sam. xii, 18) is rare, but might occur. Dew is sometimes curiously capricious in settling (Judges vi, 37). The sudden formation of a barrage of debris might stay the waters of Jordan (Joshua iii, 16). Flights of quails in large numbers (Exod. xvi, 13) are not uncommon. An attempt has been made to explain on natural grounds the incident of Beth-horon (Joshua x, 13) by the assertion that it was the darkening, not the standing still, of the sun that was asked for and granted, and another that the going back of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz (2 Kings xx, 11) was due to the upheaval of a flight of steps; but perhaps neither of these is wholly satisfactory.

If, then, so many events usually thought to be miraculous either were, or might have been, effected by purely natural forces, why are they to be considered miracles at all? The time when, and the place where, those forces operated have to be taken into consideration. Was it by mere chance that the heavy rain began to fall, and the oceanic disturbances took place exactly one week after the ark was ready to receive Noah and his companions? or that the fiery destruction of Sodom was delayed until Lot and his daughters had found a safe refuge? How came it that the gulf in the earth opened just where it would swallow up Dathan's company and no others? What caused that "strong east wind" to blow on the very night when the Israelites were hard pressed by the Egyptian forces? Why did the waters only return when the Israelites had safely crossed and yet in time to overwhelm the pursuing enemy? How came the walls of Jericho to stand unshaken for six days and then fall on the seventh when the trumpets sounded and the people shouted? Why did the "fire from heaven" fall on Elijah's sacrifice and not on that of the priests of Baal? Why did sudden death single out the one man who had put out his hand to steady the ark? Similar questions might be asked about all the other happenings, and it is quite too much to suppose they could all be mere coincidences. Besides, some—the Deluge, the flights of quails, the fall of Jericho, the relief of Samaria—were announced beforehand; others—Samuel's thunderstorm, the fire that destroyed Ahaziah's emissaries—came at the call of a man, or came in answer to prayer, as the staying of the sun at Joshua's request, the dew on Gideon's fleece, and the fire that consumed the sacrifice on Carmel. Also, in most cases, a definite purpose was accom-

plished, and these are features that coincidence or chance cannot account for.

A favourite device of those who wish to explain away or minimize the Old Testament miracles is to assert that perfectly natural occurrences have been exaggerated and distorted by the haze of tradition into supernatural events. This procedure is particularly marked in their treatment of the Plagues of Egypt. It is carefully pointed out that each of the Plagues corresponds to some visitation familiar in that country. Thus it is remarked that at the first rise of the Nile in each year the waters are coloured by the red marl brought down from the Abyssinian hills. This is, then, put forward as having been represented as the turning the waters into blood. It does not, however, account for the fish dying, for the water being rendered undrinkable, and especially for all waters, in streams, pools, ponds and even in household vessels of wood or stone, being affected, as well as the water of the Nile. Therefore, these features have to be set down as the embroidery of later tradition. In similar fashion it is urged that incursions of frogs, lice (or sand flies, R.V.), flies and locusts are fairly common, while cattle-plagues and skin-diseases (boils and blains) are not unknown, as also hail and thunderstorms, though these are rare; that the three days' darkness might be due to a sandstorm caused by the hot "Khamseen" wind, and the tenth Plague was a malignant epidemic, afterwards represented by tradition as a slaying of the first-born only.

If that were all, if the Plagues were but ordinary visitations, even though somewhat intensified, how came it that so many followed one after another in such rapid succession? Why were the Egyptians so alarmed, the magicians confounded, and in the end Pharaoh terrified into letting the people go? Why was Goshen repeatedly spared? Especially, how was it that the Plagues were announced beforehand, some coming at a definite signal—striking the water, lifting the hand or rod, scattering ashes—and some removed at Moses' intercession? If the critical suggestions are justified, the actual facts must have been elaborately and systematically falsified in the present narrative.

In much the same way it is put forward that there is a substance known to the Arabs of the Sinaitic region as "manna," which is an exudation from a kind of tamarisk found only in certain parts and at a particular time in the year. "The Arabs gather it in the early morning, boil it down, strain it . . . and keep it in leather

skins: they pour it like honey over their unleavened bread . . . In a cool place it keeps for long."\* To identify this with the manna of Scripture it is necessary to disregard the statements that this fell in double quantity on the sixth day and none on the Sabbath; that if kept on other days it putrified; that "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack" (Exod. xvi, 18); that the people could bake it, grind it, and make it into cakes; that it was found in all parts of the wilderness, and that throughout the whole period of forty years. The identification seems precarious.

Again, it has been guessed that the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night (Exod. xiii, 21) may have been suggested by the "custom of a brazier filled with burning wood being borne along at the head of a caravan of pilgrims."† Why such a brazier should suggest a pillar of *cloud* is discreetly left unexplained, and certainly it would not account for that pillar removing from the van to the rear so as to come "between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel" (Exod. xiv, 20), nor for its guiding the people (Deut. i, 33), nor for its resting on the Tent of Meeting and lifting again when the march was to be resumed.

If the Israelites of a later age really turned such ordinary everyday matters into the marvellous events portrayed they must have had tolerably vivid imaginations, and the historians who set these fantasies down as actual facts must have been strangely credulous. It is easy to talk of traditional embellishment, but the unadorned matter-of-fact way in which they are narrated does not look in the least like it. Compare, for instance, the simplicity of the historical record of the passage of the Red Sea (Exod. xiv, 21-23) with the poetic amplification of it in chap. xv, 4-10, which is admitted to be of comparatively early date ("not later than the early days of the Davidic dynasty").‡

Turning now to the events where any action of natural forces can hardly be in question, it is not likely that water should have been twice procured by striking the solid rock (Exod. xvii, 6; Num. xx, 11), or that men dying from the bite of venomous serpents should recover because they merely gazed on the bronze image of one (Num. xxi, 9). No natural force will account for the revival of a child already dead (1 Kings xvii, 22; 2 Kings iv, 34), or of a dead corpse on touching the dead bones of another man

\* Driver, *Exodus*, p. 153.

† *Ibid.*, p. 113.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 131.



(2 Kings xiii, 21), or for the sudden development of leprosy in an avaricious servant (2 Kings v, 27), and a presumptuous king (2 Chron. xxvi, 19), or the cure of leprosy by bathing seven times in Jordan (2 Kings v, 14). Even if it be possible that the wood of some tree could make bitter water drinkable (Exod. xv, 25), or a little salt cast into a spring of "evil" waters make them wholesome (2 Kings ii, 21), or a handful of meal counteract the effect of a poisonous gourd (2 Kings iv, 41), at any rate, throwing a stick into the water (2 Kings vi, 6) could not make an iron axe-head float. It is not easy to account for "a handful of meal . . . and a little oil" sufficing to feed three persons for a good part of three years (1 Kings xvii, 12, 14), or for the contents of a single pot of oil filling a considerable number of vessels, only exhausted when all were filled (2 Kings iv, 6), or for twenty barley loaves being more than enough to feed one hundred men (2 Kings iv, 42-44). That a man should be possessed of abnormal strength is nothing improbable, but why should it depend on locks unshorn (Judges xvi, 17)? There are those who sneer at the idea of an ass being enabled to speak; but is that really more surprising than the rest of the narrative in which it is found? Balaam was, beyond question, intensely eager to secure the lavish rewards promised by Balak. What made him refuse the first invitation? What checked him on his journey? What induced him to substitute blessings for the curses expected of him? It is surely more difficult to thwart the intentions of a wilful man than to enable a dumb animal to utter intelligible sounds. Where the whole account is one of Divine interposition it is idle to cavil at a detail like this. Consider again the three signs given to Moses (Exod. iv, 2-9). The magicians might be able by a mere trick to make it appear that they had changed what looked like a stick into a snake and back again; but in Moses' case this was impossible. What he had in his hand was a genuine rod, not a hypnotized serpent; nor could it have been any kind of a sign to him unless there was a real transformation. He could hardly have made a mistake about his hand becoming leprous. Even if the changing of the waters of the Nile was no more than the annual reddening, that would not apply to water turning to blood when poured on the dry land. It is said there have been instances of men who have been swallowed by shark or whale and found alive after a considerable lapse of time, and some may think that this may be what happened to Jonah, though even then the presence of the great fish at exactly the right moment, and its

disgorging the prophet just where escape was possible, would need some explaining. That three men, however, could be thrown into a fiery furnace, heated sevenfold, and yet emerge with unsinged garments, and that another could remain among hungry lions for a whole night without hurt, will admit of no such explanation; nor is it conceivable that any natural force could account for "a chariot of fire and horses of fire" parting two friends in order that one of them might be carried up from earth by a whirlwind (2 Kings ii, 11). The confusion of tongues at Babel (Gen. xi, 9) is explicitly attributed to the direct action of the LORD.

Since none of all these events can anyhow be referred to the exaggeration or misunderstanding of natural happenings, those who have made up their minds that miracles cannot take place are reduced to asserting that these incidents never occurred; that the narratives are "legends," "folklore," sheer imagination essentially untrue. If so, what possible value can be attached to the histories containing them?

In the New Testament the same difficulties recur in an even aggravated form. Our Lord Himself appealed to the wonderful works He wrought as evidence of His Mission (John v, 36; x, 38; xiv, 11), and enumerated some of them to the messengers of the Baptist (Matt. xi, 5). Nowadays it is the fashion to discount certain of these by attributing the healing of the sick to unusual personal curative or magnetic powers, while casting out devils is disposed of by simply asserting that there was no such thing as demoniac possession—it was only a popular superstition—and classifying the cases recorded as some form of epilepsy or insanity. There remain, however, many which cannot be so got rid of: such are the turning water into wine; the stilling a storm with a word, and walking upon the water; feeding thousands on scanty provision; healing sick at a distance (the nobleman's son, the centurion's servant, and the Canaanite woman's daughter); healing at a word a helpless paralytic, restoring a withered hand, ten lepers, and one by a touch; contact with a garment stanching a long-standing issue of blood; opening the eyes of the blind, especially of one born blind; and raising the dead (Jairus' daughter, the widow's son at Nain, and Lazarus). There are also the portents at the Crucifixion; the mysterious darkness, the rending of the Veil, and the opening of the graves. Above all, there are the three transcendent miracles connected with Himself: His Birth, His Resurrection, and His Ascension. All these, then, if miracles

be impossible, would have to be put down to the vain imaginings of over-credulous disciples, and so also the comparatively few marvels ascribed to Apostles in the book of the Acts : the healing of the lame at the Beautiful Gate and at Lystra ; the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, and the blinding of Elymas ; the cure of palsied Æneas and of Publius' father ; the opening of prison doors, twice at Jerusalem and again at Philippi ; the expelling of the spirit of divination from the Philippian damsel, and the immunity from the viper's bite ; the healing power of even Peter's shadow, and Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons, and his casting out of evil spirits which led the sons of Sceva to try and emulate him ; and the reviving of the dead, Dorcas and Eutychus. Altogether, though the miracles in Scripture are not so numerous as is sometimes imagined, yet if everything of the kind has to be discredited, it is evident a good deal of the Biblical history will have to be regarded as hopelessly unreliable.

When so much is put down to the influence of tradition and legend, it has to be borne in mind that this largely depends on the truth of certain modern theories. As to the Pentateuch, the view now so vehemently advocated of its composite origin claims an interval of centuries between the actual events and the records ; but if the age-long belief in its Mosaic origin holds good, the records are nearly contemporary, and the distorting effect of tradition is excluded. Much the same may be said of what is recorded in Joshua and Judges and the books of Samuel. Moreover, if the inclusion of miracles is chiefly due to the growth of tradition, then they ought to be found most frequently in the earliest ages, and yet it is precisely in Genesis that few are found. Next to Exodus and Numbers, miracles are most abundant in the books of Kings. These may have been compiled at a comparatively late date, but they are evidently based on much older records, and there is nothing to show that these did not contain the miraculous as well as the ordinary events. Also it is to be noted that in these books miracles are chiefly connected with the times of Elijah and Elisha, well on in historic times, and, indeed, far more with the latter name. It is surely to be expected that legends and traditions would have collected more about the striking figure of the Tishbite than about his less notable successor, yet the contrary is the case. For the New Testament events there is scarcely any room for the growth of legend or tradition. Three of the Gospels were already written within some thirty years of the events, two of them probably containing the reminiscences of

eye-witnesses, and the third compiled by one who had made careful enquiry of those who were eye-witnesses ; the book of the Acts was written at a still shorter interval after the events recorded in it ; the fourth Gospel, perhaps, some forty years later still, and probably by one who was himself an eye-witness.

Of course, we cannot expect to find accounts of miraculous events in the non-historical parts of the Bible, but what we do find is allusions to many of those events in many of the Psalms, in the prophetic writings, and in the Epistles, and always alluded to as actual occurrences. Above all, our Lord Himself endorses many in like manner, including some of the most disputed.

As has already been remarked, the Biblical miraculous events are mainly grouped about three memorable epochs—an evidence surely of design and purpose ; but if we extend our definition of “miracle” to include all indications of God’s intervention in the affairs of men, we shall have to include a great deal more than the actual “signs and portents.” There are the various appearances : that at the burning bush ; the great manifestation at Sinai ; the revelation to Moses when “the LORD passed before him” (Exod. xxxiv, 6) ; the appearances of “the glory of the LORD” in the wilderness, at the Tabernacle, and in the Temple, besides the departure of the glory witnessed by Ezekiel ; the visit of the LORD to Abraham before the destruction of Sodom, that of the Captain of the LORD’s Host to Joshua, and those of the Angel of the LORD to Balaam, Gideon and Manoah, to Zachariah and Mary ; the manifestations at our Lord’s Baptism and the Transfiguration ; and the appearance of our Lord to Saul on the Damascus road. Then there is the selection of individuals for special purposes : the call of Abram, the mission of Moses, the choice of David, the nomination of Elisha and Jehu, the commission of Jeremiah, the Apostles, and St. Paul ; and of non-Israelites—Hazeal, Cyrus, Nebuchadnezzar, and Artaxerxes. With these may be classed the exceptional births of Isaac, Samuel, and John the Baptist. Again, there are the notifications of the Divine Will and Purpose : the dreams of Abimelech, Joseph, Pharaoh, Solomon, and Nebuchadnezzar ; the visions vouchsafed to Abram (in the horror of thick darkness), to Jacob twice at Bethel, to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, St. Peter at Joppa, to St. Paul on more than one occasion, and to St. John at Patmos ; and in the writing on the wall which startled Belshazzar. The incursions of the Assyrians (1 Chron. v, 26 ; Isa. xxxvii, 26),

and of the Babylonians and other nations (2 Kings xxiv, 3) are declared to be according to the will of the LORD, and it is He who would bring against unfaithful Israel "a nation from far, from the end of the earth" (Deut. xxviii, 49, 50). Prediction, especially of distant events, can but come from Him who alone can declare "the end from the beginning" (Isa. xlvi, 10). Indeed, in a sense it may be said that the purport of the whole Bible is to show that "the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. iv, 32), guiding and over-ruling the destinies of nations and all mankind.

There are two assertions which are often put forward as arguments to show that miracles cannot possibly happen:—

(1) *They are contrary to experience.*

If that means contrary to *all* experience, then it simply assumes the very thing that has to be proved, namely, that all the records which assert that such events have actually occurred are false. That they should be outside ordinary experience is a matter of necessity, for unless they were rare they could not be "signs and portents," which is the very thing they are intended to be.

(2) *They are contrary to the laws of Nature.*

But we are far from knowing all the laws of Nature; there are many which we are only just beginning to find out. Moreover, what we call the laws of Nature are only our own generalizations from our experience of how Nature ordinarily works.

However, the argument is sometimes differently stated, thus: The laws of Nature are God's laws, and, therefore, He would not contravene them or allow them to be contravened. Certainly, not without good reason. The most stringent of human laws may be modified or set aside in cases of emergency. How much more, then, may the Ruler of all things modify or suspend His own rules if He sees reason for so doing? People sometimes talk as though God could not work a miracle—as though He has not the power to do so. Take, then, what I suppose would be considered the most startling of miracles—the raising of the dead. If God is (as all who believe in the living God will admit) the Source and Fountain of all life, if it is He who gives life at birth or at the germination of seed, what is there to hinder Him from giving back life to that which has died, as in the case of the blossoming of Aaron's rod?

After all, if a miracle means a wonder-work wrought by God what marvel is there so stupendous as Creation? The most startling of the phenomena which men may deem incredible sinks into insignificance compared with the mighty achievement of bringing into existence the whole Universe: the starry heavens with their myriads of shining worlds that so truly "declare the glory of God"; yea, even this world of ours, so tiny by comparison, yet so perfectly finished in all its bewildering variety that the microscope shows as many marvels of skill and wisdom in the realm of the infinitely little as the telescope and spectroscope find in the realm of the infinitely great.

Then alongside of this is the no less mighty work of Redemption. The bringing in of Life Eternal through a shameful death; the purchase of infinite joy through suffering unfathomable; the conquest of the terrific forces of evil by quiet patient endurance; the effecting so mighty a purpose as the salvation of a whole world by such seemingly inadequate means; these surely form a work as stupendous as Creation itself. Truly "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. i, 25).

Even that is not all. There is still to come the wonder of the New Creation, when we are bidden to expect "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. iii, 13), where the moral and spiritual miracle transcends even that of a physical Creation.

It were folly to doubt that the wisdom and power displayed in the Creator's work must have a worthy purpose and meaning far beyond our limited understanding, and it is Scripture alone which indicates to us something of that meaning and purpose. What, then, is this Scripture? It is made up of the utterances and writings of many men of the most varying ranks and character living in widely differing circumstances and in different ages spread over many centuries. The contents are miscellaneous in form: history, biography, poetry, pithy sayings, letters, visions. Yet the amazing thing is that these combine to form a distinct unity. That unity chiefly consists in tracing the working out of God's purposes from the very beginning to the yet distant end, from Creation through Redemption to the New Creation, the "restitution of all things." It is but a small volume compared with the ponderous tomes setting forth the theories, philosophies, researches of men. Yet in it what wealth of wisdom, what incentives to holiness, what treasures of hope and faith, what a

revelation of the love of God ! Can we doubt that this is a work of God, though carried out by human agents, instinct with the most profound meaning and purpose ?

Holy Scripture is itself a Miracle.

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN said : What is a miracle ? A miracle is “ an extraordinary phenomenon, wrought by supernatural and Divine interposition.” Such were the miracles wrought by our Divine Saviour as expressed in His own words to the disciples of John the Baptist : “ Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see : the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up.” Specimens of these miracles proper are given in detail in the Gospel narratives. Such was St. Matthew’s statement that He “ went about in all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.” These accounts are confirmed by eye-witnesses and contemporaries.

In regard to the third Evangelist, *St. Luke*, we must remember that he was a *trained physician*. His testimony, therefore, is the testimony of a man of science. For instance, when St. Luke tells us of the healing of a *fever* (iv, 38, 39) he uses the technical term for “ a violent fever ” (*puretô megalô*). His testimony, therefore, is that of one who knew what fevers were, and what the healing of them meant. This consideration is very valuable in reference to the miracles recorded by him of St. Paul in the latter part of the Acts. It should always be remembered that they are recorded by a physician who was an eye-witness of them.

On the question of the abstract *possibility of miracles*, we know very well that a man may, in general, act uniformly according to a certain rule, and yet, on a particular occasion, may, for a special reason, act quite differently. We cannot, therefore, refuse to admit the possibility of something analogous taking place as regards the action of the *Supreme Being*. If we imagine the Laws of Nature to be self-existent and uncaused, then we cannot admit any deviation from them. But if we think of them as designed by a *Supreme Will*, then we must allow the possibility of their being on some particular

occasion *suspended*. Or, it may be, without their being suspended, some different law may be brought into action, whereby the result in question is brought about without *any suspension* taking place.

Now, if there are agencies and forces in existence outside the ordinary world of Nature, and if they can, under certain circumstances, interpose in it, they must necessarily produce effects inconsistent with the processes of that world when left to itself. Life under the surface of the water has a certain course of its own when undisturbed, but if a man standing on a bank throws a stone into it, effects are produced as unexpected and unaccountable as a miracle to the creatures who live in the stream. The life in the world of air above the water is perfectly distinct from the life in the world under the water. Now, the spiritual world may be as close to us as the air to the water; and the angels, or other ministers of God's will, may as easily at His word interpose in it as a man can throw a stone into the water. Thus, when the stone is so thrown, there is no suspension on modification of any law; it is simply, as in the case of a miracle, that a new agency has interposed. Thus, in the miracle proper, it is shown that some power outside Nature has intervened, and this is borne out by the words of Holy Scripture: "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will."

The whole significance of our Lord's miracles is, that they occur at His word and in obedience to His command, "What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him." Thus our Lord proved that He was a Saviour by doing the works of a saviour. There is no word for "Saviour" in the Roman language. The ancients knew of a "*servator*" but not of a "*salvator*." The essential message of the miracles is that they exhibit our Lord in this character: that of One who has both the will and the power to save.

Thus, too, the miracles of the Old Testament are obviously wrought as manifestations of a Divine Being and as evidences of His character and will. Such were the miracles wrought for Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt—miracles which will be repeated in the future during the Day of the Lord and the future period of Judgment. Without the miracles in the Wilderness, the God of the Jews would



be an abstraction: as manifested in them, He is the living God with a revealed character—"a Just God and a Saviour" (Isa. xlv, 21). The subsequent miracles of Jewish History reveal more and more both of the will and the power of God.

The *greatest miracle is Prophecy*, and its chief value is this: that it stands ever before our sight. Every time we meet a Jew we behold a miracle. It is now about 2,500 years ago since Amos wrote: "Thus saith the Lord, I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." How has this been accomplished? Is there a nation upon earth among whom the Jews have not been sifted? Is there a nation where the Jews, being so sifted, *have been lost*? Why, then, should we dispute about miracles? "A miracle is merely a Divine working beyond and above what we call 'the laws of Nature,'" and every time we behold a Jew we behold such a Divine operation.

But the single case of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ—a wonderful miracle—governs all others. This one miracle has occurred; there can be no reason for doubting the occurrence of ten or one hundred. St. Paul very reasonably rests the whole truth of Christianity upon the miracle of the Resurrection: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins." But he convincingly shows that the truth of this miracle is abundantly established. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that he was seen of five hundred brethren at once; after that of James; then of all the Apostles." And then he adds, "of me also, as of one born out of due time." Paul's own conversion was in itself a miracle, *i.e.* a fact wholly supernatural. He went forth on his journey to Damascus—no one disputes the fact—a bitter persecutor: he came to Damascus a believer in Christ. He could not be otherwise. That same Jesus whom he had persecuted, and whom he had believed to be then lying in the tomb, had appeared to him, spoken to him, and in one moment subdued him. He could no longer doubt the fact that Jesus was his risen Lord. All the Apostles "with great power gave witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Seven or eight of them have left us their testimony in writing. The Church of Christ was built upon this fact. Was it a mistake? Was it a fraud? Could it be a fraud? Religious

impostures there have been many ; but in every such case the object and drift have been evident. Men will do much, invent much, suffer much, and lie much to gain honour, wealth, and power ; but who ever heard of men who committed frauds merely to involve themselves in all kinds of trouble ? This great fact was proclaimed everywhere in the Augustan age and in the centre of Greek and Roman civilization. To declare it involved the preacher in disgrace and persecution ; yet perseveringly it was proclaimed, *and never was it disproved*. Before this preaching the reigning faiths of the heathen world fell and vanished away.

On the whole, miracles, far from being an excrescence on Christian faith, are indissolubly bound up with it, and all have a complete unity in the manifestation of the Divine Nature as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

Mr. W. HOSTE asked the lecturer whether, there having been in sacred history, as stated on p. 99, special miracle eras—a fact he believed to be as true as interesting—might explain our Lord's words, "These signs shall follow them that believe," etc. ? (Mark xvi, 17, 18). The said signs confessedly have never been general to Christian experience. Is this to be explained, as is sometimes done, by a decline of faith ? If so, why in the case of the Apostles did miracles appear to become less frequent as the years passed ? For example, no deliverance, as in chaps. xii and xvi, is granted to Paul from the prison-house in Rome. Is not the real explanation that this promise belongs properly to the miracle-era of the opening of the Christian testimony ?

The principle on p. 101 is very important, that natural processes were often utilized for the performing of miracles (though, of course, not of all), and that what seemed like the violation of law was only the bringing in of some other more recondite law, prepared for such a contingency. He remembered, in 1910, being shown a well in India, in the compound of a missionary, in so unlikely a spot that when it was proposed to dig there, an Indian water-expert had said that "if water was found there, he would become a Christian." The missionary, however, had, as he believed, been shown the spot in answer to prayer. An abundant supply was found, issuing from what seemed like a fault in the geological formation. It was

in a small triangular tongue of land between two Indian compounds, at only two or three yards' distance on either side, the owners of which began digging for all they were worth, hoping to tap the unexpected supply, but neither got a drop! Who can say that this had not been provided for beforehand by an Omniscient God?

The miracles of our Lord were, as Mr. Finn points out on p. 101, "for effecting some worthy purpose," in contrast to the pseudo-miracles which superstition attributes to His childhood, which were arbitrary, if not mischievous. Our Lord steadily refused "the sign from Heaven," which will be given by the Antichrist (*see Rev. xiii*), which latter shows that miracles *per se* are not proofs of divine power. Why, if our Lord's miracles were unreal, could the Jewish teachers ascribe *them* to Satan, when, as in the case of the raising of Lazarus, they resulted in the conversion of many to God, and the discomfiture of Satan? The words of Jean Jacques Rousseau, "Take away the miracles, and you will have the world at the feet of Jesus Christ," are based on a fallacy, for our Lord's credentials, as Messiah, were in part His miracles (*e.g.* Isa. lxi, 1-10—a passage omitted from the Synagogue lectionary as only suitable for the Messiah's lips). Had there been nothing miraculous in the ministry of One professing to be the Incarnate Son of God, would not the unbeliever to-day have a strong argument against His superhuman claims? Certainly, and he would not hesitate to use it.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES said: We all recognize the great value and importance of the scholarly paper to which we have listened. Would that it could be widely circulated among those who have any doubts as to the miraculous in Holy Scripture! All God's works and ways are wonderful, and so are His living oracles in the written Word.

Mr. AVARY H. FORBES said: The miracles, both of the Old Testament and the New, were *physical* miracles almost exclusively. After our Lord's ascension, spiritual miracles began with the descent of the Holy Ghost, the conversion of St. Paul and of many others; and these miracles have never ceased. Little attention is usually paid to them in the matter of Christian evidence, yet they are by far the most convincing factor. It is strange that they have received so little attention, seeing that our Lord attached such importance to

them; for, in speaking of His own (physical) miracles, He said about His followers: "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." The after effects of raising Lazarus from the dead were as nothing, compared with the world-wide and age-long effects of the conversion of St. Paul.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said: According to my experience, in most cases the real trouble with those who question the miraculous in the Bible is not a mental or intellectual difficulty, but rather it is a matter of the heart. In other words, most of the objections were raised by those who wanted to find excuses for their neglect of the Bible with its teaching and its claim upon them. On the other hand, those who had experienced in their hearts and lives the greatest miracle of all, viz., conversion, found no difficulty whatever in accepting those miracles recorded in the Bible. To illustrate this, he told of a drunken man who had spent all his money, and even sold all his furniture, in order to buy *beer*. And "when he had spent all" he was led into a mission-hall, heard the Gospel, and was saved. He at once became an abstainer, got good employment in course of time, and was able to get together and furnish a comfortable home. Then, on one occasion, when reading his Bible, an unbelieving critic sneered at him, saying, "Surely he did not believe in the story about Christ turning water into wine!" But the converted drunkard replied by saying, "Of course I believe it; you come down to my little cottage, and you shall see how God can change beer into furniture."

Mr. L. BIDDULPH said: As a child, I always considered miracles as inexplicable events, and even as contradictions of the laws governing Nature, and I believe I am not far wrong in ascribing this view to the majority of Christians. It is since our general knowledge of the laws of Nature has been so largely extended, that a disbelief in miracles contradicting and upsetting the laws of the cosmos has arisen. And to this new outlook must be attributed the attitude of the modern critics toward miracles, and especially to miracles based on the old conception of something *contrary* to the laws of the cosmos.

Our lecturer, in the course of his paper, mentioned, among other miracles, the demolition of the walls of Jericho as a result of the

investment of that town by Joshua, and suggests that it was caused by a miraculous earthquake. With our present-day knowledge (scientific), however, we cannot help assigning this miraculous happening to another cause, which, although it is not perhaps so astonishing to us, because we understand how it was brought about, yet it is nevertheless miraculous in its effects. I refer to the principle of disintegration brought about by repeated and strong vibrations of a particular note. A reading of the passage in question will make this clear. The whole army was to march round the city headed by seven priests blowing seven rams-horn trumpets. The vibrations set up by the steady march of the troops must have been very great. It is well known that a regiment has to break step when crossing a bridge (suspension) or it will be broken. This measure repeated for seven days, and repeated seven times on the seventh day, accompanied by the shouting of the whole encampment, completed the work of destruction at the appointed time.

A wall has been brought down by a prolonged musical note played by a military band since Joshua's time, and to the great confusion and astonishment of the unwary bandsmen. Caruso, the great tenor, was able to shatter a wine-glass in fragments by singing a prolonged note into the glass! In fact, everything and every individual has its keynote, and if that keynote be sounded a sufficient number of times and with sufficient strength, material disintegration of that thing or person will ensue. This knowledge does not, however, destroy the miraculous nature of such an event.

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

Mr. F. C. WOOD wrote: I do not understand the mentality of those who try to explain so many miraculous events by natural causes. The only reasonable way to treat such events is to take them as actual happenings, brought about by "the finger of God," or, failing that, to discard them altogether; and then, what kind of book would the Bible be?

The Bible, almost from beginning to end, has special relation to the Jewish people; and that people had a miraculous beginning in life from the dead. The miracles of the Bible were nearly all in connection with Israel, both before, during, and after the ministry of Christ. They have been for over 1,850 years a miraculously

preserved and separated people ; and they are yet to be dealt with even more miraculously, and the preparation for these events is taking place before our eyes to-day.

It would need another paper to go into the detail, which can be gathered from the Bible, as to *why* and *how* many of the miracles occurred, and *what* purpose they served ; and criticism is not fair or just that does not take these things fully into account. May I refer to a few of the most important events ? The Deluge was sent because of the iniquity of the whole world, a condition of things so bad that probably the bodies as well as the minds of the race—Noah and his family alone excepted—were so affected, that God was compelled to destroy the race from the earth. The language used indicates this. That the Deluge did occur, is clearly stated in several parts of Scripture—once with the solemn oath of Jehovah Himself in the following words : “ This is as the waters of Noah unto Me : for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee ” (Isa. liv, 9). How it occurred and the purpose it served is explicitly stated.

The miracle of the birth of Isaac, following upon God’s covenant promise (Abraham being then one hundred years old, and Sarah ninety years), was to indicate for all time to “ the heirs of promise ” that righteousness was to be by grace, through faith, and not by works, according to what had been spoken, “ I have made thee a father of many nations ; before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ‘ So shall thy seed be ’ ” (Rom. iv, 17, 18). It was a question with Abraham, and all his spiritual seed, of faith in God’s promises, even to life from the dead.

The passing of Israel through the Red Sea was not only to deliver that helpless people, but was for the purpose, as stated in the words, “ I will get Me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen ; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.” It was also to be a matter of remembrance for Israel for all time. The sevenfold details of *how* it was done are given in Exod. xiv, 19–29. All is so plain that a child may understand.

As regards Israel crossing the Jordan, the reason *why* is given as, that the people might know that the living God was among them, and that He would without fail drive out from before them the seven powerful, idolatrous nations which were in the land. It was also that the new commander, Joshua, "might be magnified in the sight of all Israel," and that in after days the descendants of these men and "all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord that it is mighty." An immediate result was the terrifying effect it had on the nations on the western side of Jordan. *How* the miracle was wrought is plainly recorded: "The waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, the salt sea, failed, and were cut off." Then, when the feet of the priests were lifted up unto the dry land, the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before. The operating cause of these two outstanding miracles is stated in the question and answer given in Ps. cxiv: "What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? . . . Tremble thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob." In the first case, this presence was manifested in the miraculous pillar of cloud and fire, connected with which was "the Angel of the Lord," and in the second by "the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord," "the Lord of all the earth," with which was associated the Shekinah glory, this also being miraculous.

This naturally leads to the miracles of Christ. On two occasions, He walked on the water and stilled the tempest with a word. If we reverently ask *how* this was done, the only answer can be, by His inherent power as Lord of creation, the Lord of winds and waters. And if we ask *why*, the all-sufficient reply is in His own words: "The works that I do bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me."

It is an ominous sign of the trend of things in these days that so many Biblical subjects are given up to criticism under the name of scholarship and intellectuality, and that so many are influenced by this show of learning, when a careful and reverent reading of the portions criticized would not only reveal the hollowness of the criticism but magnify the truth of the things revealed. Only five miracles

have been mentioned in these remarks, but many others might be dealt with to show *why* and *how* the miracles occurred, and *what* purpose they served.

I was much interested in Mr. Finn's remarks about certain periods of Jewish history being noted for miraculous events, while for long periods they were unknown. These periods of miracles were mainly forty or fifty years at the commencement of Israel's national history ; the times of Elijah (seven miracles) and Elisha (fourteen miracles), that being a time of great national declension ; and during the ministry of Christ and His Apostles, a period of about fifty years also, when God was seeking to bring Israel back to national repentance. During the present long dispensation of about 1,850 years we have had the standing miracle of the Word of God, and this probably accounts for what is termed "the silence of God," though, where prayer is definitely answered, God is not silent, and there is then that which partakes of the nature of miracle.

#### AUTHOR'S REPLY.

There is not much criticism for me to reply to.

Mr. Biddulph considers that the fall of the walls of Jericho was due to the vibration set up by the blowing of the trumpets and the shout of the people. If so, it was no miracle and there was no need to discuss it.

I quite agree with Mr. Avary Forbes, that spiritual miracles are really more important than physical ; but since it is precisely the physical that are objected to and discredited, it was more necessary to consider them.

Mr. Hoste asked why there are fewer miracles in the later part of St. Paul's life, attributed by some teachers to some supposed weakening of faith ? Actually we have little information as to his later years ; but if there were fewer miracles, then I should certainly not attribute that to any lack of faith, but to the passing of the miracle-era.

The point in the Chairman's remarks about the possibility of angelic activities in the spiritual plane is of special interest to me. Our word "angel" and the Greek from which it is derived merely indicates a messenger. The Hebrew name, however, is connected with *malaakah*, meaning "work." This suggests that the angels are



active workers, and, both in the Old Testament and in the Apocalypse, there are hints of angels controlling natural forces (*e.g.* wind, fire, etc.). Does not this afford a reasonable explanation of miracles? An illustration I have elsewhere used is that of a great ocean liner, where for days and days the work goes on with unfailing regularity: the engineers keep up the required speed, the steersman has his prescribed course, the crew have their appointed duties. Then something happens: someone falls overboard. The captain at once issues fresh orders, the vessel circles round, the engines are stopped, a boat is lowered, the ordinary routine is interfered with. In like manner, if what we call the laws of Nature are in reality the rules governing the normal activities of subordinate angelic agents, then for some particular purpose those activities may be suspended or diverted at the Will of the Supreme Ruler.

708TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

AVARY H. FORBES, ESQ., M.A., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections:—As Associates: Dr. George Keppie Paterson, C.M., and Miss Gina L. Barbour.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Professor Theophilus G. Pinches, LL.D., M.R.A.S., to read his paper on "The Influence of the Heathenism of the Canaanites upon the Hebrews."

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*THE INFLUENCE OF THE HEATHENISM OF  
THE CANAANITES UPON THE HEBREWS.*

By PROFESSOR THEOPHILUS G. PINCHES, LL.D., M.R.A.S.

WHEN the Hebrews, both the great and renowned "Man from Beyond" the Euphrates, and, later on, his descendants, led by Moses from the servitude of Egypt, entered the Holy Land of Palestine, they found themselves in the midst of a population possessing strange manners, customs and beliefs differing from those of the nations among whom the Hebrews had formerly dwelt, and still more from their own ways of thought. Around them were the Canaanites, a people consisting of many tribes and clans, one of them being the Jebusites, who inhabited Jerusalem and the district around it. To this important section of the population must be added the Edomites, the Moabites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, and last, but not least, the Amorites, who, in later days, had to give place to the Hittites—"the sons of Heth"—people seemingly speaking an Aryan language.

On the sea-coast were the important cities of Tyre, Sidon and Beyrout, with many others. The first two had acquired power on account of their extensive commerce overseas, and constant voyages had enabled them to learn something of the islands and the coast-lands of the Mediterranean, with their inhabitants.

But that which influenced the Hebrews most, in all probability, was the religious beliefs of the Canaanites, both the specially national, the tribal, and that of the clan or family. The Hebrews must also have learned from the Phœnician seafarers some of the beliefs, as well as the manners and customs, of the lands with which they traded, and they may even have become acquainted with Canaanitish beliefs inherited from prehistoric times—details of old gods and old legends which are lost to us in the mists of the ages.

As all Bible readers know, the influence of the heathenism which the incoming Hebrews found around them was naturally great, and it was probably impossible not to be affected by it. If all men in England, for instance, were alike unattracted by ritual and mystic ceremonies, it is safe to say that this country would be an impregnable stronghold of evangelism and plain divine worship. That the Hebrews were affected, and even attracted, by the beliefs, the rites and the ceremonies of the people around them is therefore not to be wondered at. Both in Babylonia and in Egypt the Hebrews had become acquainted with the religions of those lands, and also with their legends and their traditions. But they were far from being nationally sympathetic with either of these nations—they lived among the Babylonians because it was their interest to do so, and with the Egyptians because, being captives, they had no choice in the matter.

On arriving in the Holy Land as settlers, however, the Hebrews found themselves among people who were more or less akin to themselves. More than this, they spoke a language which could hardly be regarded as a separate dialect, and there is every probability that the Hebrews still retained a knowledge of the beliefs current among their forefathers before their entry either into Ur of the Chaldees or into Egypt.

#### HOW DID THE ISRAELITES BECOME ATTRACTED TO HEATHENISM?

Upon this point we get more precise indications in the Book of Judges. From that remarkably noteworthy historical narrative we learn that it was due to the necessity of subjugating the

Canaanites, a task which was begun by Judah and Simeon. The various small nations, however, were not all killed off—indeed, it would have been difficult to do so, and many of them remained domiciled with the Hebrews, and naturally retained their old beliefs, though there must have been continual accessions from the aliens to the faith and the nationality of the Jews.

All the nations which were left were regarded as having been spared by Jehovah to prove and test the Israelites as to their faithfulness to the God of their fathers. Thus it happened that they came into contact with the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Sidonians, “and the Hivites which dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.”

These remnants of the Canaanites were “to prove Israel, so as to find out whether they were faithful to the words of Moses.” And to those already mentioned must be added the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. These, however, were probably not the nationalities which led the Israelites astray; like the Hittites and the Amorites, they probably worshipped their national gods, as did also the Assyrians. It is thus that we obtain the divine names Assur, Hattu and Amurrū (mispronounced by the Assyro-Babylonians “Awurrū”).

In addition to the adoption of the heathen worship there was the disadvantage of intermarriage, by which the Israelites lost not a few of their nationals, though of these some may have returned to them. Many other nationalities are mentioned in the Book of Judges as having subjugated Israel, but how far they adopted their heathen worship we can hardly realize. The influence which the alien beliefs of the surrounding nations must have had upon the Israelites can easily be estimated when we consider the history of Samson, and the intercourse between the various nationalities in his time.

But, previous to this, there had been the influence of the heathenism of Babylonia—the Accad of Gen. x, 10. According to the Talmud, Terah, the father of Abraham, was an idolater, but what the gods were whom he worshipped is doubtful—we are only told that they were twelve in number, one for every month of the year. We do not know whether what may be called “the Merodach-monotheism” was in existence already in his time or not, but, if it was, he may well have been influenced by it.

The fact that Terah and his family left Ur of the Chaldees, where the moon-god (Sin or Nannar) was adored, and went and

settled at Haran—the “Harran” of the Assyro-Babylonians—has been regarded as sufficient proof that the family-god of the Hebrews of that period was the moon. Without admitting that this is correct, it is to be noted that the double parentage of Ištar suggests how the Hebrews became familiarized with the worship of the queen of heaven, which they afterwards adopted. As an inhabitant of the sky, Ištar was regarded as the daughter of Anu, the god of the heavens, as stated in the *Descent of Ištar into Hades*, and, having phases similar to those of the moon, she seems to have been looked upon as belonging to the family of Sin, “brought forth in the likeness of her father and Nin-gal, the moon-goddess, her mother.”

It is only natural, that when at last in the Holy Land they should have recognized in Ashtoreth and Ashtoreth-Karnaim, the Queen of Heaven, Palestinian forms of Ištar (with the feminine ending attached, as was to be expected).

Sayce\* says that Ashtoreth was the name of the supreme goddess of Canaan and the female counterpart of Baal. Both the name and the worship, he adds, were derived from Babylonia. He also points out that she was a male as well as a female deity, owing to her character as a morning and an evening star. In connection with this, it is worthy of note—if only because it is curious—that the name of Ištar, 𐎶𐎠𐎺𐎠𐎺𐎠, *d. Ištar*, appears, without the divine prefix, in monogram-form, namely, 𐎶𐎠𐎺𐎠, in the words expressing the names of demons or even personages, who were held to be one-third or two-thirds divine. This produced the characters 𐎶𐎠𐎺𐎠𐎺𐎠, *utukku*, and 𐎶𐎠𐎺𐎠𐎺𐎠𐎺𐎠, *édimmu*, “spirit,” “shade,” or “ghost,” the former being two parts divine and the latter one part. Whether the Canaanites, and from them the Hebrews, knew of this derivation of the word *Ištar* or not is uncertain, but the Moabites seem to have regarded Ashtar (*Ištar*) as a god, and identified her (*e.g.* on the Moabite stone) with Chemosh.

There is no trace of the Semitic  $\gamma$  in the Assyrian form of the word, nor does any equivalent of the  $\gamma$  appear in the Assyrian transcription Ašartu (or *Ashtarhu*), also not in Ištarēti, one of the Assyro-Babylonian words for “goddesses.” This leads to the question, whether the Canaanites or their neighbours, the kindred nations around, may not have possessed a root capable of being identified, either owing to form, or to meaning,

\* *International Standard Bible Encyclopædia.*

or both, with the Assyrian Ištar. As is well known, the Aramaic form is *Athtar*, but this may be due only to the ancient analogy of the change of *sh* into *th*, as is well shown in Arabic. The use of the word Ashtaroth in Hebrew for "ewes" or their young is regarded as being due to the fact that *Aštari* was goddess of fertility.

*Here we have, in the very language itself—the Hebrew of the Bible, used by the writer of Genesis—a word from a root derived apparently from a dialect used by the heathen around, and applied by them to the goddess of reproduction, with special reference to the flocks and herds, of which the Hebrews made use every day.*

The importance of this goddess, therefore, led to the popularity of her worship among the Canaanites, and also to her worship among the Hebrews as "the queen of heaven"—the planet Venus, with whom, in Babylonia and Assyria, she was identified. In the Mediterranean states, under the name of Ashtoreth, she came to be regarded as the female counterpart of Baal, the great sun-god of that tract. There, too, the legend of Ištar and Tammuz must have made the people remember, that as the legends of the journey of Ištar into Hades relate, she descended into the Underworld to seek the sun-god Tammuz, whom she had espoused in her youth. The legend is based upon the disappearance of the planet Venus in the sun's rays at the time of the autumn equinox, and her reappearance at the beginning of spring at what was practically the New Year, when the Babylonians saw the earth began to bring forth again. Even a monotheist could in those days hardly escape from the influence of heathen teaching in such a case as this, and we therefore find that it had a special attraction for the women of Jerusalem, who wept for Tammuz at the northern gate of the Temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, whilst priests, to the number of five-and-twenty, worshipped the sun towards the east. Ezekiel probably voices the opinion of all the more reasonable of the pious men of his time when he speaks of these things as abominations. The influence of the Canaanites, who had brought this worship into the land before the entry of the Jews, naturally continued for many centuries, and was probably not eliminated until the time of the Babylonian captivity, and perhaps not even then. A people brought into contact with the worshippers of "the merciful Merodach," and remembering, as the more learned of them must have done, the history (or, may we venture to say, "the Jewish legend"?) of Rahab, the Dragon of the Deep—Tiawath—would

naturally be influenced by intercourse with the nations around. And were not Merodach and Tammuz both sun-gods ?

But quite apart from the philosophical and theological identifications of the more learned among the Hebrews, there were the poetical lamentations for the death of Tammuz, which Sir James Frazer has so well described in the following paragraph (I translate from the French edition of Lady Frazer, p. 306) :—

“The mourning for Tammuz seems to have taken place every year, accompanied by the shrill and strident tones of flutes, played by male and female mourners, at midsummer, during the month which bears his name. Around a statue of the divine defunct, they chanted funeral dirges ; with pure water they laved him and anointed him with oil. They then clothed him with a crimson robe, and incense, spreading abroad its perfume, mounted towards the sky, as though to awaken the sleeping senses of the defunct by its penetrating aroma which was to draw him from the sleep of death.”

The following are specimens of the *Hymns to Tammuz*, which the Babylonians have handed down to us :—

“Shepherd, Lord Tammuz, husband of Ištar ;  
 Lord of the Underworld, lord of the shepherd’s seat ;  
 Tamarisk which in the plantation has not absorbed water ;  
 Plant whose bud has not made a blossom in the meadow.  
 Sapling which has not been planted by the watercourse,  
 Sapling whose root has been removed.  
 Plant which in the furrow has not absorbed water.”

And there are many more verses in the same or a similar strain. At intervals come the rather long refrain of about nine lines, beginning “*A gurusš*,” “Alas, hero !”, and naming him with the other appellations applied to him—“lord physician,” “my god Damu,” “everlasting lord,” “lord of supplication,” “my prince of heaven,” “vine of heaven,” etc. These and his other names and descriptions are capable of many interesting and significant explanations, and render the name of Tammuz-Adonis worthy of the attention which has been devoted to it. In all probability he was one of the gods worshipped by the Jebusites, who preceded the Israelites, and was adopted by the latter as the ancient god of the city. If this was the case, it shows how the influence of a place may affect the religion and the beliefs of the people who come after. It is noteworthy that the name of El-elyon, the

Most High God of Salem, worshipped by Melchizedek, does not appear after the time of Abraham. Kuenen goes so far as to say, that the religion of Israel was originally polytheistic, and for this it may be said that he had some grounds, however unwelcome it may be regarded by believers. After quoting this opinion of Kuenen, Dr. Fried. Baethgen, in his *Beiträge zu Semitische Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1888), adds: "We may say further, that during the seventh century (and) until the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity (586 B.C.), no change took place." Without fear of contradiction, Jeremiah was able to proclaim to his contemporaries: "For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to the shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal" (Jer. xi, 13; *also* ii, 28). It may be regarded as certain, however, that the tendency to polytheism was a rather ingrained thing with the Semites. The family of Abraham, as we have seen, was by no means free from it, and though kept in abeyance whilst they were in Egypt—owing, perhaps, to its foreign form, costume, and teaching—when the Hebrews found themselves in the land of their forefathers again with its more familiar heathen worship, they were attracted to it once more. This would naturally be due to their having never lost the tradition of those gods whom, of old, their Canaanitish neighbours worshipped.

It is to be feared that, for its development in later days, we must hold the wise Solomon partly responsible. In his wisdom, he thought that the best way to secure his numerous wives' contentment and favour would be to allow them the free exercise of their religion, whatever it may have been, and thus many foreign idolatrous faiths were introduced—Ashtoreth of the Sidonians, Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites, and mention is made of the daughter of Pharaoh, and women of the Moabites, Edomites, and Hittites. By these he was seduced, and went after the deities whom they worshipped (1 Kings xi). In this he may have imitated the Israelites of earlier days, when "many forsook the Lord, and went after Baal and Ashtaroth" (Judges ii, 13), but the wise Solomon, the son of the faithful David, ought to have known better. (For other points concerning this period of Solomon's life, *see* Deut. xvii, 17, and Neh. xiii, 26.)

"Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and



for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon, and likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods."

### MOLOCH.

Of all the deities of the Canaanites and their neighbours which attracted the Hebrews, there can be no doubt that Moloch or Molech (also called Milkam or Melcam) held the first place. The reputation of this deity had spread far and wide, and may, indeed, have reached Babylonia, where his worship seems to have been unknown. The reason for this, if the question be asked, is easily explained—it was because the name Moloch means "king," and the king of heaven, with the Babylonians, was "the merciful Merodach," who naturally had, with them, no rival.

From the Old Testament the reputation of Moloch has come down to our own days, owing to the statements made therein that the people of the Hebrews of old time, in their unfaithfulness to their God Jehovah, turned to him as "the king of heaven," and even caused their children to "pass through the fire" as a sacrifice to that heathen deity. Though the horrors of this cruel sacrificial rite as described by the later Greek and Latin writers are generally discredited, the sacrificing of the children is regarded as a horrid reality, as is indicated in Mic. vi, 7: "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Not a few, besides Micah, among the Israelites of old, must have asked this question, but the worship of Moloch, and the dread sacrifice implied in these words, must have been offered by at least a few—perhaps many—of those who liked to think that they were performing a meritorious act by this terrible sacrifice. It was not done because the sacrificer of his offspring was callous and delighted in cruelty, but as an offering acceptable to the god whom, at the moment, he desired to propitiate. Did these idolaters identify Moloch with Jehovah? In some cases they did, for was not Jehovah the King of Heaven? It was probably under this impression that, as recorded by Ezekiel, men who had slain their children as a sacrifice to their idols went, the same day, into the Temple of the Lord to profane it. This was probably not their intention, but, in the eyes of all right-thinking men, this would be the effect of such acts. And were not these acts to be regarded as the very height of selfishness?

Moreover, God's favour on account of such sacrifices ought to have been too much to expect.

Severe in the extreme were the enactments of the Mosaic law against the rites accompanying the worship of Molech. They show that the leaders of the Israelites were fully alive to the effect which the worship of the heathen nations of Palestine were likely to have upon the people. "Thou shalt not give any of thy seed to make them pass through (the fire) to Molech," or, as the margin translates, "to set them apart to Molech" (Lev. xviii, 21). The enactments entailed death by stoning, not only for the Israelites who might perform such heathen rites, but also for the stranger visiting an Israelitish house or city. That "passing the seed through (the fire)" really meant sacrificing them as burnt-offerings is proved by Deut. xii, 31, which speaks of those "who burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods."

The warnings of the Mosaic law were clear, but, notwithstanding this, they allowed themselves to be seduced into the worship of the "king" which was the abomination of the Canaanites. He is regarded as having been identical with the Chemosh of the Moabites, the Milcom of the Ammonites, the Milk of the Carthaginians and the Phœnicians, and was identical with the brazen steer worshipped at Minos in Crete. In that same Phœnician colony, according to Baethgen, men were sacrificed to "Kronos-Moloch"—a fact which would identify Moloch with the Babylonian Enki or Êa, the god of the deep sea and of wisdom. This identification, however, I doubt, as the deity in question, in Babylonia, seems to have been regarded as of a mild temperament. On the other hand, we have to take into account the fact that Êa, as the god of time, was regarded as the deity who devoured his own children, the days of the week, and therefore also the men who had been born into the world from time immemorial, and whom time would go on devouring even to the end.

Was the idea of sacrificing their children to Moloch connected with the legend of Kronos? This is not the accepted explanation of the custom, but it might well be for this reason. "Shall I give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" the prophet asks; but the sacrificer of his children might well have put it in another way, and said, "May I not give the fruit of my body for the lengthening of my days?" We all know how anxious the Semites were to attain long life—indeed, it is a thing

greatly desired even now, but we do not wish for length of days at the expense of another, and, least of all, at the expense of the lives of our children.

In the *Encyclopædia Biblica* (edited by Cheyne), President G. F. Moore, the author of the article "Moloch," attributes the sacrifice of their first-born to the desire to offer the most precious thing which they possessed to the deity. It is probably not impossible that the command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac may have influenced them, notwithstanding the substitution of a lamb by the same divine command as had given the original order.







As to the chief place of these sacrifices of the first-born, that was—few are there, probably, who realize it—at Jerusalem, in the valley of Ben Hinnom, just outside the city-gate "Harsith" (Jer. xix, 2), not far from the Temple, at a place called "the Tophet" (*hattopheth*). In Greek it has various pronunciations—*thapheth*, *tapheth*, and *thaphpheth*—and in the Peshitta, *tappath*. This word is supposed to be of Aramaic origin, cognate with the Hebrew *shapath*, "to set (a pot) on the fire," in which case it would have the prosaic meaning of "fireplace." It is held that there is no contradiction in the words of Jeremiah, who states that the people of Judah had built "high places" of Tophet (vii, 31) or of Baal (xix, 5 ; xxxii, 35), as they mean no more than "heathen sanctuaries."



## THE CHARIOT OF THE SUN AT SIPPAR.

*Transcription.*

1. U-di-e ša êšu narkabtu ša ilu Šamaš ša ina qâtê awelu rêi  
imeru ra (?) - . . . \*
  2. si-in-qu-ma a-na m. ilu Bêl-âhê-iddina âbli-šu ša m. ilu  
Nabû-âbla (?) - . . .
  3. na-ad-nu Sippar ki waraḥ Ayari yumu irbašerit šattu êsru-  
tešit
  4. m. ilu Nabû-âbla-ušur šar Bâb-ili ki
- 
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 5. Išten-it mul-ti ḥuraši                            | a-(y)-a-ri-i-ti                             |
| 6. šitta (-ta) iš-pa-a-ta                            | kaspi šitta (-ta) a-(y)- a-an-<br>na-ta (?) |
| 7. išten (-en) da-aš-šu                              | kaspi ša muḥ-ḥi êšu ma-<br>ša-ta (?)        |
| 8. šina bâb sap-pi-e                                 | kaspi šina sa-aḥ-ḥar-ra-nu                  |
| 9. šitta (-ta) irtê (pl.)                            | kaspi šina qu-ul-li-ta (?)                  |
| 10. šina nag-la-bi (pl.)                             | kaspi šina nu-ur-mu-u                       |
|  |   |
| 11. šalšet ša-a-ri i-šid-di                          | kaspi išten bît tal-la-ri-e                 |
| 12. ešret ni-ik-ka-zu-u                              | kaspi ḥamšaa-šišet ni-ik-ka-<br>zu-u        |
| 13. šina pi-rik-pa-ni                                | kaspi-ša êli ta-bu-ga-ma . . .              |
| 14. šalšet patrê (pl.) man-di-ti                     | ḥuraši šina patrê man-di-[ti<br>kaspi ?]    |
| 15. ḥamšet ḥi-in-šu                                  | šina na-aš-rum (?) . . .                    |
| 16. išten (-en) ig-gal rabû                          | kaspi šina bît . . . .                      |
| 17. tišet lab-ba-gar (pl.) siparri išten (-en) . . . |   |
| 18. irbet na-aš-ḥi-ip-ti parzilli šišet . . . .      |   |
| 19. ḥamšet išu qâšâti (pl.) šišet ri . . . . .       |   |
| 20. išten (-en) zir-mu-u siparri . . . . .           |   |
- 

\* Possibly badly copied for    [], *anšu bur-ra-maš*, which would be read *šue*, "horses." The line probably ended -, *ša D. P. Šamaš*, "of Šamaš" (the sun-god).

*Translation.*

1. The furniture of the chariot of Šamaš which in the hands of the horse-keeper (?)
  2. is kept, and to Bêl-âhê-iddina, son of Nabû-ab[la-iddina]
  3. has been given. Sippar, month Iyyar, day 14th, year 19[th],
  4. Nabopolassar, king of Babylon.
- 
5. 1 golden guiding rein\* (?),
  6. 2 quivers of silver, 2 *ayannata*,
  7. 1 disc of silver which is upon the front of the mašata (?),
  8. 2 thresholds of silver, 2 retainers (? hand-rails),
  9. 2 breasts† of silver, 2 rods (?) (? fastenings),
  10. 2 razors of silver, 2 *nurmū* (staves of a tree with fruit dedicated to the sun).
  11. 3 side mats (?) of silver, one *bît-tallarē*,
  12. 10 *nikkazū* of silver, 56 *nikkazū* (of bronze ?), which are upon the *tabugama*,
  13. 2 screens (?) of silver.
  14. 2 dirks (with) sheaths (?) of gold, 2 dirks (with) sheaths (?) [of silver],
  15. 5 "fives," 2 *našrum* (?) . . . . .
  16. 1 great key of silver, 2 house(s) of . . . . .
  17. 9 *labbakars* (?) of bronze, one . . . . .
  18. 4 maces (?) of iron, 6 . . . . .
  19. 5 bows, 6 sp[ears ? ?],
  20. 1 *zirmū* of bronze, . . . . .
- 

There is no doubt that this is one of the most interesting of the Babylonian tablets from Sippar, owing to the many rare words which it contains.

\* The translation "rein" for *multi* is suggested by the adjective *ayarati*, which is apparently connected with the root of *Ayaru*, the month of the guiding bull.

† What the "breasts" were is difficult to say—they may have been ornamental bosses on the front of the chariot.

## "THE HOST OF HEAVEN."

This phrase is often employed in the Old Testament to denote the stars, especially as objects of worship, in which case they were identified with the heathen gods, as among the heathen nations around. It is in this sense that I refer to them here, and not as witnesses to the power and glory of Jehovah, which is also one of the aspects in which they appealed to the pious and orthodox Israelites.

As pointed out by the late Dr. James Orr, British editor of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, star-worship seems to have been an enticement to the Hebrews from the first, but attained special prominence in the days of the later kings of Judah. Manasseh built altars for "all the host of heaven" in the courts of the Temple (2 Kings xxi, 3, 5). These Josiah destroyed, together with the worship, by dismissing the priests and breaking up the vessels used in the worship.

The Hebrew for "Host of Heaven" is *seba hashshamayim*, which is a translation, not of the Assyrian *šabê* (or *ummanat*) *šamê* or *šamame*, but of the Sumerian *An-šar*, "heaven-host," the counterpart of which was *Ki-šar*, "host of earth," both of them the names of deities. With the Sumerians and the Babylonians (or Akkadians) this expression took many forms, as is shown in the extract from a great list of Babylonian gods in the British Museum which I gave in my last paper, "The Completed Legend of Bel-Merodach and the Dragon," published in the *Journal* of this Institute last year (pp. 161-2). We there find that *Ana-ki* is explained as *Anu* and *Antu<sup>m</sup>*, "the god of the heavens and his spouse, the earth," whilst *Anšar-gal* was "the great host of heaven," and *Kišar-gal* "the great host of earth"; and these are immediately followed by the more usual and simpler forms *Anšar* and *Kišar*, already spoken of, *Anšar* being in some way connected with the Assyrian god Asshur. The Assyrians and Babylonians did not, therefore, use the Akkadian—*i.e.* Semitic—equivalent words for the Hebrew *Šabaoth hashshamayim*, but the Sumerian *Anšar*, with the same meaning.

With the Hebrews and the Canaanites, as with the Assyro-Babylonians, the "Host of Heaven" was the sun, the moon, the five planets, and the myriads of stars which the sharp-sighted Mesopotamian astrologers saw. It is noteworthy that the Babylonian for the planets, with the sun and the moon—*Igigi*, "the five-one-one"—does not seem to have been borrowed

by the Canaanites. To all appearance the "one-one" were the sun and the moon, who were thus mentioned separately, though last, so as to make a suitable word. It is thus that Moloch, the "king," was identified with the sun, and this reminds us of the Chariot of the Sun which was kept at Jerusalem.

#### THE CHARIOT OF THE SUN.

What this chariot was like, and how it was furnished, we are not informed, but in all probability it resembled in a measure that kept at Sippar of the sun-god in the time of Nabopolassar. The tablet describing it was in private hands when I copied it, and I do not know where the record is now. I give the text, from my old copy, made about forty years ago, followed by a transcription and translation, to the best of my ability, on pp. 11-13. From this it would appear that it was kept and cared for by an ass-keeper, who probably had also charge of the animals (horses or asses) which drew it in the processions which probably formed part of the worship of the deity. It is doubtful, however, whether this ass-keeper took part in the ceremonial processions, as he seems to have handed the vehicle to a certain Bêl-âhê-iddina, who probably held some position in the sun-god's temple.

I am obliged to give my rendering of this very interesting text with all reserve, owing to our ignorance of what the furniture of an Oriental sun-chariot really was. The first item, which was possibly the "guiding-rein," was of gold, as were also the sheaths of two of the dirks or short swords. All the other implements, however, were either of silver or bronze, the latter being employed as a substitute for gold, which it closely resembled in colour. Edouard Naville, the well-known Egyptologist, in one of his last papers, argued that copper (or an alloy of copper) was actually called "gold" by the Egyptians and Semites. Probably there was something symbolical in the metals chosen and their proportions, the silver objects being emblematic of the lengthy whiteness of the rays of the god of day, and the comparatively short period when he shows the golden rays of sunrise and sunset. His quivers, two in number, were of silver, as were also the "razors" with which, possibly, the tonsures of the priests of the sun-god were made—that is, if the usual rendering of the word *naglabu* be the right one here. The mention of quivers presupposes bows and arrows as part of the chariot's furniture, and from line 19 we learn that the former were five in



number. In all probability the chariot was entered from the rear. It is unfortunate that the inscription is imperfect, as the lost words might give the clue to the doubtful words which are undamaged but incomprehensible.

### THE GODS OF THE MONTHS.

On p. 124, I have mentioned the twelve gods whom Terah, according to the Talmud, is said to have worshipped—one for every month. These are given by certain tablet-fragments in the British Museum, and are also quoted in the Hemerologies, which have been described as tablets of saints' days, though those saints were, in reality, the Babylonian gods.

Nisan (March–April) was dedicated to Anu, “the god of the heavens,” and Enlil, “the god of the earth and the air.”

Iyyar (April–May) was the month of Êa as “lord of mankind.”

Sivan (May–June) was the month of Sin, “the moon-god as the first-born son of Enlil.”

Tammuz (June–July) was the month of the hero (*quradu*) En-urta, who was seemingly identical with Tammuz-Adonis.

Ab (July–August) was the month of Nin-giš-zida, “the lord of the everlasting tree,” “the lord of . . .”

Elul (August–September) was the month dedicated to Ištar, “lady of . . .” This was the month of her “errand,” when she went down to the Underworld to seek Tammuz, “the husband of her youth.”

Tisri (September–October) was the month of Šamaš, “the warrior” (*quradu*).

Marcheswan, “the eighth month” (October–November), was dedicated to “the wise one of the gods,” Merodach.

Chisleu or Chislev (November–December) was the month of the hero (*Ur-Sag-edlu* or *quradu*) Nergal, the god of Cuthah.

Tebet (December–January) was the month of Pap-sukal, “the minister elder,” the minister of Anu and Ištar.

Sebat (January–February) was dedicated to Rammanu (Rimmon, “the thunderer”) or Hadad, the great governor of heaven and earth.

Adar (February–March), the last month of the year, was that of the seven great gods, typified by the sun, the moon, and the five most visible planets.

The additional Adar, added when the year had a sufficient number of days, was allotted (by the Assyrians) to Aššur, "the father of the gods."

It seems probable that the twelve gods worshipped by Terah whilst still "an idolater" may have been those of the twelve months of the Babylonians, as contained in the above list. The additional Adar would naturally be omitted. A great deal more might be said upon the astrological identifications of the Babylonians, but this is not the subject of this paper, as we do not know how far Babylonian astrological symbolism was adopted by the Canaanites, and, after them, by the Hebrews.

#### IDLATRY.

Idolatry, the word which we use to express the idea of the worship of false gods, comes from the Greek, and is said to have been first used by St. Paul, who probably coined it from the word *idolon*, meaning "a false god, or his image." The Hebrews seem to have had no single word for the expression "idolatry," but used the phrase *'abōdāh zārāh* (עֲבוֹדַת זָרָה) "foreign worship," to indicate it. That the Hebrew prophets intended a certain amount of contempt to be expressed in the word "foreign" there can be no doubt, though there must have been many who said, either in their ignorance or in their liberal-mindedness "why should not their beliefs and their worship be as correct as ours?"

There is more than one phase of idolatry, however, which can hardly be called "foreign," and that is, the veneration of sacred mountains and woods, streams and fountains, hills, and high places. These sacred and divine things are generally inherited from the earlier inhabitants of a country, and are of the nature of such things as lucky and unlucky days, to which many people attach faith even among ourselves. Many things of interest might be written about Mounts Tabor, Nebo, and Sinai, En-Mishpat, and En-Dor, the oak at Sechem, etc. Among what are called the "artificial sanctuaries" is the sacred stone known as the *massebah*, and also the rough altar of stone found in every place of worship. As seems to have been the case in Babylonia and Assyria, these were anointed with oil, and victims were sacrificed. The rites attending these acts of worship were supposed to bring the worshipper into direct communication

with the deity whom he worshipped, winning his favour and the chance of everlasting life with him in the world to come. These stones are regarded as having been sacred because a deity had consented to dwell therein, as in the case of the meteorites and similar objects, which (coming, as they did, from the sky) were believed to be inhabited by the deity in a still more pronounced way than the natural stones of the earth—indeed, they were called by the very characteristic name of *beth-el*, “house of god,” and even the national God of the Hebrews, Jehovah, possessed these emblematic abodes. After the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, Jehovah was worshipped in the great sanctuary there, but idolatry ultimately entered even the Holy City, as we have seen, and the names of her streets were as many as the gods of the nations around.

But we have also to recognize that there were remains of heathenism in the land which may have come down from Patriarchal times, when their families worshipped teraphim and put their trust in the (more or less roughly) graven images by which the spirits supposed to inhabit them were represented. Upon the sacred trees offerings were hung in the shape of strips of cloth or the like. These, however, were of little importance, and may be met with even now among the Christians and the Moslems of the East as remnants of the superstitions of ancient times. Ceremonies connected with the sacred post or pole are not met with in the Old Testament, but are shown, perhaps, on Assyro-Babylonian reliefs and seals, though the nature of the worship connected with them is uncertain.

More certain are other idolatrous rites. Burnt offerings, libations, tithes, and first-fruits, and tables with offerings of food were not uncommon (Isa. lvii, 6; Jer. vii, 8; Hos. ii, 8; Isa. lxxv, 11). Idols were kissed, or kisses were thrown to them or to the heavenly bodies with which they were identified, hands were stretched out to them in prayer, or, as in Babylonia, the hands raised with the finger-tips nearly touching as a gesture of adoration. To the idols, also, the worshipper knelt or prostrated himself. When an answer to a prayer was desired and a burnt-offering made to that end, the prophets of Baal leaped upon and around about the altar, calling upon the god and gashing themselves with knives. Yes, the Hebrews had either inherited or adopted all the idolatrous practices of the heathen around them (1 Kings xix, 18; Hos. xiii, 2; Job xxxi, 27; Isa. xliv, 20; 1 Kings xviii, 26, 28).

Concerning what were regarded as acts of idolatry we are instructed by the Mishna. Idolatry was not only manifested by worship, sacrifices, and libations, but also by embracing the idol, acknowledging it to be one's god, kissing it, sweeping or sprinkling water before it, washing, anointing, or dressing it, or putting on its shoes (*Sanhedrin*, vii, 6 ; cp. Maimonides, *Abodah Zarah*, iii, 6).

With regard to harlotry—and there were prostitutes of both sexes—in all probability these were not orthodox Jews, but always men and women of heathen creed. Except to say that persons of this class were indicated by a word showing that they were sacred (in Babylonia also), there is no need here to speak further upon this aspect of the old Semitic heathen worship.

I quote from Cheyne's *Encyclopædia Biblica* the further details, showing how even the minutest details from the heathen around were imitated. Thus we learn from the Old Testament that the priests of Dagon would not set foot on the sacred threshold (1 Sam. v, 5 ; cp. Zeph. i, 9) ; the worshippers of the sun stood (as might be expected) with their faces to the east (Ezek. viii, 16) ; besides the mourning for Tammuz at Jerusalem there were also gardens of Adonis (Isa. xvii, 10 f.) ; altars to the Host of Heaven were built on the roofs of the houses (Jer. xix, 23 ; i, 5, etc.) ; cakes of a certain form were offered to the Queen of Heaven (Jer. vii, 18) ; lectisternia to Gad and Meni, the gods of chance or fortune (Isa. lxxv, 11 and margin), were spread ; and all the devices to obtain favour which the heathen adopted in their worship were resorted to.

A great deal more could be written upon this section of the subject, but enough has been given to show, with the preceding pages, how, in ancient Israel, the matter stood. As has been well recognized, this idolatry was due to the influence of the nations around, and foreseen by their great lawgiver. As they wished to have a king, like their neighbours, so they—or many of them—wished to honour many gods, as those nations did. If they feared that they might offend the one deity of their race, it was unlikely, in worshipping many gods, that they would offend them all : they would still have at least a few—and they might even have many—on their side. Alas, they were not affrighted by the hideousness of Moloch nor the uncouth appearance of the statues of Hadad ; they saw not the incongruity

of Dagon, with his merman-form. The Babylonians were moderate, but the Egyptians had monstrosities far worse than these.

### THE IMAGES.

These, in heathen countries—as, indeed, also in Christian lands—are very numerous, and varied in their nature. They consist of representations of various supernatural or divine beings or personages, emblems, sacred objects, and mystic signs. Properly speaking, there should be no representations of gods in Christianity, as we have not the slightest conception as to what the great Creator of the Universe is like; and, even if we knew, we may be certain that any representation of the All-highest and All-holiest would be beyond the power of any man to reproduce. With the heathen, however, things are otherwise, and he has in all ages given free rein to his imagination. With the Canaanites the simplest divine emblems were the *massebah* or “pillar,” the *asherah* or “grove” (as it is rendered in the Authorised Version), and the *amman* or “sun-image.” To these must be added the *ephod*, a garment of many colours over which the mystic *urim* and *thummim*, “lights and perfections,” were placed. Among animals were the golden calf, introduced after the captivity in Egypt, Jeroboam’s calves, and the brazen serpent. In human form, more or less, were the teraphim, the images of jealousy, and the figures shown in the chambers of Imagery.

It is doubtful how far the heathen nations which the Hebrews imitated regarded the idols which they worshipped as the images of the invisible deities of their pantheon. Those which had no human form they must frankly have thought of as merely emblems, like the Babylonian carved stones in the form of the sun’s disc and the crescent moon, which represented the deities identified therewith. With regard to the brazen serpent set up by Moses to cure the people who looked upon it in faith of the plague, there is no doubt that this had a deep symbolical meaning. The wisdom of the serpent was firmly believed in, and they were well acquainted with its power of swiftly striking and suddenly wounding even unto death. If it could thus kill, why should it not also cure with equal speed? As to the golden calf, that was undoubtedly borrowed from what the Israelites had learned during their stay in Egypt.

The teraphim are generally thought to have been household

gods, and some think that, in addition, they were images of ancestors. This, however, seems improbable. It is true that ancestor-worship seems to have existed in Babylonia about 2300 B.C., and perhaps at other times, but the deified personages—for such they were—were the renowned kings of the land, thus honoured, apparently, because much esteemed and beloved of the people. The “household god” from Gezer figured in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, p. 1455, is far from being an attractive object, and unacceptable as even the rudest labourer’s forebear.

The writer of the article in the above-named *Encyclopædia*, speaking of the Image of Jealousy, called *Semel*, says that that was not the name of the idol. It was, perhaps, an image of the Asherah, and bore the name given to it because its worship provoked Jehovah to jealousy. That jealousy was one of the attributes of Jehovah was certainly a fixed belief among the orthodox Israelites. At the present time it is difficult to imagine the great Father of all things as possessing this peculiarly human defect (if it may be so called). It must have been non-existent in the pantheons of Canaanites and the other heathen tribes and nations around them.

Strange and puzzling are the “Chambers of Imagery” mentioned by Ezekiel (viii, 11, 12). It is not impossible that men had chambers in their houses where the images of heathen deities and symbols, either idolatrous or otherwise, were to be found, and also there may have been similar chambers in the Temple at Jerusalem, where perfectly legitimate symbols could be inspected and studied, but where other heathen symbols afterwards found a place. They were possibly like Terah’s idols, already referred to, but each worshipper of later days would naturally have the deities and the symbols which most appealed to him. These were evidently suggested by the wall-paintings of Babylonia and Assyria, but there is no reason to suppose that other nations had not adopted similar aids to devotion. The “Chambers of Imagery” may, therefore, have passed from the Canaanites to the Hebrews, along with the “abominable beasts and creeping things” mentioned in Ezek. viii, 10, where “all the idols of the House of Israel” are also referred to.

“All the idols of the House of Israel!” It goes against the grain to regard them as really belonging to God’s chosen people—surely they were borrowed, as has already been said, from the nations around, by whom the Israelites had been led astray!

## DISCUSSION.

Mr. AVARY H. FORBES (Chairman) asked : How did the idea of worshipping a female deity originate ? In, I suppose, every pagan religion, we find, not only "gods many and lords many," but also goddesses many. The Egyptians had their Isis, the Canaanites their Astarte, the Hindus their Sasthi, the Greeks their Hera, the Romans their Juno—to mention a few out of very many.

Now, in God's revelation to Adam, and in that to Noah, there certainly could have been no hint of a goddess. When and where, therefore, did the idea of a goddess arise ? Was it that the sons of Noah, or their descendants, as they wandered afar over the earth, corrupted the teaching they had received, and became so anthropomorphic as to conclude that their chief god must have a wife ? Or was the notion begotten and encouraged by the fact that men are more selfish, hard, and cruel than women ; and that there is more pity, compassion, and mercy in the female than in the male mind ? Probably both factors were at work.

Rev. J. J. B. COLES said : We have had many excellent papers from Professor Pinches. The one just read is specially interesting, inasmuch as it deals with the religious history of the Hebrews.

Sir James Frazer, in his *Gorgon's Head and other Literary Pieces*, writes : "The proof that a belief is false can never be complete or final, because it is always possible to allege that excellent reasons for it may exist which have hitherto eluded the scrutiny of our limited intelligence."

The Chairman's question, as to the introduction of the idea of a goddess into pagan mythology, may be answered by a reference to the Virgo and Cassiopeia of the ancient constellations.

Sir CHARLES MARSTON expressed great appreciation of Professor Pinches' paper. He thought that in order to estimate heathen influence upon the Hebrews more ought to be known concerning their pre-Mosaic religious beliefs.

It was clear from the Old Testament that, while Moses utilized and developed the Passover ceremonial and the observance of the Sabbath, he was not the actual originator.

He understood that archæologists were still doubtful about the original home of the Hebrew race. Many years ago it was thought

we should one day discover traces of a little kingdom on the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf whence Abram's ancestry was derived. More recently it had been suggested that the home of the race was between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon.

The author of the paper did not appear to attach much importance to Egyptian influence, but surely the worship of the golden calf was derived very decidedly from that source.

Lieut.-Col. T. C. SKINNER said: I desire to ask a question and clear up an ambiguity. The lecturer cites Kuenen as saying that the religion of Israel was originally polytheistic, adding that "for this it may be said he had some grounds." What does "originally" mean? Israel was Jacob, and the Children of Israel were Jacob's seed. Does it suggest that Jacob and his sons were polytheists before they went down to Egypt? or that they became such in Egypt? or on return to Palestine? or does it imply that the religion of Abraham or of his ancestors was polytheistic? The point is not unimportant, and, perhaps, Dr. Pinches will be so kind as to make it clear.

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF: Arising out of the learned paper, there are two questions which I desire to ask Professor Pinches, and one observation I wish to make.

The questions are: (1) Does not history show that the influence of the religious and other beliefs of the Canaanites upon the Hebrews varied immensely at different periods—sometimes it was powerful, at other times weak? (2) When were the Hebrews first known by this name—prior or subsequent to Abraham's leaving Ur of the Chaldees? What is known of the beliefs current among their forefathers before their entry into Ur (p. 123, par. 4)?

The observation is this: It appears to be a fact that, notwithstanding all the varied and veteran forces—religious, social, political, and those of customs—there never at any period in the history of the Hebrews were forces of any or all of these so strong that they became embodied in the revelation from God which the Hebrews guarded. The standard was kept pure, and there never had afterwards to be eliminated from their sacred Scriptures any corrupt teaching or practice such as prevailed amongst the nations which surrounded



the Hebrews. Whenever such corrupting things are referred to in the Scriptures they are always the subject of unsparing condemnation.

Mr. HOSIE thanked Dr. Pinches for his suggestive paper, and ventured to ask for further enlightenment on a few points. For example, what ground is there for saying (on p. 123) that the Hebrews were more or less akin to the Canaanites? From Gen. x, 15-17, we learn that these latter were of Hamite stock. Had they become assimilated to Semites by surrounding influences? Is it strictly correct to say (as on p. 128) that "the ingrained polytheism of the Semites . . . was kept in abeyance in the descendants of Abraham while they were in Egypt," in view of Joshua's exhortation to Israel, "to put away the gods which their fathers served on the other side of the flood *and in Egypt*" (Joshua xxiv, 14)? Laban also had teraphim stolen by Rachel (Gen. xxx, 19). Were the golden calf at Horeb, and Jeroboam's calves, a survival of this idolatry? Would the "originally" (top of p. 128) go back to Ur or Egypt? In either case, I do not quite see why Kuenen's remark should be "unwelcome to believers," as the learned lecturer seems to imply.

Dr. Pinches (on p. 124) refers to the testimony of the Talmud as to Terah being an idolater. The Talmud, it may be added, is no doubt correct here, for it only follows the testimony just quoted from the Book of Joshua. May I ask Dr. Pinches whether a cuneiform word in combination may lose its "personality," so to speak, for I notice that Ištar (p. 125) loses itself altogether in *utukku* and *édimmu*?

#### AUTHOR'S REMARKS.

The Chairman has answered his own question as to the origin of female deities. It is exceedingly difficult to escape from an anthropomorphic conception of the Deity, as many a Christian sculpture shows us. In fact, to a human being a female divine nature or element seems quite natural; and this is so much the case that the late Benjamin Webb, Vicar of St. Andrew, Wells Street, once told me that the motherhood, as well as the Fatherhood, of God had already been discussed by the Church Fathers. As to the true reason, that will always be a mystery, but it may be noted that the Assyro-Babylonians, in their pantheon, always thought of

triads of gods—father, mother, and son (or sons) ; likewise servants or ministers. Each god was, in fact, as a king in his own domain.

I agree with Sir Charles Marston in the matter of the Israelites' pre-Mosaic beliefs. There seems to be no doubt that they had been much influenced by the untaught peoples around them. The worship of the golden calf, I agree, was derived from Egypt, and may have been accompanied by other rites from the same source ; but, if so, they have been lost in the mists of antiquity. Was the name of *Miriam* Egyptian—*Meri-Ammon*, "the Beloved of Ammon" ? This seems to have been the opinion of Dr. Binion, the well-known missionary, who died in America a few years ago : he was an accomplished Hebraist and a deep student of Hebrew names. This would imply that the Hebrews of the Exodus-period had no more objection to a daughter being called "the beloved of Ammon" than they had to a son being regarded as "the Mero-dachite" in the days of Esther. The original home of the Hebrew race would seem to have been, as suggested, the shores of the Persian Gulf, where dwelt their kinsmen, the Babylonians and the Elamites.

Lieut.-Col. Skinner's question would be best answered by Kuenen or one of his school. I take it, however, that that scholar was led to say that the religion of Israel was originally polytheistic by the statements of the Talmud (*see pp. 124–126*). They were influenced by polytheism, at Ur of the Chaldees, in Egypt, and in Palestine, where they were surrounded by their heathen kinsmen.

In answer to Mr. Ruoff, it seems to be quite reasonable to suppose that heathen influence did vary from time to time, but to define the cause of this would require study. It may have been political, or a demand for uniformity. Abraham is generally explained as "the man from beyond the Euphrates." The beliefs of the ancient Hebrews are only known, I believe, from the early chapters of Genesis. The family to which Abraham belonged seems to have been native of Babylonia. They lived, as is known, at Ur (𒌦𒍪 𒌦𒍪 𒌦𒍪, *Uriwa* in Sumerian), of which we have heard very much of late, consequent upon the discoveries which have been made there. This was an important city of southern Babylonia, and one of the great centres of the worship of the moon-god Sin or Nannar. The polytheism of the Israelites was therefore (if it existed in Abraham's time) Babylonian, but the

family probably adopted Babylonian monotheism, changing it later to their own Jahwist faith.

I am much obliged for Mr. Hoste's appreciative remarks. With regard to the parentage of the nations of the ethnic table in Genesis, it is generally thought that that parentage implies an indication of the suzerainty under which the nation lived, and the power by which it was protected—like the non-Semitic-speaking Elamites. As we know from the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, Canaan was under the protection of the Hamitic Egyptians. With regard to the faithfulness of the Israelites while they were in Egypt, the desire to escape from their bondage there would keep in abeyance any polytheistic tendencies they might have had. They were told to "put away the gods which their fathers served on the other side of the flood," but may they not have kept the images as curiosities? When they found themselves in Palestine once more, they would naturally be tempted to serve them again—they were the gods of the land, and were probably regarded as having considerable influence therein. I should say that Kuenen's remark went back to whatever period may have been regarded as the beginning of the Israelitish nation, and as a working theory we might accept the period between Ur and Egypt. Mr. Hoste is a keen questioner, and therefore difficult to answer. Does *Ilu* lose its "personality," so to say, when it becomes *Iltu* by attaching the feminine ending *-tu* to it, or is Ashtoreth not connected with Istar for the same reason?

I thank the Rev. J. J. B. Coles and all those who have taken part in the discussion for their kind remarks. The subject is one to which I ought to have devoted months instead of weeks. Should I be spared, I hope to make an effort to fill up the gaps and set right my errors.

709TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1, ON MONDAY, MARCH 5TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

ROBERT CALDWELL, Esq., F.R.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of Philip J. Le Riche, Esq., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., as a Member.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced the Rev. Canon B. K. Cunningham, O.B.E., M.A., to read his paper on "The Doctrine of Forgiveness through the Cross of Christ."

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*THE DOCTRINE OF FORGIVENESS THROUGH THE  
CROSS OF CHRIST.*

By THE REV. CANON B. K. CUNNINGHAM, O.B.E., M.A.

WHEN a teacher is addressing simple people he not infrequently sums up the work of Christ in three short sentences:—He came to show us what God is: He came to show us what man might be: He came to bring man into fellowship with God. And the central fact in this making-at-one of God and man, alike in Scripture and in Christian experience, is the Cross of Calvary.

We are indeed aware of a contrast between the experience of those whose burden, like that of "Christian" in Bunyan's great allegory, rolled from off their back—an experience so full of joy and peace and freedom—and the explanations of this

experience—"theories of atonement"—so cold and dull. Though this is so, we are none the less bidden to love God with our minds as well as with our hearts, and as reasonable beings we must let reason have her place in any activity of the whole self, such as is an "act of faith."

Lord Balfour writes somewhere in his *Foundations of Belief*: "Any *one* theory of the Atonement would be either too narrow for man's spiritual need or too large for his intellectual apprehension"; and we find, when we review the history of Christian thought, that different ages have described their experience by picture-words and phrases which were full of meaning to those who lived in that particular age.

The purpose of this paper is, then, to draw out the permanent truth which underlay these several pictures, and to consider how we, in turn, can best retranslate our experience of forgiveness through the Cross in terms which shall appeal to the heart and mind of the younger people of our own time.

#### THE OLD TESTAMENT FORESHADOWING.

The sacrificial system of the Hebrew people, so tiresome to British readers, and especially to British schoolboys when studied in detail, is in its broad outline full of teaching and of profound spiritual truth. This is more clearly seen if the results of Old Testament criticism are accepted, for, stated generally, criticism places the Levitical system later than the prophets, and regards that system as enshrining those great spiritual and ethical truths which the prophets proclaimed. What then, broadly, is that system? In the pre-exilic period sacrifice is of two kinds. There are the sacrificial meals (R.V., Peace offerings); the occasions of these were such as bring men together in a festive spirit. In all time, joyful events are regarded as culminating fittingly in a banquet. The Peace offering was the form taken by the festal banquet among a people and in an age permeated by religious spirit; the people and their God held fellowship in the meal. On the other hand, when the predominant feeling was one of grief or awe, the expression-rite was the whole Burnt offering, in which the victim was offered and consumed in fire, betokening man's dedication to God.

The simplicity and joyousness of earlier worship, with its frequent sacrificial feasts, could not, however, withstand the strain of prolonged disaster and adversity. During the exile,

Israel's sense of guilt was greatly deepened, and she came to regard herself as under the displeasure of Jehovah. Thus, on the return, in the priestly code published by Ezra, the early idea of sacrifice as a communion meal or a dedicatory gift is overshadowed by the realization of the need for expiation of sin, and the Sin and Guilt offerings receive the greater emphasis, and find their climax in the striking ritual of the Day of Atonement, when Sin offering is accompanied by Burnt offering. The nation is ransomed, then dedicated; pardoned, then consecrated.

[We should add that the Passover sacrifice stands somewhat by itself, taking features from each of the three more regular types, and being more comprehensive in the ideas which it embodies.]

The point we desire to press is, that the system witnessed in striking manner to the three great needs of man in relation to God in every age and in every land—*Reconciliation, Consecration, Fellowship*. If in Christ and His Cross mankind is to find "at-one-ment" with God, there must be seen to be in Him and His Cross a "fulfilling" of these needs.

Before going further, it is worth while to recall the actions which all classes of sacrifice had in common. These were three:—

(1) The ceremony of the presentation of the victim; the animal is presented at the door by the offerer in token of the *willing* intention, which alone was acceptable, and hands were laid upon it. Did the offerer think "this animal is my substitute"? or did he think "this animal is my representative"? The answer given marks a divide between substitutional and representative theories of atonement.

(2) The act of slaughter—this does not seem to have had any independent significance; the Hebrews did not delight in it more than we should do, but it was the means of obtaining the Blood, that is, the Life (Lev. xvii, 11).

(3) The significant part of the ceremony is not suffering or death as such, but the application of the Blood—the life that has passed through death and is now available as the medium of atonement, and is sprinkled in varied degrees of nearness to God, reaching a climax in the ritual of the Day of Atonement when it is carried within the Holy of Holies.

The symbolism of the Hebrew "Blood" should be carefully explained in teaching the young. Throughout the New Testament,

in the writing of every apostle man is reconciled to God not through the death of Christ, but through the *Blood of Jesus* (e.g. Rom. v, 9; Ephes. ii, 13; 1 Pet. i, 19; 1 John i, 7; Heb. ix, 14). The Salvation Army preacher finds echo in the Church hymn, "Louder still and louder, praise the sacred blood." Such imagery is inartistic, and even revolting, unless we keep constantly in mind the significance of the expression, namely, that it is through the *Life of Our Lord*—a life willingly laid down in sacrificial death and now available for us—that we are brought into fellowship with God.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLING.

We need not here concern ourselves with the difficult question as to the extent to which Our Lord during his earthly ministry had clearly before His mind the Cross as its close; it is, however, very much to our purpose to note that just as at the commencement of His ministry He went into the wilderness to think out in the light of Scripture the interpretation He was to give to His work as Messiah, so towards the end of His public ministry He went up into the mount and communed with Moses and Elijah as to "the decease which He was about to accomplish." Such "communing" does at the least imply that Our Lord meditated on what the Law and the Prophets had to teach as to the end of the Messiah's earthly career. It is in accord with this interpretation that we read that twice on Easter night Jesus sought to enlighten the puzzled disciples, and—"beginning from Moses"—"in the Law of Moses"—showed them that the Messiah must suffer (Luke xxiv, 27, 44). May we not fairly conclude that Our Lord saw in His Cross a fulfilling of that sacrificial system which was associated with the name of Moses?

The Apostolic Church, into which converts were at first mainly drawn from the Jewish people, would naturally interpret the new experience of pardon and freedom through the Cross of Christ in terms of Old Testament sacrifices, and that is partly why we of another race and mentality often find their language difficult or unreal.

Dr. R. C. Moberley shows that the teaching of the New Testament on the subject groups itself round three ideas—

(1) Ransom, Redemption—a thought which falls into line with the central teaching of the Passover sacrifice.

(2) Our Sanctification, our Righteousness, our Peace, our Life—thoughts which suggest the wholehearted dedication set forth in the Burnt offering of Old Testament times.

(3) The Propitiation for our sins, the Reconciler of man with God, the Sin bearer—and here we find ourselves in the more difficult set of ideas suggested by the Jewish Sin offering.

If we believe that all the groping of man after God in every age is under the guidance of the same Spirit of God, we shall not be surprised to find that now this and now that of those aspects received emphasis at different ages of the Church's life.

We turn, then, to consider in briefest summary form these interpretations of the Cross down Christian history.

#### THE PATRISTIC PICTURE.

It cannot be said that any particular theory of atonement characterized the Church in early ages. St. Paul's thought and language was not acceptable to the Greek mind ; moreover, the Incarnation rather than the Cross was the centre of thought and controversy. It is significant that the greatest work on the reconciling of man and God in these first four centuries should be entitled by its author, St. Athanasius, *De Incarnatione Verbi*. The language of the Fathers is that of devotion and of Scripture in speaking of the Cross ; and their experience is of "Redemption" and "Ransom" at the hands of a "Saviour." The words spoke to the age. In literal sense, it was one in which life was insecure : "Ransom our captives" is a petition which in some form recurs frequently in the Liturgies. Morally and spiritually, also, it was an age in which men yearned for deliverance.

" On that hard Roman world  
Disgust and secret loathing fell :  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell." (*Matthew Arnold*.)

The Gospel was welcomed, as Harnack points out in his *Expansion of Christianity*, in the message of a great Physician come to heal, to redeem, to save ; and one of the last of pagan gods to go down before Christ was Æsculapius, who was, like Christ, adored as the "Saviour god."



We need not concern ourselves with tracing the error into which the Church fell along the familiar road of pressing the incidentals of a metaphor—asking such questions as “to whom was the ransom paid?” and “what was the price?”—and finding itself involved in the horrible doctrine that the Cross was the “mouse-trap” wherein the Devil was snared! The metaphor of “ransom” suggests merely deliverance at great cost, and if we must ask, deliverance from what? the New Testament answer would be deliverance from the power and guilt of sin, or, better, deliverance *for* the unfettered service of God. So the early Church echoed St. Paul: “Our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ” (1 Cor. v, 7).

#### THE EARLY MEDIÆVAL PICTURE.

The deliverance for all future time of the Church from the doctrine of a ransom paid to the Devil for the world’s salvation was effected by the teaching of St. Anselm (1033–1109), afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. We have passed from the circumstances of the Patristic period to another set of circumstances and ideas which characterized the early Mediæval period—those of Chivalry and Feudalism.

“Chivalry,” writes Buckle in his *History of Civilization*, “was to manners what feudalism was to politics.” Its distinctive notions were “honour” and “satisfaction.” An insult was a stain on a man’s honour, and could only be wiped out by satisfaction, though this was not regarded as payment or any exact equivalent to the wrong done. (See Sir George Peveril’s challenge to Sir Jasper Cranbourne in Scott’s *Peveril of the Peak*, chap. ix.)

The feudal system spoke to men’s mind of overlordship and homage due. Hence the mould in which St. Anselm shaped his great thoughts on Christ’s Atoning work. God is the great Overlord of the world; to Him homage is due, but the homage He asks for is that of a perfectly obedient life. No man has offered the homage, and if we could serve God unceasingly from this hour, we could do nothing to redeem our past years or touch the accumulated debt of mankind. (*Cur Deus Homo* (1098).) Why did God become man?—Because the God-man alone could offer, and did offer, the life of perfect obedience. This, indeed, He owed as man, but He was obedient “*unto death*,” and, being Himself sinless, He did not owe death; this

extra (as it were) he paid for moral damages on the honour of God, due for man's disobedience.

Such in very simple and inadequate form is St. Anselm's theory, and we can appreciate the truth and spiritual value of it with its emphasis not on the death, as such, but on the perfect self-consecration of the whole life, the only one from among the whole human race of whom God could say, "in this I am well pleased." Such thought is in a line with the teaching shadowed forth in the Jewish Burnt offering. We look on Jesus, the one and only "*Spotless Oblation*."

#### LATER MEDIÆVAL PICTURE.

When we pass to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the ideas colouring the minds of men are no longer those of feudalism, but of Roman Law and Jurisprudence; "satisfaction" is due, not to honour, but to justice; it is not merely a question of satisfaction *or* punishment, but satisfaction by punishment endured, and in theology we meet for the first time with the word "punishment" in reference to the Cross of Christ. We are here obviously on dangerous and difficult ground, and the modern mind is certainly right in insisting—

(1) That any explanation of the atoning work of Christ is to be rejected which implies a dualism in the Godhead—wrath pitted against mercy; the Father of one mind and the Son of another (*cf.* Milton's *Paradise Lost*). Scripture, on the other hand, teaches that the action throughout is of God, who "so loved the world that He gave His Son."

(2) It is impossible to consider Our Lord as in any sense "guilty"—"*maledictum Dei*" is a phrase used by Luther, but is really intolerable.

(3) Punishment cannot be transferred under any system of justice (*see* a classical illustration of this is Scott's *Waverley*, chap. lxviii); vicarious suffering is indeed one of the noblest and purifying forces in the world, but there can be no vicarious punishment, nor can the word be applied to the Cross.

Are we then to throw over the whole idea of "satisfaction" in reference to the death of Christ? The Christian Church is deeply committed to the words: "He made there . . . a sufficient . . . satisfaction for the sins of the whole world"

—the words of our Prayer Book find echo alike in Roman and in Protestant teaching. Modern scholars (Dr. Denney, Dr. Mozley, Dr. Carnegie Simpson, and, perhaps, we may add, Canon Storr) are still found who insist on a deep element of truth underlying the “substitution” theories.

In any attempt to penetrate into the mystery of the Cross in its Godward aspect, we would ask that these considerations should be weighed :—

(1) God is indeed Love, but love is in psychological teaching a sentiment and not an emotion. Now, a “sentiment” is an organized system of dispositions and covers many differing “emotions”—*e.g.* love manifests itself in tenderness, in indignation, and also in wrath. The Cross then shows forth God’s eternal antagonism to sin; we dare not say Christ was punished, but should we not say that He entered into, and accepted, the doom which properly follows on sin, especially in the cry of forsakenness; “He was bowed under the burden of the sin of the world.”

(2) By His Cross, Christ paid homage to “the sanctity of the moral order of the universe,” and reveals not only the Love but the Holiness of God. If the cup from which Christ shrank in Gethsemane was merely that of physical death, then Socrates, and not Christ, is the greater figure. But what if the words which St. Matthew ascribes to Christ, “This is my blood which is shed for many *unto remission of sins*,” be true? Then all comparison between Socrates’ cup of hemlock and Christ’s cup of Calvary is silenced.

Assuredly, there is a great multitude in every age who testify in experience that in the text, “The Son of God gave Himself for me,” it is the “*for me*” which has brought peace to their soul; and however difficult it may be for us to express in terms of reason, there is abiding power in the mystery of the Sin offering.

#### THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CONTRIBUTION.

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed a new orientation in the theology, at any rate, of the Church of England. The Oxford Movement had revived interest in sacramental teaching and practice. The Revised Version of the New Testament, under the influence in this respect of Bishop Westcott,

had emphasized the prepositions "into Christ" and "in Christ," and there was strong reaction from transactional theories of the Atonement. With this background of thought, R. C. Moberley produced his great book, *Atonement and Personality*. The characteristic feature of his contribution is his insistence that the "Christ for us" must find its compliment in the "Christ in us." He points out how the article on "Forgiveness of Sins" in the Creeds has ever been associated, not directly with the Crucifixion, but with the work of the Holy Spirit; if Christ did such and such, it was not as our *substitute*, so that we might not have to do the same, but rather as our *representative*, so that, by virtue of His life in us and we in Him, we, too, might be enabled to do likewise. Pentecost is the completion of Calvary, whereby the Blood of the God-man flows ever through the body here below, cleansing, vivifying, and transforming from strength to strength. Christ is, indeed, our Peace offering and sacrificial meal.

Those who are familiar with the history of the doctrine will have noticed that we have omitted reference to the teaching of Abelard (1079-1142), who was the first great teacher to emphasize what is commonly called the subjective aspect of the Atonement. That the death of Christ was a revelation of the love of God, intended to call forth answering penitence and love in man, is teaching that has often found echo in English theology from William Law to the late Dr. Rashdall, whose Bampton Lecture is a full and learned exposition of this theory. We do not dwell upon it for the reason that all would accept it so far as it takes us; the question remains, can we go further?

#### THE PICTURES WHICH APPEAL IN OUR TIME.

It will be generally admitted that if we are to make a fresh appeal to the younger generation, it is necessary to bring the terms we use within its sphere of the things that are real.

Obviously, "Forgiveness" can have little reality unless there is a sense of something which needs to be forgiven.

It is a commonplace to say that there is less sense of individual sinfulness, less "conviction of sin," than was the case in the time of John Bunyan or the Evangelical Revival. While this is probably true, it is also true that never before has there been so widespread a recognition of the wrongfulness of things as they are. There is, especially among the young, a divine impatience at the wrongness of the international relationships in Europe and

the industrial life of our own country. I believe the most hopeful line of approach to a conviction of individual sin is to start from the admitted corporate sin, and argue back to ourselves, that it is our own pride, and snobbishness, and self-indulgence, etc., which go to make up what we see and deplore on the large scale.

A passage, read some thirty years ago—I know not in what book—has often recurred to my mind: “When you see a good man borne down and defeated in his fight against evil, remember it is not the men of his own generation who have killed him; it is the stubborn dull resistance which the sloth, and apathy, and selfishness of past generations have woven into the social fabric of our lives. . . .” With this thought we see in Calvary not a single event in the far past, but the inner meaning, the reality of the age-long passion of humanity. From our asylums and workhouses, from the squalor of our crowded streets, from the impurity of our village lanes, from every haunt of misery and crime one pleads, “See how I suffer: is it nothing to you, all ye who pass by?”

An honest mind must recognize that there is much in the world, and, consequently, in our own hearts, which calls for forgiveness. What then is Forgiveness?

To the man in the street, even more to the man in the dock, the word “forgiveness” ordinarily suggests “letting off punishment.” This idea belongs really to the law-court where personal relationship may be said to be non-existent. The prisoner at the bar is not concerned about the grief which his misdoing causes to the worthy magistrate on the bench, he is concerned whether it will be one month or six.

Now, if Theology is to appeal to the modern mind, one thing is clear, it must be translated throughout into terms of personal relationship. Not the judge, and the criminal, and the law-court, not the baron, and his thegn, and the feudal system, but the Father, the Friend, and the Home and the Child—this is the picture which alone can find acceptance.

Forgiveness is, then, nothing more—nor less—than *the restoration of a relationship which has been broken*. If I ask a friend to whom I have done an injury to forgive me I am not asking him not to punish me (on the contrary, I shall be only glad if I may be allowed to do or suffer somewhat in evidence of my sincerity), but what I do want is that our relationship may be as it was before I did the wrong.

At this point we must bring in a consideration of great

importance for the understanding of the Cross. Forgiveness is the restoration of broken relationship, but relationships, as Bishop Temple points out, vary in degree of nearness, and forgiveness must vary in corresponding degree of cost. If my tailor sends in his account, which I have already paid, a second time, I go round and remonstrate. He apologises for the oversight, and I, remembering that I in turn forget at times to sign my cheques, forgive with ease. If there has been real fraud, and the man says he is really sorry, then the angels must "get busy"; but, even so, forgiveness will not cost very much. It does not require me to make the man my friend or to ask him to dinner. I restore to him my custom, and the forgiveness is complete in the particular relation of tradesman and customer—we are as we were before the incident occurred.

If, however, one whom I love betrays my trust and brings dishonour on my name, then forgiveness is going to cost much, just because our relationship has been so close; it must cost passion on both sides—the passion of repentance in the wrongdoer and the passion of suffering on the part of the forgiver. This, which is not theology but experience of ordinary life, enables us to understand how much it must cost God to forgive. The relationship into which He would draw His children to Himself is unimaginably close; He will have no half-forgiveness; His love is greater than that of Mother or of Friend.

Men ask, if God is Love, why cannot He forgive us, as it were, "out of hand"? Why bring in a Cross at all? The answer can be given along more than one line of thought:—

(1) If God merely "let bygones be bygones," men, so casual as we are, would suppose God did not really care about sin, that His Love was indifference to evil. The Cross of Christ forbids any such thought. Beholding the Cross, we see what it cost God to forgive. Hearing that repeated cry (imperfect tense) "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," we can never pretend that God does not mind about sin.

(2) The Cross is needful because, as Abelard truly taught, it is suffering Love which constitutes the strongest motive to repentance.

Does it then appear that what man can offer is Repentance, as though by this "work" we merited God's forgiveness! But the old-fashioned evangelical view seems to have more to say

for itself in reason and psychology. Repentance includes three elements :—

(1) A man must see and hate the sin of which he repents. But this is just what we can never adequately do. The punishment of sin is sinfulness. The more a man indulges in it, the less he can see it in its true nature. H. G. Wells pictures an island in which all the inhabitants are blind ; it is visited by one man possessed with sight ; the people disbelieve him, hate him, and ultimately put him to death. The story might be an allegory of the Cross. Only the sinless, Himself without sin, could see sin in all its ugliness.

(2) In repentance a man must resolve to separate himself from his sin. But how can I separate myself from that which is now myself ? The drunkard in Rip Van Winkle says of his last glass, " I will not count it this time," but in every part of his body and spiritual make-up it was counted.

(3) In repentance a man must make reparation for his wrongdoing. But how can we ever overtake the consequences of any sin ? They have passed far beyond our reach into other lives and characters. " Can you undo " ? asked the dying sergeant, as he told the padre of a lad whom he had seduced into evil. The padre's answer was the only possible one : " No, I cannot undo, but God, revealed in the Cross of Christ, can forgive."

So we bring Dr. Moberley's teaching of self-identification with Christ (the need of being " found in Him " even for our repentance) and St. Anselm's teaching on the one life of perfect obedience, and Dr. Temple's teaching on the cost in pain of any act of forgiveness, to reinforce the simple teaching of Abelard ; and when we have tried to say all that we know, we confess that we have understood but a tiny part of the love of Him who " deviseth means that he that is banished be not an outcast from Him."

#### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN : As Chairman of this meeting, it is my duty—and it is also a great pleasure—to convey to Canon Cunningham the warm thanks of the Officers and Members of the Victoria Institute for his kindness in preparing and reading the paper which we have just heard. The subject is one of the highest importance to all

who profess and call themselves Christians. Personally I have to thank Canon Cunningham for much blessing received in reading up afresh the teachings of Scripture concerning the Atonement made by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in order that I might be better fitted this afternoon to fill the post to which the Council of the Institute called me. I am free to say that by re-reading Scripture on the subject under consideration, I have felt myself greatly benefited; and I have been much encouraged by examining afresh my own moorings in connection with this fundamental doctrine. Canon Cunningham's paper has, therefore, been to me the cause of, if not also the channel of, much blessing, and for this I desire heartily to thank him. I have, therefore, great pleasure in conveying to the Canon the sincere thanks of the Institute and of all present.

It also falls to my lot to lead off in such discussion as may follow on the subject before us, and on the way in which it has been dealt with by the author. The paper readily divides itself into *three* sections, each consisting of four pages. I should like the last four pages to be considered very carefully in relation to their suggested method of approaching the young people of the present day when dealing with this great subject. The second four pages (pp. 152-5) treat largely of various theories that have been advanced from the eleventh century till the present day. These theories do not greatly appeal to me, and of each one of them it may be safely said, as Lord Balfour puts it, that "any one theory of the Atonement would be too narrow for man's spiritual need." In my judgment, each of these theories advanced can be rightly so characterized "too narrow!"

I will, therefore, confine myself to the section of the paper comprised in the first four pages, in which the author deals with his subject from two points of view—first, "The Old Testament Foreshadowing," and, second, "The New Testament Fulfilling." If I understand the author aright, the Old Testament foreshadowing of the Atonement contains very shadowy (if not very shady) teaching! The author divides the Old Testament period into three—namely, a pre-exilic, an exilic, and a post-exilic period—and it would seem that in the pre-exilic period there was not much in Scripture that had any reference, near or remote, to the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. The only two sacrifices named as being then in vogue



were the Peace-Offering—characterized as a festal-banquet, at which the people and their God held fellowship (there is nothing of Sin in this)—and the Burnt-Offering, made when the people felt themselves oppressed by a feeling of grief or awe, which led them to conclude that they ought to dedicate themselves as a people to God (there seems to be little of Repentance in this, and less of Sin). According to the author, there was no Levitical system, as we understand it, in those days. The system, so called, came into existence after the later Prophets had proclaimed great spiritual and ethical truths, which came to be enshrined in a system. I am not prepared to accept this rearrangement of Scripture, which practically does away with the Mosaic Institutions, and makes them really a sacrificial system associated only with the name of Moses. I cannot accept the statement made regarding the priestly code published by Ezra.

The second period is the exilic, during which Israel's sense of guilt was greatly deepened, and she began to regard herself as under the displeasure of Jehovah; and the third is the post-exilic, when this sense of guilt overshadowed all their earlier offerings, and the people began to realize the need for expiation of sin. Thus there were instituted in this post-exilic period the Sin-Offering and the Guilt-Offering, and perhaps others. As I read Scripture, these are not the facts.

Coming now to "The New Testament Fulfilling," I feel myself as much at a loss to endorse the statements of the paper here as in the previous section. The author evidently thinks that it is a very difficult question to determine whether, during His earthly ministry, our Lord had clearly before His mind the Cross as its close. Apparently, being in doubt as to this, our Lord retired into the wilderness *to think the matter out in the light of Scripture*—to think out what interpretation He was to give to His work as Messiah *so as to conform it to what He found to be taught in the Scriptures*. Even when drawing near to the time when He was to be offered up, it would seem that our Lord was not convinced that He had properly gripped the teaching of the Law and the Prophets with regard to the end of the Messiah's earthly career. Consequently, He went up into the Mount *to commune with Moses and Elias*, to be Himself enlightened as to the deace which He was about to accomplish; and having been so enlightened, He returned to show to His

disciples that His Cross was meant to be a fulfilling of that sacrificial system which was associated with the name of Moses !

If these are correct deductions from the paper, one wonders why our Lord should put Himself to the trouble to climb a mountain, with a view to ascertain from two men the meaning of His own life, especially as neither of those men had apparently anything to do either with the sacrificial system or with the prophecies upon which the system was based. Without irreverence, one might ask why did not our Lord confer with Ezra ?

I cannot agree with the doctrine of the Atonement as herein explained. From all eternity, our Lord knew what lay before Him. He was party to the Covenant made with His Father with a view to man's redemption. He knew and taught that He was sent by His Father to be the Saviour of the world. He knew and taught that His death would be the means by which men should be reconciled to God. He knew that there were divine necessities that had to be met, as well as human barriers that had to be removed, and He had constantly His eye on the Dial of God, waiting for the hour when He, through the Eternal Spirit, should offer Himself a sacrifice for the sins of men. Both by His life of holy obedience, but more especially by His Atoning Sacrifice, our Lord met and satisfied the wrath of God and revealed the righteousness of God. By the life and death of Christ, in a way not fully understood, the wrath of God against the sins of men was neutralized—the barriers between men and God were removed—and the righteousness of God was set free to be bestowed upon men believing in Jesus Christ as the One who had reconciled them to God by bearing their sins in His own Body up to the tree.

Personally, I believe that Jesus Christ has done for me, both in His life and in His death, something which I never could have done for myself ; something which none other than Jesus Christ could have done, and something which even Jesus Christ could have accomplished *only on His Cross*. The Son of God "loved me and gave Himself up for me."

Mr. W. E. LESLIE said : The author of this thoughtful and attractive paper has followed a sound method in giving an historical review of his subject, followed by a philosophic analysis. In each of these sections of the paper, however, I suggest that there are

certain defects. At the beginning of the historical section will be noticed the pre-supposition that what is to be recorded is a history of *experience*. Further, an historical statement should take cognizance of all the facts. The author describes only the "gropings" of various ages, tacitly assuming that there has been no direct communication from God, the Person immediately concerned, upon the subject of "Forgiveness." When dealing with Old-Testament times, he accepts a reconstruction of the history as it has reached us, carried out in conformity with certain philosophic pre-suppositions.

Turning to the philosophic section, it is suggested that the analogy of a court of justice is illegitimate, because it is not stated in terms of personal relationships. But society is composed of persons, and a court of justice represents social relationships. Further, God is not simply a person among persons: He is also the substratum of moral values. It is suggested that forgiveness is the restoration of broken relationships rather than remission of punishment. But surely this interruption of relationships is itself penal. The pain experienced by one who forgives an injury done by one near and dear to him is given as an illustration; but part of this pain would be experienced, whether the injured party forgives or not. The remainder is due to the repression of vindictive feelings, which are not present with God.

We are often reminded of the difficulty of the transfer of punishment from a guilty to an innocent party. Would not this difficulty be removed if we could suppose that the two individuals become one? The Scriptures frequently use language implying some kind of identification between Christ and believers.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said: We must always, with Christian courtesy, thank those who so kindly come and give us of their time and talents; but, having done so, I must say I entirely disagree with the general tone of this lecture.

On such a subject as "The Doctrine of Forgiveness through the Cross of Christ," we should have expected to find voluminous quotations from Holy Scripture.

But although the lecturer refers to the "results of Old-Testament criticism" (p. 149), the "Oxford Movement" and "sacramental teaching" (p. 155), and "the Creeds" (p. 156), and quotes from such Modernists as Dr. Denney and Canon Storr (p. 155), Matthew Arnold

(Rationalist) (p. 152), and even H. G. Wells! (p. 159), yet the quotations from Scripture are amazingly few.

The result of all this is naturally very serious. The lecturer, for example, distinguishes between the *blood* of Christ and the *death* of Christ (pp. 150 and 151), and even says "man is reconciled to God *not* through the *death* of Christ, but through the blood of Jesus." We have only to refer to one or two quotations, among many others, from the Scriptures, to see how incorrect that statement is. For example, Rom. vi, 23, declares that "the wages of sin is death"—not merely blood, and the only reason why we read so much about the *blood* of Christ in the Bible is because, as we learn from Lev. xvii, 14, "it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof." Hence, when the *Victim's blood was shed*, it meant that the *Victim's life was taken*: in other words, death had taken place. So that, if we may reverently say so, however much blood had flowed from the Saviour's veins, if He had not actually *died* there could have been no atonement for sin. So that, in spite of what the lecturer tells us, the Bible declares: "we *were* reconciled to God by the *death* of His Son" (Rom. v, 10).

But the paper contains even more serious statements still. On p. 154 the Canon says: "There can be no vicarious punishment, nor can the word be applied to the Cross!" And, again, on p. 156: "If Christ did such and such, it was *not* as our Substitute!" Then I ask the Canon to tell us what is the meaning of 1 Pet. iii, 18: "Christ also suffered for us, the Just for the unjust?" Is that not substitution? And Isa. liii, 5: "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." If these words mean anything, then Christ's sufferings upon the Cross *were vicarious*, and it *was* as our *Substitute* that He died. Indeed, that is the great central doctrine of the Bible. Blur that Truth, and you close the only door of hope for sinful humanity!

Again, on p. 151, on what authority does he say: "Christ went into the Wilderness to *think out . . . the interpretation He was to give to His work as Messiah?*" The Bible does not say so. Matt. iv, 1, tells us that "He was led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." And, as for our Lord learning anything from Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, as is suggested on p. 151, surely the Canon forgets that whatever Moses and the

Prophets knew or wrote, they wrote under the direct guidance of His Spirit. So that our Lord had certainly nothing to learn from them, but everything to teach them.

I am sorry to have seemed somewhat severe on one who has evidently given much time and thought for our benefit ; but really I regard this lecture as very unsatisfactory, because *very unscriptural*. Indeed if the doctrine set forth in this paper is, as Canon Cunningham says, the doctrine of forgiveness through the Cross, then all I can say is, it is *not the doctrine of the Bible*, and, therefore, is not the message to give to young or old men in this or any other age.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES pointed out that the use of the word "at-one-ment" led to confusion and to a faulty and defective view of the Atonement as presented to us in Holy Scripture. The Godward aspect of the Cross, propitiatory and expiatory, was not expressed by "at-one-ment." "Reconciliation," as in Rom. v, 11 (R.V.), was the manward aspect of the finished work of Christ, and quite distinct from the "propitiation" of Heb. ii, 17 (R.V.). God was glorified by the Sacrifice of the Cross (John xiii, 31). There is, alas! in these days a tendency to omit the Godward aspect of the Atonement. He felt sure that Canon Cunningham regretted this, as we all do.

Lieut.-Col. F. A. MOLONY said : It would seem that our lecturer's question on p. 151, which runs : " May we not fairly conclude that our Lord saw in His Cross a fulfilling of that sacrificial system which was associated with the name of Moses ? " should certainly be answered in the affirmative ; as John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and said, " Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." As the lamb had always to die sacrificially, this was a prediction that Jesus would also so die to take away the sin of the world. As John the Baptist foresaw this, we must conclude that Jesus knew it also.

As regards what the paper says on p. 151 about the Transfiguration, and our Chairman's criticisms thereon, I note that St. Luke's account reads that Moses and Elijah spake to Jesus " of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." None of the three accounts say that Jesus told them about it. Hence it seems to me that our lecturer's remarks are well within the implications of Scripture.

I had the advantage of hearing Canon Cunningham speak at greater length on this subject at Cambridge, and, in conclusion, he said : “ The meaning of Christ’s Cross in experience will always be greater and deeper than the intellectual ability to express it,” and, “ We may well contrast the fullness and naturalness with which the whole heart goes out to Jesus Christ, who made the great sacrifice, and the cold, dry theories which seek to explain it.”

MR. PERCY O. RUOFF said : It is difficult to understand why the spiritual truth of the sacrificial system of the Hebrew people is more clearly seen if the results of the Old Testament criticism are accepted (p. 149). The key to the interpretation of this system appears to be given within the Epistle to the Hebrews principally, and this Epistle nowhere favours the conclusions of the critics.

With reference to the statement on p. 151, that Christ “ went up into the Mount and communed with Moses and Elijah as to His ‘ decease which He was about to accomplish,’ and that such communing does at the least imply that our Lord meditated on what the Law and the Prophets had to teach as to the end of the Messiah’s earthly career,” the lecturer seems to have overlooked the words of the Lord in Matt. xvi, 21, viz., “ From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.” These words were spoken prior to the Transfiguration, and by their directness show clearly that our Lord had full knowledge of His end, and communicated the facts attendant upon His decease and Resurrection to His disciples.

The Canon, on p. 157, urges that “ the most hopeful line of approach to a conviction of individual sin is to start from the admitted corporate sin, and argue back to ourselves,” etc. This conviction is different in kind from the conviction of sin referred to in the Scriptures. This latter is produced by the Spirit of God convicting the individual of personal transgression and sin, and bringing him face to face with God. An acute apprehension that the “ times are out of joint ” never did, and never can, produce the cry of the heart, “ What must I do to be saved ? ” It is my firm belief that the factors are the same in every age, viz., the personal sinfulness of man, the holiness of God, and the work of the Spirit of God in producing

conviction of sin. Any other conviction may produce an external reform, but will not change the heart and turn it to God.

Mr. HOSTE failed to see how the rearrangement of the Old Testament writings by the Higher Critics could be viewed as a gain, as the lecturer seems to maintain on p. 149 ; even if this could be justified on any but subjective grounds. Certainly an author who could feel gratified to anyone who made "printer's pie" of his pages, and reversed the order of his chapters, would not be hard to please. One cannot suppose that the Author of the Greatest Book in the world will take it as anything but a disservice. As a fact, the Prophets continually refer *back* to the sacrifices (which had, it is true, been much abused in practice), so it is not clear how the sacrifices can have come later than the Prophets. We must suppose they looked back prophetically ! (See, e.g. Isa. i, 11-14 ; Amos v, 21-26.)

As for the *at-one-ment* theory of the Atonement, it seems to be based on an *ad captandum* appeal to the original meaning of the English word, but, as the lecturer doubtless knows, the Hebrew word *kah-phar* means primarily "to cover," and then secondarily "to appease," "make satisfaction," seeing it only then that sin can be righteously covered. When we say in everyday parlance that a "man has atoned for his offence," we do not mean he has "at-oned it," but "made satisfaction to the law for it."

I think what the Canon says, on p. 154, as to the impossibility of considering our Lord in any sense "guilty" is most important. The sin-offering was "most holy" (Lev. vi, 25). Never was the Lord more Holy than on the Cross. "He suffered once for sins," but it was as "the *Just* for the unjust" (1 Pet. iii, 18). If a magistrate, as reported not so long ago in the papers, paid the fine of a man he had just found guilty of shooting a tame pigeon, he did not become guilty of the offence, though his purse suffered.

May I ask for an explanation of a sentence at the top of p. 151 ? "Throughout the New Testament in the writing of every apostle man is reconciled to God, not through the death of Christ, but through the *Blood of Jesus*." Then follow five references, none of which seem to speak of reconciliation, nor can I find any apostle, but Paul, who deals with the subject of *katallag e*. In Rom. v, 10, we are specifically said to be "reconciled by His *death*" ; and again, in Col. i, 20, we read "reconciled in the body of His flesh through *death*." Not that

it really makes any difference, for though blood in the veins is the life (Gen. ix, 4), the blood poured out always, I believe, in Scripture means "death"; "He poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. liii, 12). The blood of the kid on Joseph's coat of many colours spoke to Jacob of his son's death (Gen. xxxvii, 31-33). The bread and the wine in the Lord's supper "shew His death" (1 Cor. xi, 26). I cannot find anywhere in the Levitical sacrifices the thought of the blood of the victim becoming in itself the life of the offerer.

Unless the death of our Lord was *imperative*, to meet the Holy claims of divine righteousness, I fail to see how the Cross of Calvary was a revelation of the love of God. Certainly to the man in the street outside Jerusalem on that first "Good-Friday," to be told that that crucified One was the Son of God, delivered by His Father in order to show His love to us, the whole thing would have been an enigma. It would have spoken of God's cruelty, rather than His mercy; but when we learn that Christ died for our sins, that God might be able at this infinite cost to offer forgiveness to all, then the idea of His love is comprehensible. But it humbles the natural heart too much to be told he deserves the judgment of God for his sins, so he will not admit that Christ suffered what he deserved.

Mr. F. C. WOOD: I agree with Canon Cunningham, that there is "a contrast between the experience of those whose burden, like that of 'Christian' in Bunyan's great allegory, rolled from off their back . . . and the explanations of this experience, *i.e.* 'theories of atonement,' so cold and dull." There is indeed a vast difference. I have tried to read some of these "theories," only to leave off with very little profit and much mystification. In 1873, I entered into the experiences of "Christian," of having a veritable load of sin roll instantly from me, never to return, by coming to Christ, and Him crucified. From that moment I began to feed upon every Scripture which referred to His atoning death, both in the Old Testament *in prophecy*, and in the New Testament *in fulfilment*. I do not like "theories," especially on such a centrally solemn subject, but prefer to go straight to Scripture for the teaching needed, as long experience has taught me that it contains all that it is necessary to know.

The Canon refers to the Day of Atonement, and rightly so, because apart from that solemn day, with its special observances, the Doctrine of Forgiveness through the Cross of Christ cannot be properly



understood. I do not consider, however, that the expression "at-onement," suggestive as it is of after-results, gives us the true meaning of the word. "Atonement" means "to cover," and that covering was by blood, however unpleasant the word may be to the modern mind, and the teaching about blood runs through the whole of Scripture. If we desire knowledge concerning Atonement, the Forgiveness of Sins, and the Cross of Christ, we cannot do better than go to Lev. xvi and xvii to get the original instructions given by the Lord to Moses, and to the Epistle to the Hebrews for the inspired explanation of those chapters. Both portions speak freely of Atonement, Sacrifice, Blood, Forgiveness of sins, and the death of Christ, and this latter as absolutely fulfilling the others. I quote from Leviticus, as coming direct from Jehovah through Moses, and not from any post-exilic writer. No book in the Bible contains so many of the actual words and commands of the *Lord*, not even any of the Gospels, and no Book in the New Testament contains so much of the Old—especially concerning priestly and sacrificial teaching—as does the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The importance of Atonement is seen by the fact that these precise and emphatic instructions given to Moses in Lev. xvi, contain the expression "make an atonement" (or similar words) 18 times, and definite instructions, preceded by the word "shall," 51 times. The chapter begins with "The Lord spake unto Moses," and ends with "as the Lord commanded Moses." As an indication of the divine ordering of things, the Fast was to be kept on the *tenth* day of the *seventh* month, both perfect numbers; and there were to be *seven* sprinklings of blood in the holy place, and *seven* upon the altar. The Atonement was to be made for the high priest and for his house, for the scapegoat which bore away all the sins of the people, for the holy place (because of the people's sins), for all the congregation, for the altar, for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the priests, *eight* in all. The purposes of the Atonement are stated to have been firstly, "because of the *uncleanness* of the children of Israel, and because of their *transgressions* in all their *sins* ; and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their *uncleanness* " (v. 16) ; and, secondly, "to cleanse *you*, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord " (v. 30). These two verses clearly state the purpose of the Atonement (*i.e.* the covering), and seem to relate, firstly, to

God's share in it, because of His holiness and honour, and, secondly, for the people's deliverance and forgiveness.

It is very suggestive that the two offerings relating to sin were offered first, and the two for burnt offerings secondly, and that all four had definitely to do with making Atonement. Including the "scapegoat," there were *five* animals in all (the number of grace), as Jehovah was the source and originator of all these typical ceremonies and rites. But Lev. xvi is incomplete without chap. xvii. In the former chapter, "blood" is mentioned nine times, and in the latter thirteen times, and the vitally important statement is made, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your soul: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (xvii, 11). To minimize this vital truth, or to pass it by, is to incur a great responsibility, as "the blood which maketh atonement" is the basis of forgiveness. "Thou hast borne away the iniquity of thy people, Thou hast covered all their sin" (Ps. lxxxv, 2). And, again, "This is My blood of the new covenant, that for many is being poured out, to remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi, 28, Young's translation).

I must quote the Epistle to the Hebrews on this important subject: "Into the second (tabernacle) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (ix, 7) "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (ix, 12). "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (ix, 14). "Death (having taken place), for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (ix, 15). "Where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the covenant victim" (ix, 16). "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (ix, 22). "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (ix, 23). "Once in the end of the ages hath He appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself" (ix, 26). "Christ was once

offered to bear the sins of many" (ix, 28). "When He cometh into the world, He saith . . . a body hast Thou prepared Me" (x, 5), *i.e.* for sacrificial purposes. "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (x, 12).

In this remarkable chapter, which appears to be an inspired commentary on Lev. xvi, the word "blood" occurs *twelve* times.

It only remains to indicate the main teachings of Heb. ix. Sinful man cannot enter into the presence of God, who is essentially holy, apart from blood, which represents life given up; and that in the very nature of things, must be the blood of a sinless substitute. That this atoning blood of Christ crucified, brought about remission of *sins* for all that trust in Him, as well as the putting away of *sin*, by His bearing of *sins*, and being made *Sin* for us—*i.e.* in the behalf of, or the interests of, us. That this voluntary offering by Christ of Himself obtained for us eternal redemption, with the promise of an eternal inheritance. That His blood also sealed and ratified the New Covenant, and that the Father, Son and eternal Spirit were each engaged in that great work. That this atoning sacrifice was made in a perfectly human, but sinless, body, specially prepared; and that its spacious effects are seen in a true believer by the Lord's will being written in the heart.

I think a further quotation from Scripture will in other words sum up the whole—"Justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath foreordained to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii, 24-26).

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

Major L. M. DAVIES, R.A., F.G.S., wrote: I hope that I misunderstand Canon Cunningham's ideas, for they seem to me to have little in common with Scripture testimony. Thus Canon Cunningham appears (p. 149) to favour placing the Levitical system later than the Prophets. I trust that he does not actually favour this, for all Scripture testimony is to the contrary, and no one but

a Modernist could respect the writers of the Bible if they could lie as this theory implies that they lied.

Canon Cunningham's three statements (p. 148), describing what he regards as the work of Christ, seem sadly to water down the kind of statement by which our Lord Himself was apt to sum up the purpose of His coming. Whether we take John iii, 16, or Matt. xx, 28, we find emphasis laid, in Scripture, upon the fact of sin, upon the fact of death as God's Judgment on sin, and upon the fact of man's need of a sacrificial death to redeem him from that death. Canon Cunningham, like most fashionable theologians of the day, says little about sin, and still less about any judgment on sin. (The punishment of sin, he tells us on p. 159, is "sinfulness." According to Scripture, it is "death.") To declare, as he does, that the early Christians dwelt upon the Incarnation rather than upon the vicarious Atonement, is beside the point for his purpose. The central aspect of the Cross was, to the early Christians, indisputable. The only possible question was, as to the nature of Him who died upon that Cross. The fact of payment being granted, the only question was as to how much had to be paid for our Salvation. The sceptical mind of 2,000 years ago was offended at the idea of a dying God, just as that of to-day is offended at the idea of an angry God. The Scriptures themselves, however, are clear enough both as to the vicarious nature of the Sacrifice, and as to the Deity of Him who was sacrificed. (Even Canon Cunningham admits that the early Christians clearly saw their "RANSOM" at the Cross. I fail to see the idea of "ransom" anywhere in Canon Cunningham's own theories—compare p. 151 of his paper with pp. 158 and 159.)

The distinction which Canon Cunningham would draw (pp. 150 and 151) between "blood" and "death" seem forced. Blood certainly did, to the Jew, stand for life; but, for that very reason, the shedding of blood implied death, to the Jew, even more clearly than it does to us. The blood of Abel did not complain of life, but of slaughter (Gen. iv, 10), and the Blood of Christ, which was *shed* for us (Matt. xxvi, 28), is the basis of praise ascribed to the Lamb that was *slain* (Rev. v, 12). And why was He slain? Isa. liii, on the inspired testimony of Philip, refers to our Lord (Acts viii, 32-35); and vicarious suffering and death—the doctrine of substitution—is as clearly expressed there as in our Lord's own later statement (Matt. xx, 28).

But all Scripture testifies of substitution. Without substitution, how are we to explain the repeated references, in Scripture, to our justification. For the Modernist may indeed, like the Moham-medan, persuade himself into a hope of *forgiveness*; but forgiveness is not justification. For a man to be *justified*, his debt must be paid in full, either by himself or by a willing substitute. Nor is Paul's meaning to seek, on the basis of substitution, when he says that if Christ be not risen our faith is vain (1 Cor. xv, 17), and we are yet in our sins; although on a basis of mere "forgiveness" such a statement is a sheer anomaly. If Christ died *as our Substitute*, then the fact that He had not yet risen would imply that a balance of our debt still remained undischarged; and for that unknown balance we ourselves might still be liable. The Resurrection of the Christ, however, as Paul elsewhere points out (Rom. iv, 25), was to our *justification*, for it proved the completed payment of *our* debt.

The doctrine of substitution is of the essence of Scripture, and no man ever yet felt the burden of his sins roll off, as did Bunyan's Pilgrim, apart from that doctrine. If the very Son of God died *in my stead*, then (backed by the fact of His Resurrection), I know that the very Justice of God, instead of being my Accuser, is enlisted upon my side; for a Just God could not punish me over again for a sin already expiated by Another.

Without the Substitution of the Christ, the Justice of God is ranged against me, "forgiveness" or no "forgiveness." The *Substitution* of Christ, however, turns that most terrible of all opponents into the greatest of all my champions—a miracle of satisfaction denied to all who would look upon the Cross without seeing their SUBSTITUTE there.

There is much else against which I must protest in this paper, *e.g.* the assertion that our Lord went into the Wilderness in order to "think out" the "interpretation He was to give to His work" (p. 151). We have no right whatever, by fictions of this sort, to deny the truth of our Lord's repeated declarations that He did not speak His own words, whether previously "thought out" or not, but the words which His Father gave Him to speak.

Similarly, Canon Cunningham's statements (p. 154), that "It is impossible to consider our Lord as in any sense 'guilty,'" and that "Punishment cannot be transferred under any system of justice," are easily refuted both by Scripture and by common sense. Our

Lord, who knew no sin, was definitely "made sin" for us (2 Cor. v, 21); and that punishment may be transferred under certain circumstances is allowed whenever, *e.g.* one person is allowed to clear a debt for another. Canon Cunningham himself is forced to admit (p. 155) that our Lord "entered into, and accepted, the doom which properly follows on sin," a circumstance which seems impossible to justify, unless our Lord did accept punishment, as guilty, in our stead. Since we know that our Lord laid down His life of *His own free will*—since it could not have been forcibly taken from Him (John x, 18)—we must either regard Him as our Substitute or degrade Him to the level of a suicide. His Passion falls from the status of our Ransom, as He himself called it, to the level of a mere gesture.

#### LECTURER'S REPLY.

From my suggestion, on p. 151, that our Lord "saw in the Cross a fulfilling of the sacrificial system which was associated with the name of Moses," it would appear that, with a good deal of the criticism to which the paper has been subjected, I have no quarrel.

My intention was to suggest that, whereas New Testament writers expressed their experience of Forgiveness through the Cross in terms of Jewish sacrifices, other ages have likewise clothed that experience in other imagery; so it is our duty to-day to express this same experience (an experience which I share with my critics) in language that will be living and real to those of our own time and country.

The Spirit of God, I would ask my critics to remember, abides with the Christian Church to the end of time, leading us into fuller truth, and surely into fresh interpretations of the truths already received.

711TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,  
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, APRIL 2ND, 1928,  
AT 4.30 P.M.

ALFRED W. OKE, ESQ., LL.M., F.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed. Lieut.-Col. HOPE BIDDULPH, in the absence of the Hon. Secretary, announced the election of the following as Members:—Henry W. Beedham, Esq., M.A., M.D., B.Ch., and Mrs. Katherine A. Beedham.

The CHAIRMAN then called on Mr. Avary H. Forbes, M.A., a Member of Council, to read his paper on "Science in the Book of Ecclesiastes."

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*SCIENCE IN THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.*

By AVARY H. FORBES, M.A.,

Author of "The Tree of Knowledge," etc.

SCIENCE has been defined as "organized knowledge." That is surely a vague phrase. I would rather define it as "the reduction of facts to law." As soon as you begin to discover laws underlying facts or phenomena, you are scientific.

Ancient science was mainly deductive—that is, jumping at conclusions, and then making the facts fit in with the preconceived conclusion. They jumped, for instance, at the conclusion that the earth was at rest, that it was the centre of the Universe, and that the sun, the planets and the stars revolved around it. This jumping at a conclusion, however, could only be done after making a number—perhaps a large number—of observations; possibly also after making a few crude experiments. At the present day, when observations and experiments are very much

more numerous and elaborate, there is also often a great deal of the jumping at conclusions process still. The case of Darwinian Evolution seems one in point. Though the experiments and observations on the physical side have been extremely numerous, it is admitted that no proof has been forthcoming to show that Evolution is in actual operation around us ; while the moral side, which flatly contradicts the theory, is practically boycotted by the scientists. Evolution, then, is a speculation merely ; in other words, a conclusion jumped at.

Ethical and metaphysical facts have laws underlying them, equally with physical facts ; and they, therefore, come under the term "science." And so at some of our Universities, the students can graduate in what is termed in the calendar "Mental and Moral Science." On the subject of metaphysics, it may safely be said that the philosophers have discovered nothing. What comes nearest to a discovery is perhaps the Idealism of Berkeley ; but so far from that good Bishop claiming novelty for his discovery, he frequently appeals to the man in the street—"the plain man," as he calls him—for confirmation of his teaching.

In psychology it may be that philosophers have made some partial discoveries, though even that is a doubtful proposition. In ethics, or moral science, they certainly have not been more successful than in metaphysics. "We know," wrote Burke, "that *we* have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality." The Bible is, in fact, the only book that makes great and real discoveries in that subject, as everyone who has been truly enlightened by the Holy Spirit will admit. The agnostic, with the unregenerate man, will deny this statement ; but in doing so he is unconsciously confirming the truth of Scripture, which distinctly says that the "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."

It is often asserted that the physical science of the Bible is all wrong ; and the usual answer is, that the Bible was not written to teach science. Both statements, as thus worded, I regard as incorrect. The *speculations* of scientists (their jumping at conclusions) are often contradicted by Scripture ; but I know of no clearly established *fact* of science with which Scripture is at variance.

I also maintain that there are parts of Scripture which *were*



written to teach science ; and, further, that those parts teach correct science, and science up to date, and in many cases beyond what the majority of people are familiar with. The two outstanding books in this respect are, I think, the *Book of Job* and the *Book of Ecclesiastes*. There was an excellent paper on science in the Book of Job read here some two years ago, bringing out a number of scientific facts which were commonly believed to be modern discoveries. I am going to attempt something similar in the case of *Ecclesiastes* ; but I shall not feel prohibited from making excursions into any other parts of Scripture, should it seem advisable. Let me divide science (for the occasion) into Moral, Economic and Physical.

1. *Moral Science*.—Except in the case of a few—a very few—Oriental monarchs, there were no individuals in former times to correspond to the millionaires of the present day. Nowadays it is not monarchs but subjects who are millionaires, and these indeed are quite numerous. This is the result of an ingrained factor of human nature. A generous-minded and wealthy merchant was interviewing one of his clerks who had got into money difficulties through misfortune. “ Well,” said the merchant at last, “ what would really set your mind at rest in the matter—what would make you happy about it ? ” “ Why, sir,” replied the clerk, “ if I had a hundred pounds I should be perfectly happy.” “ Then you shall have it,” said the merchant, and, writing out a cheque for the amount, he gave it to the clerk. The latter, after expressing his profound gratitude to his principal, retired ; and on passing out, he told his fellow-clerks how he had fared. “ Oh, you lucky dog ! ” they exclaimed. “ Yes, am I not ? ” replied the clerk, “ but I wish I had said two hundred pounds.” That is human nature up to date. When a man has made a £100 a year he wants to make £200, and then £500. When he has made £500 he wants to make £1,000, when he has made £1,000 he wants to make £10,000, then he wants to make £50,000, then £100,000, then he wants to be a millionaire, and when he is a millionaire he wants to be the greatest millionaire in the world.

Among the ancients barter was largely practised, for there was far less money than there is with us. And, therefore, a saying of Juvenal’s has been fastened on and made a proverb, as displaying a profound insight into human nature, and as far more applicable now than ever it was : “ The love of money increases as much as the money itself increases ” (“ *Crescit amor nummi*

quantum ipsa pecunia crevit.”—*Sat.* 14, 139). The wise man, however, expressed exactly the same sentiment many centuries before Juvenal: “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase” (*ch.* v, 10).

When I was a boy I never heard of such a thing as a nervous breakdown. There probably were such cases, but they were certainly extremely few compared with those of the present day. That indeed is not to be wondered at, considering the strenuousness of our congested city life, and the struggle to get rich quickly. But that the malady should affect Christian workers is a much more novel phenomenon, yet very common at the present day. Nearly every popular preacher has a breakdown at some time or another. Most of them have several; and probably the lives of the majority of them are shortened by the strain of fulfilling their engagements. Numerous laymen, too, class-leaders, deaconesses, Bible-women, missionaries, and other Christian workers suffer from severe heart-strain, and sometimes pay the extreme penalty. The mischief, I suppose, existed in the time of Solomon, yet I think it must have been more for our sakes that he wrote that warning: “Be not righteous over much . . . why shouldest thou destroy thyself?” (*ch.* vii, 16).

Modern Germany is a nation of great scholars—philosophers, psychologists, metaphysicians, etc. They have also shone in oriental lore, philology, archæology, etc. But the Germans are said to be peculiarly lacking in wit and humour; they have no Cervantes, no Rabelais, Voltaire or Le Sage; no Swift, Addison, Sheridan, Dickens or Thackeray. Nor in this country do I think that *Punch* draws its chief support in wit and humour from the learned Professors of our Universities! Erudition has indeed a depressing effect on the spirits, and great scholars have often acknowledged this. Our poetry abounds with this sad, but inevitable, truth. Listen to Wordsworth’s confession:—

“Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy.”

“The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where’er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth. . . .”

“Those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings; . . .  
High instincts before which our mortal nature  
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised.”

Coleridge echoes it likewise :—

“ When I was young ? Ah ! woeful when !  
Ah ! for the change ’twixt Now and Then ! ”

Tennyson echoes it. He was no longer a boy when he wrote *Locksley Hall*, and in that poem pessimism and optimism jostle each other, but optimism plainly predominates : he was

“ Yearning for the large excitement which the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father’s field . . . ”  
“ Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range ;  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.”

In *Locksley Hall—Sixty Years After* there is a palpable change :

“ Hope the best, but hold the present fatal daughter of the past,  
Shape your heart to front the hour, but dream not that the hour  
will last.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘ Forward ’ rang the voices then, and of the many mine was one.  
Let us hush this cry of ‘ Forward ’ till ten thousand years have  
gone . . .

Ay, for doubtless I am old, and think gray thoughts, for I am gray :  
After all the stormy changes shall we find a changeless May ? ”

The whole poem is full of it.

Unquestionably learning increases this pessimistic frame by presenting to the mind fresh “ riddles of destiny,” fresh problems that we cannot solve. To support such a burden requires a strong will and a well-balanced brain. This poor Cowper had not, and the weight of the burden drove him, on no less than six occasions, to attempt suicide, and left him at the last demented. If Bunyan had been as learned as Cowper, we should never have had *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. Milton was a very learned man, and there is a complete absence of wit and humour in his writings, while his later poems were far more serious and sober than his earlier ones. Dr. Johnson was a very learned man, and everyone familiar with his life knows what fits of melancholy he suffered from in his later years. George Eliot was a very learned woman, and she was something of a martyr to melancholy. At the age of forty she wrote : “ The weight of the future presses on me, and makes itself felt even more than the deep satisfaction of the

past and present." Her biographer, Leslie Stephen, tells us that "Each of George Eliot's novels was the product of a kind of spiritual agony"; and, later on, "She was," he says, "as usual, tormented by hopelessness and melancholy." At the age of sixty-one she married Mr. Cross, and speaks about this as a "wonderful blessing." "But, deep down below, there is a river of sadness; but this must always be with those who have lived long." (*English Men of Letters.*)

Such cases might be cited almost *ad infinitum*, and probably I may seem to be only "breaking a butterfly upon the wheel." The evil was no doubt felt in Solomon's time; but how much more applicable to our time, how thoroughly up to date are the Preacher's words: "In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (*ch. i, 18*).

*Ecclesiastes* is sometimes labelled as the composition of a pessimist. But the fact is that it is true to human nature, and there is also a rare vein of *prophecy* in it. What Matthew Arnold said of poetry is as applicable to *Ecclesiastes* as it is inapplicable to poetry, viz., that it is a "criticism of life." Pessimism varies much in individuals, but we may take it as a general truth that the older we grow, the more pessimistic we become. This is almost capable of demonstration, for the mind reveals itself in the face. Consider the countenance of a person whom you have not seen for fifteen or twenty years; you will find that the expression has changed for the worse. I have often noticed this in a series of photographs of the same person, taken at intervals of ten or twenty years. The wrinkles are multiplied, and the furrows are deeper. The eyebrows are thicker, and they never fall off (as the other hair does); and this gives a harsher, darker, or more stern expression to the face. Altogether the bright eye and the cheerful smile of youth has degenerated into a frown, or a look of pain, or, at least, into an expression of sad sobriety. The causes of this are obvious. Death is one; every one who lives to be old has more graves than friends to look after. But the chief cause, I think, is the more extended knowledge of human nature and of oneself. "The history of the world is its condemnation": the history of the individual is also *his* condemnation, and, therefore, the more we learn of both histories the sadder we are bound to become. Sometimes the daily papers are industrious enough to supply us with a series of such graduated portraits of eminent men, and they are always a striking confirmation of the fact I am seeking to establish.

One more observation before leaving the moral aspect of the question. Dr. A. Shadwell, writing in *The Times* (January 28th, 1928), called attention to the fact that man is the only animal that is cruel for the sake of being cruel, that inflicts pain for the pleasure of doing so. He illustrates this fact by referring to recent Soviet cruelties in China: "It is not merely massacre, but massacre with fiendish delight in cruelty, and in gloating over the agonies of the victims . . . with new refinements of cruelties, before they were allowed to die . . . We talk of such conduct as inhuman, but it is essentially and peculiarly human." Beasts, he reminds us, inflict great pain on each other, and kill each other without remorse; "but they do not inflict pain for the sake of inflicting it." Moreover, they are not "cannibals"; they do not prey on their own kind, "they leave that to man . . . A cat plays with a mouse, as a thing that runs; and is equally ready to play with a leaf or anything else that will run. It does not rejoice in the pain caused, of which it knows nothing. The position of a man who deliberately inflicts pain is totally different. He knows what he is doing, and that is why he does it." We call his cruelty "brutal," but that is a libel upon the brutes; the brutes are not guilty of such conduct at all.

The ape is a non-combative, harmless, fruit-eating animal; if, then, man be descended from the ape, when, where, or how did he acquire his fiendish propensities? The record of human nature leaves us nothing to boast of, and everything to be ashamed of—seeing that, after the Fall in Eden, man has degenerated so woefully. According to Evolution, however, this is a *process still going on*. And if this is what a million years of Evolution has made man into, what will another million years make him into? The convinced Evolutionist, who really thinks out the matter, ought to be the most horror-stricken pessimist in the world.

When will the scientist fairly and squarely face this moral problem, instead of ignoring it or flying from it? For it is of far greater importance than the physical problem. While, according to his own teaching, the whole creation is threatened with a fearful tempest of fire and brimstone, the Evolutionist hides his head in the sand, and, busying himself with bones and teeth, declares that these things promise an eternity of power, happiness, and virtue!

2. *Economic Science*.—"Back to the land!" is a familiar cry of the present day. With the increase of machinery and factory life, cities have grown into a bloated and factitious importance.

and for millions of persons life has been entirely changed. Men, however, are beginning to rediscover the value of land and the country. Political economists are calling attention to its vital importance to all classes. They bid us look around in the room where we are, and see how everything comes out of the land—the bricks, the stones, the lime, the sand, the metals, the glass, the paper, the woodwork, and even the clothes we wear; the cotton and the linen growing on the land, and the silk and wool from animals entirely dependent on the land. Thousands of years before, however, the wise man had made a similar pronouncement, when he said: “The profit of the earth is for all; the king himself is served by the field” (*ch. v, 9*).

Modern political economists are also agreed on the discovery of a profoundly important economic law, namely, that the increased production of wealth is always accompanied by an increase of population, which soon destroys the initial benefit. Here are J. S. Mill's words: “According to all experience, a great increase invariably takes place in the number of marriages in seasons of cheap food and full employment . . . Let them work ever so efficiently, the increase in population could not, as we have so often shown, increase the produce proportionately” (*Political Economy, II, 11.2, and II, 12.2*).

But here again the wise man was thousands of years in front of our philosophers, for did he not announce the same economic law when he said: “When goods increase, they are increased that eat them” (*ch. v, 11*)?

3. *Physical Science*.—The indestructibility of matter and motion is another great modern discovery of science. Physicists tell us that an object once set in motion will go on moving for ever, unless interfered with by something else; and that, in the case of stoppage or hindrance, the object's motion is not destroyed, but is communicated to the hindering body, either in the form of motion, or heat, and so on *ad infinitum*. Matter, in like manner, is found to be indestructible, irreducible, and unaugmentable. Gases, liquids, and carbon may go from an animal to a vegetable substance, from a vegetable to a mineral, from a mineral to the atmosphere, and back to a mineral or vegetable again; and so on everlastingly, but not one atom is ever lost, increased, or diminished. Here, again, our wonderful “discovery” was anticipated by the Scriptures thousands of years ago: “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it” (*ch. iii, 14*).

I have asked many educated persons if they could explain the law of the winds. A few understood that the winds were caused by the sun's heat producing diversity of temperature in the earth's atmosphere, but I never could get a clear explanation of the theory which investigation has proved to be the true one. My hearers will pardon me for stating the process simply. The principle is exactly the same as that of a room with a fire in it. The fire heats the chimney ; the heated air ascends the chimney ; to supply its place cold air comes in through door or window, or wherever it can (or else the fire goes out). This cold air makes for the chimney and becomes heated ; it ascends, becomes cold again outside, mixing with the atmosphere, which again has to supply the heated room. And so a regular circuit is kept up continually. Now, in the case of the earth, the tropics are the chimney of the world. There the air is hottest, and there it ascends continually. To supply the place of this ascending air at the Equator, and to prevent a vacuum, cold air must come in from the Poles, causing a continuous current of wind from the South Pole and the North Pole. These currents, on approaching the Equator, in turn gradually become warm, then hot, and in due course they likewise ascend. And to prevent a vacuum at the North Pole and the South Pole, they, on ascending to a great height, travel *back*, part towards the North and part towards the South, cooling as they go, only to be again drawn towards the Equator and made to repeat the same revolution. This process would require a good many long words to describe it scientifically, but the Preacher has hit it off in very simple language : " The wind goeth toward the South, and turneth about unto the North ; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again, according to his circuits " (*ch. i. 6*). The preacher was in the Northern Hemisphere, and therefore he would speak of the North current in particular ; but he speaks of " circuits " in the plural, there being two great circuit systems.

Some people might object that, according to this theory, we should have a continuous North wind in the Northern Hemisphere and a continuous South wind in the Southern Hemisphere all the year round. So of course we should, were the earth homogeneous—all water or all land, all sand or all forest, etc. ; were it all of the same altitude—no valleys and no mountains ; and above all, were the earth at rest, we should have nothing but two winds, the North and the South all the year round. As it is, the two great circuits are, in most parts of the world, interrupted and

modified by these conditions. On the ocean within the tropics these "trade winds" (as they are called) are exceedingly regular.

Another great fact in physical geography is, that water obeys similar circuit laws. Evaporation is greatest in the tropics. There principally, but everywhere more or less, the water is sucked up by the heat of the sun and is carried about by the wind, until, meeting with a colder atmosphere, the moisture is condensed and precipitated on the earth in the form of rain. Thus it rejoins the ocean, or, falling on mountains, valleys, plains, etc., collects into rills, rivulets, streams, and rivers, eventually reaching some lake or the sea; where it is drawn up again by the heat of the sun, to repeat the same process continually. Here again the Preacher has forestalled our physical geographies: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (*ch. i, 7*).

This leads me to a final remark, namely, on the Weather. If we ask a meteorologist, or any man of science, how the weather is caused, the answer will be, that the weather is the natural and necessary result of certain fixed causes which are perfectly well known. And probably most men of science, and not a few earnest Christian people, think that to pray for rain or for fine weather, or for any change of weather, is to ask God to suspend the laws of Nature, and is therefore wrong. Nowhere, I suppose, is cause and effect taken for granted as ruling absolutely more than in climate and the weather.

Now I am audacious enough to join issue on this view. I maintain that *no* connection can be shown between the weather-changes and their so-called causes; and in this, I believe, I have not only Scripture but facts behind me. The regularity of the *Seasons* is promised in Scripture, but not regularity in the weather. What are the causes to which the weather is attributed? The chief are the sun, its size, heat and distance; the earth, its size, its diurnal rotation, its annual revolution, its polar obliquity and its elliptical orbit. The character of the earth's surface, too, has its say in the matter—masses of land and their altitude, masses of water, forests, mountains, deserts, etc., modify the climate. Now, except to a negligible extent, all these are fixed and permanent. Forests may be cut down, marshes drained, deserts flooded, etc., and the climate thereby slightly altered. But these facts do not touch the problem; for once done, such changes are permanent, and the weather should correspond.

Now, according to the "laws of cause and effect," the weather



should be the same exactly *on the anniversary of every day in the year*, for the conditions are the same.

On June 21st, 1919, I find by a note I made, that we had showers of hailstones. I am pretty sure that on June 21st, 1918, and June 21st, 1920, the weather was totally different. But if the weather obeys fixed laws, how is it that, *the conditions being exactly the same*, the weather on anniversary days is not the same? It is often the very opposite. One day is hot and cloudless, and its anniversary cold and wet. The weather of no day can be relied on as a guide to the weather on its anniversary. Nor can the weather of any week, or even the general weather of any month, be thus relied on. East winds are sometimes confined to a portion of March; they sometimes begin in January or February, and last through March, and April, and May, and even into June and July, as they did in 1919. Sometimes March is a lovely sunny month; sometimes it is chilly, wet and stormy. Sometimes May is fairly uniform in its conditions; sometimes it is a collection of weather samples of every kind. Sometimes December is bitterly cold and frosty; sometimes it is so mild that primroses may be seen blossoming. In the early days of March this year (1928) we had glorious summer weather. The *Morning Post* for March 5th said: "Yesterday was a miracle of early March; it was indeed the hottest day this year." Four days later, on leaving our homes in the morning, we found the country *covered with snow!* It was snowing hard, and hailing, and freezing later on.

Even in tropical countries like India, where the weather is, on the whole, extremely uniform, there is sometimes a terrible change, giving rise to famine and great loss of life. What causes the failure at times of the Indian monsoons? No one can tell us.

We have been taught for centuries that the weather obeys fixed laws. If so, one would think we ought to know enough about them now to prognosticate at least the great and fateful variations that take place.

I know that some meteorologists talk about sun-spots and weather cycles, etc. But these are guesses and of no practical value; they are only a euphemistic way of confessing that they cannot account for the changes. As a matter of fact, beyond a period of three or four days, *Old Moore's Almanac* is just as useful a weather guide as meteorology.

I do not mean to belittle Meteorology, or those who study it: far from it. It is quite right that we should try and "discern the

face of the sky"; but that is all we can do. It is very useful to have stations on the Atlantic seaboard, for instance, to telegraph to us when westerly gales are coming our way. But how, and when, and where those *originate* they cannot tell us. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth," is as true as ever. The "Weather Forecasts" are a mere matter of *signalling*, and even as signals they are only approximately reliable; for a cyclone or anti-cyclone, travelling west (for instance) across the Atlantic, may be diverted or dispersed long before reaching Europe. Scientists, therefore, are entirely helpless in endeavouring to account for the weather changes which we have, or in foretelling those which are in store for us.

Now, all through Scripture the weather is spoken of as sent by God for reward or punishment. Rain and sunshine, fruitful seasons and desolating droughts, are referred to as God-given, according to the behaviour of the inhabitants of the land. And it seems to me that that is so still.

To *obedient* Israel God said: "I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn" (*Deut.* xi, 14). "I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruits" (*Lev.* xxvi, 4). "I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing" (*Ezek.* xxxiv, 26). "He hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first month" (*Joel* ii, 23). "Thou, O God, didst send the plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary" (*Psa.* lxxviii, 9). "The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in His season" (*Deut.* xxviii, 12). "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field" (*Zech.* x, 1).

To *disobedient* Israel God said: "I will punish you seven times more for your sins . . . and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass" (*Lev.* xxvi, 18, 19). "If I shut up Heaven that there be no rain" (*2 Chron.* vii, 13). "When the Heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray towards this place . . . then hear thou from Heaven, and forgive . . . and send rain upon thy land" (*2 Chron.* vi, 26 and 27). "Yet have ye not returned

unto Me, saith the Lord, and also I have withholden the rain from you" (*Amos* iv, 6 and 7). "Whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth into Jerusalem to worship the King the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain" (*Zech.* xiv, 17). And with all this the words in the Book of Job entirely agree, when, speaking of the rain, we read: "He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy" (*Job* xxxvii, 13). Passages like these might be multiplied, and it is the same in the New Testament (see *Acts* xiv, 17; *Matt.* v, 45).

Unquestionably there have been great changes of climate in certain countries, and these changes have produced great political consequences. Mesopotamia was once the most fertile country in the world. Herodotus tells us that its crops yielded four-hundredfold profit! Palestine used to be extremely fertile; and Isaac, we are told, reaped one-hundredfold (*Gen.* xxvi, 12). Yet in later times it became so poor and barren, that Voltaire and other infidels denied that Judea could ever have supported the great and numerous cities which history tells us once flourished there.

How God would work in such a case we saw in 1911. In that year we had a terrible drought in these islands, which had far-reaching effects, and which should teach us how greatly dependent we are upon the weather for our national well-being. First, the grass and all green crops were very scanty, so that the cattle, sheep and other live-stock deteriorated. The corn was burnt up, and horses and poultry suffered greatly. Very many cattle had to be killed, as the root crops were not sufficient to feed them through the winter. Milk was in consequence short in quantity and poor in quality. Cheese and butter fared similarly, and child-life suffered all over the country. The long-continued heat, moreover, produced multitudinous insects, grubs, and garden pests, which left their eggs in the soil and in the bark of the trees, and proved very destructive in the following year. The unaccustomed heat had also a bad effect on human health, weakening the physical powers when they were most needed. In fact, a few more seasons like that would have spelt ruin for the nation.

Yes, the *Book of Ecclesiastes* is a great "criticism of life," and a great prophecy as well. It looks forward to the Dispensation of Grace, and of Salvation through the death of Christ, as revealed in the New Testament, bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel. How so? There are in the New Testament new commandments. One is that God "commandeth all men

everywhere to repent." Another is, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." Another is, "I know that his commandment is life everlasting." Inseparably linked with this Gospel of God's Grace is the final verdict of Ecclesiastes, addressed to all—to pessimist and optimist alike:—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: for this is the whole duty of man" (*ch. xii, 13*).

#### DISCUSSION.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES remarked that Mr. Forbes's paper was a very interesting one. His application of the lessons to be learnt from Ecclesiastes were singularly useful. As to the interpretation of the book, which very many have found a difficult matter, it was well to notice that the "pessimism" referred to the things "under the sun." The Creation had been subjected to "vanity," but it would be delivered from the bondage of corruption. The wisdom given to the Apostle Paul, and the revelation of the future glories of Christ's Kingdom in the New Testament, should be before our hearts when we are in difficulties in reading the Book of Ecclesiastes.

Mr. W. E. LESLIE said: One cannot but admire the literary qualities of this paper. There are, however, one or two references to scientific matters which call for comment. It is difficult to understand the author's doubt as to whether any progress has been made in psychology—when research and discovery have been so prolific that we have almost witnessed the rise of a new science since the days of the old "faculty psychology."

Turning to p. 182, is it certain to-day that matter is indestructible? We know that atoms are subject to change and decay. With regard to the science of meteorology, does not the author's argument assume that at the end of a year, all the complicated processes set up by the movement of the earth, etc., will have arrived at the condition in which they were at the commencement of the cycle? This, of course, is not the case. The second cycle starts with a large number of modified factors. I fail, however, to see why we should

be anxious to discover an untidy spot for God in the universe. Our God is a God of order, and His universe is orderly. This by no means precludes the intercourse of a free Creator with his creatures.

Mr. PERCY O. RUOFF said: This extremely interesting lecture is marked as much by lucidity as by literary charm. The law of the winds, as illustrated by a fire in a room, is vivid and arresting, and a happy figure. Perhaps Professor Forbes goes beyond the bounds of fact in saying that parts of Scripture were written to teach science. For my part, I should prefer to speak with greater reserve, and say that the Bible undoubtedly records a number of scientific facts.

On p. 178, the interpretation of the words "Be not righteous over much" does not appear to fit in with its setting. Lord Bacon propounded the view that it was the "vain affectation" of righteousness which Solomon had in mind. It may be that what is referred to is over-scrupulousness in secondary matters. But it obviously cannot mean that a person can be too righteous or too holy, for the Bible makes constant appeal for whole-heartedness.

Again, with regard to knowledge increasing sorrow, it is necessary to ask "What knowledge?" Surely not spiritual knowledge—knowledge of God and the revelation of His Word, for it is true that "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

The argument of Mr. Forbes that a change for the worse is seen in the human face as age advances, is not normally true as regards Christians. Long fellowship with God, and experience of spiritual things, mellows the expression, and produces true beauty, attractive tenderness, and grace in the countenance.

The argument about the weather is well presented. With reference to prayer about weather, there is a story told about a prayer-meeting in which there was constant prayer that fine weather might be given on the day fixed for the annual excursion. A scholar in the Sunday School, with the insight of a philosopher, said to his mother, "Mother, why don't they pray to God to lead them to choose a day which will be fine?"

Mr. D. RAMSAY SMITH said: I should like to thank Mr. Avary Forbes for his faithful handling of the physical facts taught us through Solomon. The beautiful cycle by which the living God supplies

our needs for fresh water on the land—by evaporation and elimination of salt from the water of the ocean, and carrying it in His sealed clouds to the spot where the earth awaits its benediction—has been a real tonic to many seekers after God's truth, in Nature as in Grace.

The circulation of the blood in our bodies, as discovered by William Harvey, and the invention of the surface condenser observed by James Watt—the latter to condense the steam generated in his boilers, and put it in again (after it had done work in his engines) to be regenerated once more—were great revelations in their day. Both these men, I believe, got the circular idea from the Bible through Solomon. The teaching of cycles, viz., progression by retrogression, has not yet come to its own.

Given an Immutable God, whose works were finished from the foundation of the world, involves in its conception a working out in cycles and *not* on a straight line ahead. Matter is not self-existent, neither are laws. All matter is conserved by God; equally so is all energy; and again all life.

A circle is the emblem of ETERNITY—it has neither beginning nor end. If this is true (and all sound evidence is in its favour), there is absolutely no room for the disgruntled and factless theory termed “the evolution of man.” God gets His Glory from each individual “life.” Man is too poor to buy it, and God is too rich to sell it. Life is the gift of God; He gives it suddenly, and takes it suddenly. “All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Eccles. iii, 20 and 21.)

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.” (Eccles. iii, 14 and 15.)

Lieut.-Col. SKINNER said: I find myself in such complete agreement with the lecturer, that I have no comment to offer, though, if I may, I would be glad to supplement what he has said as to the teaching of science in the Bible. He has referred specially to two books, Job and Ecclesiastes, as inculcating science; I would like to add the book of Genesis.

In the second chapter we are told that God brought the creatures to Adam to see what he would call them ; and, whatever name Adam gave them, that was the name thereof. Here, I am convinced, we have the very beginning of scientific classification ; elementary, no doubt, but sufficient for a beginning ; and the, to me, significant fact about it is that it shows that God intended man to be scientific : having endowed him with a brain, an intellect, He meant him to utilize it to the full, and that, moreover, notwithstanding the seeming paradox of having already forbidden him, under pain of death, to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

At the same place we read that, with that one exception, permission was given man to eat freely of every tree of the garden, the permission, therefore, including the tree of life in the midst of the garden, from its location perhaps the most accessible of all.

In the third chapter of Genesis we have the subtle question of Satan : “ Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree ? . . . Ye shall not surely die ; for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” With knowledge comes discernment, and, when able of yourselves to choose the good and avoid the evil, the world is at your feet, and nothing shall be impossible to you. Gods you will become. And man fell into the trap, little knowing that knowledge of evil brought no power to withstand it.

Then followed the fall, the arraignment, and the eviction from Paradise, lest, having tasted rebellion, if man were now to take of the tree of life, he would, like a bad negative once fixed, become unalterably bad, incurably evil ; in fact, a devil. Thus was his exclusion planned in infinite mercy ; and even so, not before a promise had first been given of salvation through the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent’s head.

Thus in disobedience man chose knowledge and lost the life, and my thought is that, had he honoured God in trustful obedience and meanwhile taken of the tree of life as he was free to do, in due time, perhaps after further probation, God would have released to him even the tree of knowledge and would have trained him from the outset to co-operate with Himself in His purposes in the world. But, alas ! he preferred the pride of intellect, the light of reason, to life of the soul.

But when, in fullness of time, came the promised Redeemer, we are told of Him that "In Him was LIFE, and the Life was the Light of men." In Eden man chose light and lost life. In Christ we take Him as our life, and the light follows; "For, with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light." Thus it seems to me that, where, generally speaking, to-day scientists are seeking after knowledge in independence of God, they err, and are bound to go wrong, since, to ransack the universe for material facts while disregarding the facts of Faith, is to ignore the prerequisite of all true knowledge—the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom—and to exclude the operation of the Holy Spirit, who alone can guide us into all truth and save us from error.

#### THE LECTURER'S REPLY.

I wish Mr. Leslie had given some examples of the "prolific discoveries" made in psychology. Some scientists have, I know, invented new labels for old goods, and seem to think that this amounts to a new science. Swift reminds us that the Scholiasts were sorely exercised over the discovery of a mouse with a beak, a lamb with five legs, or some such monstrosity. They could not place it in any category, till one of their number suggested that it was a *lusus naturæ*. This solution, which explained everything, delighted them.

This, it seems to me, is what our modern psychologists have done. In a series of papers in the *Morning Post* (March and April, 1926) Dr. Percy Dearmer explained the new psychology. The miracles were once regarded as the chief proof of Christianity; but, after the rise of modern science, they became the great obstacle to its acceptance. "Advanced thinkers said they could only accept a non-miraculous Christianity. . . . Now all this is being changed," and the miracles "have already received a scientific explanation." How was this done? Simply by inventing a new vocabulary!

When Zacharias was temporarily struck dumb (St. Luke i, 22), this, Dr. Dearmer, informs us, was a case of "*Aphasia*," i.e. "incapacity of coherent utterance, not caused by structural impairment of the vocal organs."

When Christ healed the centurion's servant without visiting the



patient (St. Matt. viii, 13), it was simply a case of *Telepathy*, or "communication of thought independently of the channels of sense."

When Christ saw Nathanael under the fig-tree, and when He told the Samaritan woman that she had had five husbands (St. John i, 48, and iv, 18), it was a case of *Telæsthesia*, or "perception at a distance."

When the Lord foretold Peter's denial (St. Matt. xxvi, 34), it was a case of *Prevision*.

The man who had the Legion of demons (St. Luke viii, 27) was an instance of *Possession*, "A condition in which the subject's personality disappears for a time, while there is a more or less complete substitution of some secondary or foreign personality."

Christ and Peter walking on the water (St. Matt. xiv) was an example of *Levitation*, "How natural it was," adds Dr. Dearmer, "that Peter should fail as soon as he lost the necessary psychic conditions!"

Could any explanations of the miraculous be more original, satisfactory or scientific!

To Mr. Ruoff I should explain that the "knowledge" discommended in Scripture is always, I think, secular knowledge. True wisdom, as Archbishop Trench remarks, "is never in Scripture dissociated from moral goodness."

I thank the speakers one and all for their remarks, and for the fresh light they have thrown on the subject.

712TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, APRIL 16TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

DR. JAMES W. THIRTLE, M.R.A.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the Election of the Rev. Gideon L. Powell, B.D., Ph.D., as an Associate.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced the Rev. Charles Boutflower, M.A., the learned author of "In and about the Book of Daniel," to read his paper on "Sennacherib's Invasion of Judah, 701 B.C."

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*SENNACHERIB'S INVASION OF JUDAH, 701 B.C.*

By THE REV. CHARLES BOUTFLOWER, M.A.

IT is now wellnigh eighty years since the account of Sennacherib's Invasion on the Taylor Cylinder began to be read, so that my subject might seem at first sight to be already worked out.\* But inasmuch as our Holy Religion depends on a miraculous story, and comes to us through a nation whose history is in some parts a chain of miracles, I deem it a worthy object to endeavour to throw light on a passage in that nation's history which partakes largely of the miraculous: a passage for ever dear to the heart of every loyal patriot, be he Jew or Christian.

Without entering into the difficulties which gather round those opening words, "Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah,"

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\* See NOTE 3, at end of paper.

I wish to remark that, leaving on one side the chronological question, the Biblical and the Assyrian records, with one marked exception, either confirm or supplement one another in such a way that there is no need for us to postulate *two* campaigns of Sennacherib against Judah. Thus, Sennacherib emphasizes his capture of the fenced cities of Judah with which the Scripture account begins. Then, in the mention of a king of Ashkelon bearing the Jewish name Zedekiah whose dominions stretched for some distance along the coast, and of a king of Ekron, with the Jewish name Pedaiiah, who was delivered by his subjects into the hands of Hezekiah, he confirms the Scripture statement as to Hezekiah's victories in Philistia.\* Again, Isaiah's oracle, pointing to Egypt as the invader's goal, is confirmed by Sennacherib's statement that he met and defeated an Egyptian army at Eltekeh. This defeat in turn helps us to understand the Rab-shakeh's words when he speaks of Egypt as "this bruised reed."† Sennacherib, it is true, speaks of himself as making an expedition to the "Hittite land": he does not mention Egypt as his goal, for the good reason that he never got there.

The invader traces his line of march through Phœnicia and down the coast to Joppa, and thence inland to meet the Egyptian army hastening to succour Ekron. After the battle of Eltekeh he captures that city, and also Timnath at the foot of the hills of Judah, 10 miles S.E. of Ekron. The Scripture record supplements this itinerary and shows us the Assyrian a stage further, viz., at Lachish, 16 miles E.N.E. from Gaza and on the direct route from that town through Timnath to Jerusalem. At Lachish, as the famous bas-relief shows us, Sennacherib pitched his camp. This spot, so far as we know, was the furthest point south reached by him. From Lachish, as the Bible tells us, he fell back on Libnah;‡ no doubt to be in closer touch with the army which he had despatched to Jerusalem.

During the siege of Jerusalem, Sennacherib tells us that Hezekiah's picked troops deserted him. This appears to be referred to in Isa. xxii, 3, where the prophet, addressing Jerusalem, says, "All thy rulers," or rather "commanders,"§ "fled away together, they were bound without the bow; all that were found of thee were bound together, they fled afar off."|| The words

\* 2 Kings xviii, 8.

† 2 Kings xviii, 21.

‡ Joshua's army coming from the north attacked Libnah before Lachish (Joshua x, 31).

§ In Joshua x, 24, the same word is rendered "chiefs."

|| R.V.M.

would then imply that the deserters were captured by the enemy. Further, we have no need to accuse either Sennacherib or the Biblical writers of exaggeration. Thus, Sennacherib says that he took 46 fenced cities of Judah. Now if the word "bulided" be understood in the sense of "fortified," it is possible to pick out from the Historical Books about the same number. Sennacherib also claims to have carried away from Judah over 200,000 persons. Such wholesale deportations were introduced by Tiglath-Pileser. Judah, whose fighting force in the days of David mounted up to 500,000 men,\* was doubtless populous in the prosperous years of Hezekiah. Also she included much of Philistia within her borders and may have afforded a home to many refugees from the Northern Kingdom. On the other hand, Scripture declares that 185,000 of the enemy perished in the overthrow before the walls of Jerusalem; a greater number it is said than the whole force which marched out from Nineveh. Possibly so; but let it be remembered that "all the kings of the West Land," who tendered their submission to Sennacherib before he left Phœnicia, would each be required to furnish their quota to his army, and that to these must be added the camp followers and the multitude who would be drawn to the spot by mercenary motives and in the hope of witnessing the expected assault on the town.

The statement in Isa. xxxi, 1, that the Jews were looking to Egypt for chariots and horses, borne out as it is by the Rabshakeh's taunt as to their weakness in that branch of the service, suits admirably with Sennacherib's description of the Egyptian army defeated by him at Eltekeh.†

In Isaiah's oracle, uttered on the eve of the Great Deliverance, we meet with some life-like touches. The Assyrian is represented as saying, "With the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains."‡ Read the annals of Sennacherib—*e.g.* the description of his fifth campaign—and say, is not this true to the life? Again, he is represented by the prophet as going to the mountains, not merely to march triumphantly across them, but with this definite object, *viz.*, to cut down cedar beams, doubtless to roof his palaces. In order to find these, Isaiah

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\* 2 Sam. xxiv, 9.

† Sennacherib describes the forces opposed to him at Eltekeh as "the kings of Egypt, the bowmen, chariots, and horses of the king of Ethiopia, a countless host," and says that he captured alive "the Egyptian charioteers and princes together with the charioteers of the king of Ethiopia."

‡ Isa. xxxvii, 24.

pictures him as resolved to penetrate "the innermost parts of Lebanon," and "to enter into his farthest lodging-place," or, as some render the words, "its last retreat." This again is true to the life. "Ashur and Ishtar," says Sennacherib, "who loved my priesthood and have pronounced my name, shewed me where the great cedar trunks which had grown lofty trees from distant days and become mighty, sprang up, as they lay concealed in the mountains of Sirara."\* These and other details one might love to dwell on, but time and space bid me hasten on to my main subject, which is (i) to show that Sennacherib was foiled in his attempt to take Jerusalem, and (ii) that he was foiled by a disaster of a miraculous nature which took place before the walls of Jerusalem.

*Sennacherib was foiled in his attempt to take Jerusalem*: he as good as admits it. Speaking of Hezekiah he says "Himself I shut up like a caged bird in Jerusalem his royal city. I erected siege-works against him: the one coming out of the gate of his city I turned back to his misery." On which Georges Martin comments: "Chose significative, il ne dit pas qu'il ouvrit la cage et saisit l'oiseau; et s'il ne le dit pas, nous pouvons être assurés qu'il ne le fit pas."† This point, then, needs no further proof: if Sennacherib or his generals had got into Jerusalem, we should be sure to have heard of it.

Now to my second point, viz., *that the Assyrian was foiled by a disaster* of a miraculous nature before the walls of Jerusalem. The evidence for this is to be found in Prophecy, Psalmody, and History: History both profane and sacred.

(i) *In Prophecy*.—In the Book of Isaiah, from chap. i onwards, we find many details foretold respecting the coming disaster, which are seen afterwards to have been fulfilled. Jerusalem is to be left alone as a booth in a vineyard,‡ Jehovah, in the prophecy against Ariel, says, "I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a fort," or wall of circumvallation, "and I will raise siege-works against thee."§ She is to be invested, but not assaulted. The foe is not to "shoot an arrow there": the spearman, mounting the scaling-ladder, is not to "come before it with shield": the military engineer is not to

\* Luckenbill, *Annals of Sennacherib*, pp. 107, 120. Sirara is the Sirion of Deut. iii, 9, the Sidonian name of Hermon.

† *La campagne de Sennakhérib en Palestine*, by Georges Martin (Montauban, 1892).

‡ Isa. i, 8.

§ Isa. xxix, 3.

“cast a mount” against the wall.\* The Assyrian is to be “broken” and “trodden under foot” in Jehovah’s land and upon his mountains.† Jehovah will “come down to fight upon mount Zion”: as birds hovering over their nests He will protect Jerusalem.‡ Jerusalem, engirdled with the impassable waters of the divine protection, will be better off than a sea-fortress provided with war-galleys§—a reference, surely, to the Island—Tyre, which the Assyrian could not take. Deliverance will come suddenly, and in the night: “At eventide behold terror; and before the morning they are not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.”||

(ii) *In Psalmody*.—As, for instance, in Ps. lxxvi, entitled in the LXX “Respecting the Assyrian.” In this psalm Jerusalem is brought forward as the scene of a Divine deliverance, the Almighty Deliverer being compared, as in Isa. xxxi, 4, to a lion. The R.V.M. renders verses 1 and 2 thus:—

“In Judah is God known:  
His Name is great in Israel,  
In Salem also is His covert,  
And His lair in Zion.”

whilst verses 4–6 are thus rendered in the R.V. :—

“Glorious art Thou and excellent, from the mountains of prey.  
The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep;  
And none of the men of might have found their hands.  
At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,  
Both chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.”

Then, later on, in verse 11, we have a call to the neighbouring nations to pay tribute to Jehovah, which the chronicler tells us was actually done after the overthrow of Sennacherib.¶

Again, take Ps. xlvi. Jerusalem is described as—

“The City of the Great King.  
God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge.  
For, lo, the kings assembled themselves,  
They passed by together.  
They, even they, \*\* saw! Forthwith they\*\* were amazed;  
They were dismayed, they were stricken with terror!”††

\* Isa. xxxvii, 33.

† Isa. xiv, 25.

‡ Isa. xxxi, 4 and 5.

§ Isa. xxxiii, 21.

|| Isa. xvii, 14.

¶ 2 Chron. xxxii, 23.

\*\* The pronoun is emphatic (see Perowne’s *Psalms*), and also with regard to the word rendered “forthwith.”

†† R.V.M.

“ They saw ” : to make the description more startling we are not told what they saw, but the context shows that it was the City of the Great King—a sight which was to prove death to that mighty host. Presently the poet invites us to walk round the Holy City, and see how she has come unscathed out of this terrible ordeal :—

“ Walk about Zion, and go round about her :  
 Tell the towers thereof.  
 Mark ye well her bulwarks,  
 Traverse\* her palaces ;  
 That ye may tell it to the generation following.  
 For this God is our God for ever and ever ;  
 He will be our guide for evermore.”

If those prophecies of Isaiah were never fulfilled, how came they to be treasured in the Sacred Writings ? If Jerusalem never experienced some thrilling, astonishing deliverance, how came those glorious Psalms to be written ?

(iii) However, for positive evidence we turn from Prophecy and Poetry to *History*, and not to Sacred History only, but to the pages of Herodotus and Josephus, and especially to Sennacherib's own annals.

Herodotus, who loves to record all that is marvellous and strange, visited Egypt about two and a-half centuries after the overthrow of Sennacherib's army. After mentioning a blind king in whose reign Egypt was invaded by the Ethiopian Sabacos, he continues thus :—

“ The next king, I was told, was a priest of Hēphæstus, called Sethos. This monarch despised and neglected the warrior-class of the Egyptians, as though he did not need their services. Among other indignities which he offered them, he took from them the lands which they had possessed under all the previous kings, consisting of 12 acres of choice land for each warrior. Afterwards, therefore, when Sanacharib, king of the Arabians and Assyrians, marched his vast army into Egypt, the warriors one and all refused to come to his aid. On this the monarch, greatly distressed, entered into the inner sanctuary, and before the image of the god, bewailed the fate which impended over him. As he wept he fell asleep, and dreamed that the god came and stood at his side, bidding him

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\* R.V.M.

be of good cheer, and go forth boldly to meet the Arabian host, which would do him no hurt, as he himself would send those who should help him. Sethos, then, relying on the dream, collected such of the Egyptians as were willing to follow him, who were none of them warriors, but traders, artisans, and market people, and with these marched to Pelusium, which commands the entrance into Egypt, and there pitched his camp. As the two armies lay here opposite one another, there came in the night a multitude of field-mice, which devoured all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy, and ate the thongs by which they managed their shields. Next morning, they commenced their flight, and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves. There stands to this day in the temple of Hēphæstus a stone statue of Sethos with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription to this effect—‘Look on me and learn to reverence the gods.’ Thus far I have spoken on the authority of the Egyptians and their priests.”\*

The chief points in which the above account agrees with the Biblical record are as follows :—

- (i) A great disaster happens to an army of Sennacherib.
- (ii) This disaster happens in a single night.
- (iii) It is emphasized as a Divine interposition, obtained by a king, who in dire distress goes into the temple of his god to obtain help.

And the points of difference are these :—

- (i) The scene of the disaster is laid in Egypt. The king is an Egyptian king: the god an Egyptian god, apparently Phtah, the god of Memphis.
- (ii) The agency employed is not pestilence, but field-mice.
- (iii) The city rescued is not Jerusalem, but Pelusium on the Palestinian frontier of Egypt.

Now, which of these stories is the true one? This is a most important question, deeply affecting the veracity of Holy Scripture. It is a question, too, on which critics have been divided. Who, then, will come to our help?—A most unexpected ally :

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\* *Herodotus*, ii, 141-2.



Sennacherib himself. In the Egyptian story, the monarch's distress is attributed to his being deserted by his proper army. According to Sennacherib, as already stated, it was Hezekiah who was thus deserted, not the Egyptian king. The record runs thus :—“ *The Arabs and his trusty warriors, whom he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem his royal city, fell away.*” Add to this, that Sennacherib's account speaks only of Hezekiah and Jerusalem, and says nothing whatever about the Egyptian king and Pelusium. The story told to Herodotus is further negated by Sennacherib's statement, that he was met by an Egyptian army of bowmen and chariotry at Eltekeh, evidently a trained force and no mere gathering of peaceful civilians. The differences between Herodotus' story and the Scripture account have, however, led some critics to suppose that the former must relate to a second campaign, undertaken during those eight closing years of Sennacherib of which we know nothing. But this again is most unlikely, since it would be an equally strange thing if in a second campaign there happened at Pelusium a repetition of what had previously happened at Jerusalem in 701 B.C., viz., a king, deserted by his army, going into the temple of his god to entreat divine assistance, and receiving an astonishing deliverance just when matters had reached a climax. It appears, then, that the story told to Herodotus is a fabrication, closely moulded on what happened, not at Pelusium, but at Jerusalem; and that it should be so is no surprise, for Herodotus tells us that he heard it “ *on the authority of the Egyptians and their priests.*”

With regard to the field-mice, which in the Egyptian story take the place of the pestilence, it is remarkable that in Homer's *Iliad*, book i, a pestilence is said to have been inflicted on the Greeks by Apollo Smintheus, “ *Apollo the Mouse-god.*” Further, on the coins of Alexandria Troas, Apollo was represented with a mouse in his hand, like the statue shown to Herodotus of Sethos the priest of Hēphæstus, on which was inscribed, “ *Look on me and fear the gods!*” That Apollo the Sun-god should send a pestilence seems natural enough, but why is he designated Apollo the Mouse-god? Probably because the mouse was a symbol of pestilence. It is possible that the history in 1 Sam. v and vi, describing the plague inflicted on the Philistines and the images of the golden mice, may have some bearing on this subject.

We turn next to the pages of the Jewish historian Josephus.\*

\* *Antiquities*, Bk. x, lines 4-5.

Josephus wrote about eight centuries after the invasion of Sennacherib, and his account of that invasion is based in great measure on the Old-Testament story. After mentioning the letter sent by Sennacherib to Hezekiah, the Jewish king's prayer, and the reassuring answer received through the Prophet Isaiah, Josephus continues his account thus :—

“ But after a while, the king of Assyria, when he had failed of his treacherous designs against the Egyptians, returned home without success on the following occasion : He spent a long time on the siege of Pelusium ; and when the banks that he had raised over against the walls were of a great height,\* and when he was ready to make an immediate assault upon them, but heard that Tirhakah, king of the Ethiopians, was coming, and bringing great forces to aid the Egyptians, and was resolved to march through the desert and so to fall directly upon the Assyrians, this king Sennacherib was disturbed at the news, and, as I said before, left Pelusium and returned back without success. Now, concerning this Sennacherib, Herodotus also says, in the second book of his histories, how this king came against the Egyptian king, who was the priest of Vulcan ; and that, as he was besieging Pelusium, he broke up the siege on the following occasion : This Egyptian priest prayed to God, and God heard his prayer, and sent a judgment upon the Arabian king. (But in this Herodotus was mistaken when he called the king, not king of the Assyrians, but of the Arabians.) And he adds that a multitude of mice gnawed to pieces in one night both the bows and the rest of the armour of the Assyrians ; and that it was on that account that the king, when he had no bows left, drew off his army from Pelusium. And Herodotus does indeed give us this history ; nay, and Berosus, who wrote of the affairs of Chaldea, makes mention of this king Sennacherib, and that he ruled over the Assyrians, and that he made an expedition against all Asia and Egypt : and says thus : ”

These words, “ and says thus,” not being found in all copies, it is best to suppose that the extract from Berosus has dropped out, and to regard as Josephus' own words the remainder of the

\* These “ banks,” or “ siege-works,” must be distinguished from the banks, mounts, or paved ways, referred to in 2 Kings xix, 32, A.V., up which, as shown in the Lachish bas-relief, the battering-rams were brought to play against the wall.

passage, which agrees closely with the Scripture account and runs thus :—

“ Now, when Sennacherib was returning from the Egyptian war to Jerusalem, he found his army under Rabshakeh his general in danger by a plague, for God had sent a pestilential distemper upon his army, and on the very first night of the siege, a hundred fourscore and five thousand, with their captains and generals, were destroyed. So the king was in a great dread, and in a terrible agony at this calamity ; and being in great fear for his whole army, he fled with the rest of his forces to his own kingdom and to his city Nineveh ; and when he had abode there a little while, he was treacherously assaulted and died by the hands of his elder sons, Adrammelech and Seraser, and was slain in his own temple which was called Araske. Now these sons of his were driven away by the citizens on account of the murder of their father, and went into Armenia, while Assarachoddas (Esarhaddon) took the kingdom of Sennacherib. And this proved to be the conclusion of the Assyrian expedition against the people of Jerusalem.”

In studying the above extract, the first thing that strikes us is, that when dealing with the miraculous part of the story, Josephus appeals to the testimony of heathen writers before appealing to the records of his own people. The reason is, that he is writing for the Gentile world. Therefore, when dealing with a story bordering on the miraculous, he very naturally seeks to corroborate it in part with outside testimony from Egypt and Babylonia through the histories of Herodotus and Berosus (notice the emphasis which lies in those words, “ *Herodotus does indeed say this* ”). Then, without in any way contravening their statements, he goes on to give the story contained in the Hebrew Sacred Records.

But though Josephus does not contravene, it is observable that in dealing with Herodotus' story he makes certain additions, perhaps unconsciously. For instance, he tells us that Sennacherib spent a long time over the siege of Pelusium, and that he was just about to start active operations when the news of Tirhakah's advance obliged him to desist. Here, indeed, he adopts a detail taken from the Scripture narrative (see 2 Kings xix, 9). But what shall we say as to his statement that Sennacherib raised banks over against Pelusium ? We may say this, that Sennacherib's own account is that he raised the banks, not against

Pelusium, but against Jerusalem. Speaking of Hezekiah, his words are, "*I erected siege-works against him.*" But whence did Josephus get this added detail? He could not have got it from the inscriptions of Sennacherib, which in his days had long lain buried in the ground. Did he unconsciously take it from the prophecy against Ariel already quoted? If so, he has transferred to Pelusium what was predicted concerning Jerusalem, a prediction which, as Sennacherib's words show, was duly fulfilled.

With regard to the Chaldean Berosus, who flourished about the time of Alexander the Great, we learn from Josephus that this historian speaks of Sennacherib's expedition as directed in part against Egypt. This is important, for it can be shown from contemporary Babylonian inscriptions that Berosus is a most trustworthy historian. All the more, therefore, must we regret that the extract from this author, which Josephus was about to quote, has fallen out. Still those brief words, "Nay, and Berosus," assure us that, after quoting Herodotus, Josephus was about to give further evidence from the pages of Berosus of some disaster having befallen the arms of Sennacherib; a disaster which the Chaldeans, as age-long enemies of the Assyrians, would be only too glad to record.

After thus bringing forward the Egyptians and Chaldean stories, Josephus turns to the records of his own people. Guided doubtless by 2 Sam. xxiv, he interprets the destruction inflicted by the angel of the LORD as the pestilence, and regards the fatal night, mentioned in 2 Kings xix, 35, as the first night of the siege, *i.e.*—according to the Jewish mode of reckoning—the night before the day on which active operations were to begin. The terror-stricken flight of Sennacherib—likely enough in itself—he borrows, may be, from Isa. xxxi, 9: "His rock shall pass away by reason of terror"; while the very brevity of the Sacred Record leads him to imagine, as many have since done, that Sennacherib died very shortly after his return to Nineveh. It escaped him that in the short notice, "*dwelt at Nineveh,*" the historian makes use of a verb of continuance.

One other point calls for a short notice. Josephus very naturally demurs to the Egyptian informants of Herodotus calling Sennacherib "king of the Arabians." Some light is thrown on this by the earliest inscription of Sennacherib, in which he tells us that in his Babylonian campaign in 703 B.C., two years before his invasion of Judah, he captured the allied armies of Merodach-baladan under his stepson, and of the Queen of Arabia under her brother;

also, that he carried captive the Arabs, Arameans, and Chaldeans, from certain Babylonian cities: so that this mention of Sennacherib as "king of the Arabians" does not require us to refer the story of the Egyptian priests to a supposed second invasion of Judah subsequent to Sennacherib's invasion of Arabia in 690 B.C.

I have now to bring forward some indirect evidence from the Assyrian side to show that Sennacherib was baffled in his attempt to take Jerusalem, and that his arms suffered some mysterious reverse. My first piece of evidence shall be that famous bas-relief, the Storming of Lachish, which so awoke the admiration of its discoverer, Sir A. H. Layard. "The whole power of the Great King," writes Layard, adopting the expression of the Sacred Chronicler when writing on the same subject,\* "the whole power of the Great King seems to have been called forth to take this stronghold. In no other sculpture were so many armed warriors seen drawn up in array before a besieged city." What was the motive which led to the execution of this famous monument? May it not have been this: a wish on the part of Sennacherib to represent the campaign in Judah as a success, or, at any rate, to hide its failure? Now, the cautious monarch knows quite well that in some cases this can better be done by pictures than by words. There is no need for a detailed account of the siege of Lachish in the royal annals, seeing that it is only the few who can read the difficult cuneiform characters. A picture with short explanatory inscriptions will serve the purpose better. We have, then, only to imagine a party of provincial governors and foreign notables, or possibly simple townsmen, being conducted over the palace and standing before that bas-relief rapt in admiration. What a grand battle-piece! A strong city on its lofty *tell* is seen to be assaulted by the Great King with all his power. So severe is the contest, so great the forces engaged, so animated the whole scene, that, as we look at it, the din and uproar of battle seems, as it were, to rise up from the silent stone. Before such an assault even the strongest city must fall; and that such is to be the fate of this fortress is told by an inset in the centre of the picture, showing a train of captives and spoil issuing from the portal of an embattled

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\* 2 Chron. xxxii, 9, "now he was before Lachish, and all his power with him." "Power," Heb. *memshalah* = "display of might" (Francis Brown, Heb. Lex.). Could any word better describe the scene on the Lachish bas-relief?

tower. But, pray, what city is this? and who is its proud conqueror? The guide bids his party turn to the right, where the subject is continued on the end wall of the chamber, and, pointing with his stick, proceeds to read the epigraphs, thus:—

“Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria,  
sat on a chair of state, and  
the spoil of Lachish  
passed before him.”

“Tent of Sennacherib, king of Assyria.”

“Camp of Sennacherib, king of Assyria.”

Thus the impression produced on the crowd is, that the campaign in Judah was a brilliant success; and in this way the capture of Lachish is made to blot out the disaster before Jerusalem.

Indirect evidence of another kind, tending to show that Sennacherib entertained a bitter grudge against Hezekiah, may be obtained from the standard inscription on the Taylor Cylinder. In this inscription reference is made to no fewer than 25 royal personages, the greater number being mentioned by name.\* Of these 25 persons, 23 receive the title of *sharru*, “king.” The title is distributed alike to friend and foe, for out of the 23, 12 are the enemies of Assyria; some of them, like Merodach-baladan and Shuzub the Chaldean—for whom Sennacherib can find no language contemptuous enough†—very bitter enemies. To two persons only the royal title is denied. First, to Hezekiah of Judah, an hereditary prince, sufficiently powerful to head a hostile confederacy, and the ruler of a “wide territory,”‡ possessing no fewer than 46 strongholds, which it taxed all the skill of the Assyrian to capture;§ a territory so populous that over 200,000 captives were led away from it.|| The space occupied in describing the campaign against this powerful prince is well over the average, and he is thrice mentioned, *i.e.* as often as any other royal personage; yet in every case the royal title is denied to him: twice he is “Hezekiah of Judah,” once simply “Hezekiah,” whilst in a fourth instance, where we might expect the name, a personal pronoun is deemed sufficient. This omission of the royal title is rendered more significant by the fact that

\* See NOTE 1, at end of paper.

† Taylor Cylinder, v, 8–18.

‡ Nebi Yunus Inscription, line 15.

§ *Ibid.*, iii, 13–17.

|| *Ibid.*, iii, 17.

Jerusalem is twice called *makhaz sharrutishu*, "his royal city."\* It is as if the title *sharru* had been struck out by Sennacherib from the rough copy submitted to him. This belief is much strengthened when we come to consider the case of the only other person to whom it is denied, viz., "Shuzub of Babylon." This Shuzub, who appears not to have been of royal birth,† was set on the throne of Babylon by the king of Elam in the place of Sennacherib's eldest son, Ashur-nadin-shum, who was carried away to Elam. It is clear, then, that Sennacherib's feelings must have been very strong against this commoner, who had supplanted his own son on the throne of the ancient sacred city. So, then, we are not surprised to learn that after a short reign of eighteen months, Shuzub of Babylon was captured alive, thrown into chains, and carried away to Assyria. "At the central gate of Nineveh," writes Sennacherib, "I tied him up like a pig."‡ The bitter animus, which thus vented itself, had a plain reason at the back of it in the case of Shuzub. What was the reason in the case of Hezekiah? Let us make the dead Sennacherib confess, for, in his inscriptions, "he being dead yet speaketh." In strong contrast to the way in which Hezekiah is spoken of in the Standard Inscription, observe that brief notice on some of the Bull Inscriptions: "I devastated the wide district of Judah. *The strong proud Hezekiah its king* I brought in submission to my feet." How surely does Sennacherib here "let the cat out of the bag." Hezekiah has proved too strong for him: too strong for one whose "warfare *strong* kings feared."§ He shut up the bird, but could not take it out of the cage. But is that a sufficient explanation of his being put on the same plane as Shuzub the supplanter? No! there is something more behind: *Sennacherib has lost half his army before Jerusalem!*

I turn lastly to the one important point in which the Biblical and the Assyrian records are at variance, viz., over the despatch of the tribute. Sennacherib concludes his account of the campaign with a full statement of the tribute sent by Hezekiah, and after enumerating the various articles, including 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, and the king's own daughters, winds up thus: "to Nineveh, the city of my lordship, he caused to be brought after me; and he sent his ambassador to pay tribute

\* Taylor Cylinder, iii, 21, 32.

† No dynasty is affixed to his name on the Second Dynastic Tablet.

‡ Nebi Yunus Inscription, lines 35-36.

§ Taylor Cylinder, i, 16. The adjective used is the same in both cases.

and to do homage.”\* The Bible also speaks of 30 talents of gold—which assures us that both accounts refer to the same tribute ; but only mentions 300 talents of silver. This need not detain us. It may be due, as Brandis affirms, to the use of a lighter talent in the Assyrian’s reckoning. But what constitutes a real difference between the two records is this : Sennacherib affirms that after he had left Judah Hezekiah sent the tribute after him to Nineveh : the Bible declares that the tribute was sent to him at Lachish. How are we to deal with this discrepancy ? On the face of it the Assyrian’s story is a most unlikely one. For some reason or other he has been compelled to withdraw from Judah, leaving Jerusalem untaken. Further, as his records show, he has his hands full with troubles in Babylonia at the other end of his empire. Is it likely, under these circumstances, that Hezekiah, having successfully held out, will send tribute after him to Nineveh ? On the other hand the Scripture story is most comprehensible. Hezekiah, in order to save his city, knocks under, and offers to pay whatever tribute may be demanded. The amount is named and the tribute sent to Lachish. What followed may be best constructed thus :—Sennacherib, on second thoughts, feels that it is not safe for him to go forward to Egypt leaving a strong fortress like Jerusalem untaken in his rear. He therefore coolly seizes his advantage, takes the tribute, and at the same time demands the surrender of Jerusalem. This view is based on Isa. xxxiii, 7, where “ the ambassadors of peace ” are represented as returning to Jerusalem, crying aloud outside the gate, and weeping bitterly. Then, almost immediately after, come the words, “ He hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth not man.” It is further endorsed by Josephus, who says, “ The Assyrian king took it,” viz., the tribute, “ and yet had no regard to what he had promised ; but while he himself went to the war against the Egyptians and Ethiopians, he left his general, and two of his principal commanders, with great forces, to destroy Jerusalem.”† Such, then appears to be the true account of what happened. And yet I imagine that if we were to ask the man in the street at Nineveh, “ Did the Jewish ambassadors come with their tribute after the king’s return ? ” he would answer at once, “ Certainly : I saw them myself kneel before him and kiss his feet.” In order to hide from his subjects the terrible disaster

\* Taylor Cylinder, iii, 39–41.

† *Antiquities*, Bk. x, line 1.



which has befallen his arms, the cautious monarch cunningly arranges that, after his return, Jewish captives, make-believe ambassadors, shall reach the city, bringing with them the costly tribute received at Lachish, including the king's daughters: a telling proof that at last "the strong proud Hezekiah" has been compelled to submit to his sway. Something of the same cunning appears in the very wording of the inscription. The fact is, that the words rendered "he caused to bring after me" may also be rendered "I caused to bring after me," since in the causative conjugation the 1st and 3rd persons singular have the same form. It is only the context which tells us that in the present instance the former is the true reading. But the *true* reading is not the *truthful* reading. The truthful reading is "I caused to bring after me." So then, even in these closing words of the Assyrian's record, I seem to see a further evidence that he has suffered some reverse, which policy, no less than pride, bids him do his utmost to hide from the view of his subjects.

An expert in Assyriology, to whom we are much indebted for proof positive of the kingship of Belshazzar, has lately put forward the view that Sennacherib's campaign was "absolutely successful." This result, however, he obtains only by leaving out of account the testimony of Scripture and Herodotus, on the ground that it is impossible to reconcile those versions of the story with the Assyrian record. His own explanation is, that possibly "Esarhaddon's unsuccessful campaign of 675 was confused in 2 Kings xix, with Sennacherib's successful campaign in 700 (701 (?))."\* He thinks that this may also explain Herodotus' story.† To say the least, this is dealing very freely indeed with ancient authors and compilers. It is as if we could only trust the royal historians of Assyria. The best answer to such a construction of history is to point out as I have already done, the different details in which the story told by Herodotus corresponds not only with Scripture, but with the Assyrian's own record, at the same time endeavouring to explain the differences.

The objection that Tirhakah was not king of Ethiopia till some twelve years after the invasion is met by regarding the title as given by anticipation, or, with Professor Flinders Petrie, by looking upon Tirhakah as co-regent with his cousin Shabatoka.

After thus endeavouring to weigh as carefully as I can the evidence which comes to us from Assyrian, Chaldean, Egyptian,

\* *Cambridge Ancient History*, iii, p. 278. † See NOTE 2, at end of paper.

and Hebrew sources, I submit that we may reasonably affirm the balance to be decidedly in favour of the Scripture story, and may still in all good conscience "tell it to the generation following" and picture to ourselves and to our children's children, how

"The might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord."

#### NOTE 1.

A list of the 23 persons styled "king" on the Cylinder (those marked thus "†" were the enemies of Assyria):—

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|--|---|
| †1. Marduk-apal-iddina (Merodachbaladan) of Kar-Dunyash,<br>i, 19, 20.   |   |
| †2. Ispabara of Ellip, ii, 8, 9.   |   |
| †3. Lulē (Elulaeus) of Zidon, ii, 35.                                    |   |
| 4. Minkhimmu (Menahem) of Samsimuruna,                                   | } "kings of the<br>Amorite-land,<br>all of them,"<br>ii, 47-55. |
| 5. Tubahlu (Ethbaal) of Zidon,   |   |
| 6. Abdilhti of Arvad,  |   |
| 7. Urumilki of Gebal (Byblos),   |   |
| 8. Mitinti of Ashdod,  |   |
| 9. Buduilu of Beth-Ammon,  |   |
| 10. Kammusu-nadab of Moab,   |   |
| 11. Malik-rammu of Edom.   |   |
| †12. Tsidka (Zedekiah) of Ashkelon, ii, 58.                              |   |
| 13. Sharru-lu-dari of Ashkelon, ii, 62.                                  |   |
| 14. Padi of Ekron, ii, 70; iii, 7, 8, 25.                                |   |
| †15. The King of Egypt, ii, 80.  |   |
| †16. The King of Melukhkhi, ii, 81.                                      |   |
| 17. Tsil-Bel of Gaza, iii, 25, 26.                                       |   |
| †18. The King of Elam (Shutruk-Nakhkhunte II), iii, 62.                  |   |
| †19. Maniae of Ukku, iv, 2, 3.   |   |
| †20. The King of Elam (Khallutush-In-Shushinak II), iv, 30, 40.          |   |
| †21. The King of Elam (Kutir-Nakhkhunte II), iv, 80-v, 1.                |   |
| †22. The King of Elam (Humbanimena), v, 21, 70; vi, 14, 15.              |   |
| †23. Shuzub the Chaldean (Mushezib-Marduk) of Babylon,<br>v, 41; vi, 15. |   |

## NOTE 2.

In his *Babylonian Historical Texts*, pp. 7 and 8, the author, referring to the story told Herodotus by the Egyptian priests, writes thus: "One night, Herodotus says, field-mice ate the bows, quivers, and shield-handles of the Assyrians. Now it has been frequently pointed out that the mouse typifies pestilence, but no pestilence rots string, wood, and leather." My answer is that the whole description is symbolical, the meaning being that the weapons of the Assyrians were rendered useless, inasmuch as the men who wielded them lay prostrate in death. To say that the mice killed the men would be to mix figure and fact: to say that they rendered the weapons useless, keeps up the figure and expresses symbolically the fact. In further support of his theory—commenting on 2 Kings xix, 7, "Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return unto his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land"—the author goes so far as to suggest that the first part of the verse may refer to the storm which drove back Esarhaddon, while the latter part he admits can only refer to Sennacherib. He then adds, "the words *ruakh* and *shemu'ah*, 'a wind' and 'a noise,' may be so obviously interpreted of a storm." This argument is completely refuted by Ezek. xi, 19, "I will put a new spirit within you," where the verb and noun are the same as in 2 Kings xix, 7, and the same preposition is used only in a compound form—"within" for "in." Be it also noticed that the word *shemu'ah* is never used in the Old Testament in the sense of "noise." It signifies "report," "rumour," "tidings," something first spoken and then heard.

Whilst condemning the above piece of criticism, I gladly endorse the writer's remark almost immediately after: "It is extremely improbable on historical grounds that Sennacherib invaded Egypt or marched to invest Pelusium. Had a disaster befallen him there, which no attempt was made to retrieve, Palestine would almost certainly have risen against the Assyrians, but we know that no such rising took place."

## NOTE 3.

*Sennacherib's Account of His Expedition to Palestine.\**

"In my third campaign I went to the Hittite-land. Lulē, king of Zidon, the fear of the splendour of my lordship overwhelmed him, and he fled afar into the sea (Bull inscription 'to Yatnan,'† *i.e.* Cyprus), and I subdued his land. Great Zidon,‡ Little Zidon, Bit-zitte, Zarephath (*Tsariptu*), Makhalliba, Hosah (*Ushu*),§ Achzib,§ Accho,|| his strong cities, fortresses, spots for pasturage and watering, his garrison towns, the terror of the weapons of Ashur my lord overwhelmed them and they submitted to my feet. Ethbaal (*Tuba'lu*) I set on the throne of sovereignty over them, and I laid upon him the tribute of my overlordship yearly without fail. As regards Menahem (*Min-khimmu*) of Samsimuruna, Ethbaal of Zidon, Abdihti of Arvad, Urumilki of Gebal, Mitinti of Ashdod, Budu-ilu of Beth-Ammon, Chemosh-nadab (*Kammusu-nadbi*) of Moab, Malik-rammu of Edom—all of them kings of the Amorite-land, extensive regions—they brought their costly presents along with stores to my presence and kissed my feet.

"But Zedekiah (*Tsidqā*), king of Ashkelon, who did not submit to my yoke, the gods of his father's house, himself, his wife, his sons, his daughters, the seed of his father's house, I tore away, and I dragged him off to Assyria. Sharru-ludari, son of Rukibtu, their former king, I set over the people of Ashkelon, and I imposed on him the payment of tribute, the price of my overlordship, and he drew my yoke. In the course of my campaign Beth-Dagon, Joppa (*Yappū*), Beneberak,¶ Azuru, the cities of Zedekiah, which did not quickly submit to my feet, I besieged, captured, and carried off their spoil.

"The rulers, nobles, and people of Ekron (*Amqarruna*), who had thrown into iron fetters and handed over Padī, their king, a sworn vassal of Assyria, to Hezekiah (*Khazaqiau*) of the land of Judah (*Yaudāa*)—he shut him up in durance as an enemy—their heart feared. They called upon the kings of Egypt (*Mutsuru*), the bowmen, chariots, and horses of the king of Ethiopia (*Melukkkha*), a force without number, and they came to their aid. In the vicinity of Eltekeh\*\* (*Altaqū*) they set the

\* Taylor Cylinder, ii, 34; iii, 41.

† In some cases I have given the Assyrian form of the name in italics.

‡ Joshua xi, 8.

§ Joshua xix, 29.

|| Judges i, 31.

¶ Joshua xix, 45.

\*\* Joshua xix, 44.

battle in array against me; they appealed to their weapons. In dependence on Ashur, my lord, I fought with them, and accomplished their overthrow. The commander of the chariots, and the sons of the king of Egypt, together with the commander of the chariots of the king of Ethiopia, my hands captured alive in the midst of the battle. Eltekeh and Timnath\* I besieged, captured, and carried off their spoil. Against Ekron I advanced. The rulers and nobles who had made rebellion, I slew, and impaled their bodies on stakes round the town. The townsfolk, who were guilty of disaffection and rebellion, I took for a spoil. The rest of them, who had committed no sin and misdeed, who were faultless, I ordered to be released. Padi, their king, I brought forth from Jerusalem (*Ursalimmu*), and set him on the throne of sovereignty over them. The gift due to my overlordship I laid upon him.

“But Hezekiah of Judah, who did not submit to my yoke, forty-six of his strong-walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighbourhood, which were without number, by levelling with battering-rams and advancing the siege-engines, by attacking and storming on foot, by mines, tunnels and breaches, I besieged and captured. I brought away from them and counted as spoil 200,150 people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep without number. Himself, like a bird in a cage, I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city. I erected siege-works against him: the one coming out of the gate of his city I turned back to his misery. His cities, which I had spoiled, I separated from his territory and gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, to Padi, king of Ekron, and to Tsil-Bel, king of Gaza; and I diminished his territory. To the former tribute, paid yearly, I added a tribute as the price of my overlordship, and I laid it upon them. As for Hezekiah himself, the fear of the splendour of my lordship overwhelmed him. The Arabs and his trusty warriors, whom he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem, his royal city, fell away (lit. ‘took leave’). Along with thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver he caused to be brought after me to Nineveh, my royal city, precious stones, antimony, jewels (?), great carbuncles (?), couches of ivory, state chairs of ivory, elephant’s hide, elephant’s teeth, ebony (?), box-wood (?), valuable treasures of all kinds, as well as his daughters, his harem, his male and female musicians, and he despatched his envoy to pay tribute and do homage.”

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\* Judges xiv, 1.

## DISCUSSION.

In opening the discussion, Dr. THIRTLE, who occupied the Chair, said : It gives me pleasure to move a vote of thanks to the lecturer, and thus to acknowledge the utility and cogency of the essay to which we have listened. Mr. Boutflower's reputation as a writer on Old Testament problems of profound importance—in particular, on the book of Daniel—led us to entertain high expectations ; and we have not been disappointed. If questions still remain open, in regard to the movements of the Assyrian invader, and the fate of his mighty army, then they are subjects for further investigation, even although, owing to the difficulties that may be encountered, we may at the long last realize a measure of disappointment. One thing stands out with clearness—the enemy of God and the Chosen People, the tyrant who for that age represented “ the might of the Gentile,” met his fate : “ unsmote by the sword . . . (he) melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.” The end of the great army came by a miracle, performed for the salvation of Israel and the vindication of the honour of Jehovah. “ Stricken with terror,” as foretold by the Prophet, the generals and captains of Sennacherib were put to confusion, and the men of war whom they led, many thousands in number, were “ cast into a dead sleep.” Only thus, that is, in such a result, could Israel be saved, and Jehovah's name be sanctified among the nations.

We have seen that, as transmitted from one generation to another, the story, so simple in the Old Testament record, came by expansion to embody curious details. According to Israelitish history, as authentically handed down in Holy Scripture, the “ angel of the Lord smote ” the camp of Sennacherib. As explained by subsequent writers, Josephus among them, this visitation was effected by a pestilence, or plague, and in connection with the tragedy a multitude of field-mice are represented as having played a destructive part. We recall that, at an earlier time, when the Ark of the Covenant was rescued from the Philistines, there were placed in the casket, as memorials of a plague, votive images of golden mice and of the tumours (or boils) which had spread death in the land of Philistia. The field-mice have been regarded as symbols of the disease, and this assuredly comes from the conviction that they had some association with the pestilence in its destructive work.

The question arises, can we correlate the various accounts of the destruction of the great army? In some particulars this may be possible. That the angelic visitation should be described as a *pestilence* yields no difficulty. (See 1 Sam. xxiv, 16 and 17; cp. *vv.* 13, 15, 21 and 25.) Again, though not named in Scripture as having a place in the occurrence before us, field-mice were recognized as having a well-defined relation to pestilence. The images placed in the Ark when rescued from Philistia furnish an illustration of this. (1 Sam. vi, 4 and 5; cp. v, 10-12.) To regard the field-mice as a traditional explanation of the pestilential occurrence—carrying infection and spreading disease—is more easy than to conclude that they are introduced into the story by a merely wanton play of the imagination. The Prophet spoke of “the angel”; the army saw the field-mice. Thus the animals were given a place in the story; in the experience of men, field-mice and pestilence go together, as, in later days, rats and bubonic plague have been associated. Denounced by the Prophet of the Lord, the judgment came upon the Assyrian army in a way that could easily be understood; but the incident, as witnessed among men, and introduced into human records, left Providence out of account. In the words of Scripture, “the angel of the Lord smote”; in the common report of men, there came a plague, and this was brought by field-mice as carriers of infection.

Similar visitations have been recorded at other times and in other lands, observers in China declaring that, simultaneously with pestilence among men, there has been great mortality among rats. In the later editions of Sir George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, particulars are given of the destructive nature of epidemics in the Maritime Plain of South-West Palestine, the self-same region traversed by Sennacherib on his march toward Jerusalem, a region, moreover, which has bred disease for generations.

How miracle came in with the destruction of the Assyrian army may very easily be seen. In the judicial providence of God, a pestilence was timed for the hour of Israel's danger; and the consequence was, as we have heard this afternoon:—(1) Sennacherib was foiled in his attempt to take Jerusalem, and (2) he was so foiled by a disaster of a miraculous nature which took place outside the walls of Jerusalem. Here we have the facts, few and simple; but

we need not overlook a tradition, apparently vital and certainly reasonable, that, in the dead of night, the sleeping army was infected by field-mice (or rats), and so its thousands fell victims to pestilence—"were cast into a dead sleep." Other armies have encountered destruction in a similar way. It is important to note that, as the record plainly shows, the host of Sennacherib met disaster in answer to the prayer of God's people, for the deliverance of their city and land. May we not, in these circumstances, emphasize the words of our lecturer in regard to the Prophecies and Psalms to which he has referred: "If those prophecies of Isaiah were never fulfilled, how came they to be treasured in the Sacred Writings? If Jerusalem never experienced some thrilling, astonishing deliverance, how came those glorious Psalms to be written?"

Mr. R. DUNCAN said: It seems a strange providence that the reign of the good king Hezekiah should be marked by so severe a visitation as the overrunning of Judah by the Assyrian armies; the reduction of its fenced cities, Jerusalem excepted, and the carrying into captivity of multitudes of the people. Perhaps the explanation is that Hezekiah, having, through Divine favour, enjoyed long years of prosperity, grew exalted in spirit, and, without seeking counsel of the Lord, rebelled against the Assyrian suzerainty inherited from the evil days of his father Ahaz. Going forward thus in his own strength, Hezekiah had to learn by dire experience that in the Lord alone could Judah find deliverance.

As regards the destruction of the Assyrian host, the inference that this was caused by pestilence seems to me unsupported. The idea has been borrowed from Josephus, not from the Scriptures. What they indicate is that the host perished in its sleep. From neither cholera nor bubonic plague—Eastern forms of pestilence with which we are acquainted—would so quiet a type of death ensue. But slumbering men, breathing such a gas as, say, carbon monoxide, would sink peacefully into death. I suggest that this was what happened. Surely the Almighty knew as much then about gases and their lethal effects as our scientists did in the late War. And would it not be just as easy for Him to pervade the surrounding air with carbon monoxide as with microbes, as easy as to gather among the sleepers myriads of field-mice?



My suggestion may seem far-fetched, but how striking the poet's intuition:—

“ For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast  
 And *breathed* on the face of the foe as he passed ;  
 And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,  
 And their hearts but once heaved and for ever grew still.”

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said : I only wish to make one remark, and that is in regard to the tribute paid by Hezekiah, referred to on p. 208. It is one of those points which for some time the critics held up as a sure proof of a mistake in the Bible. For, when the Assyrian records of this incident were discovered, it was found that they mentioned “ 800 ” talents of silver and “ 30 ” talents of gold, while the Scriptures spoke of only “ 300 ” talents of silver and “ 30 ” talents of gold.

When it was found that the two accounts differed it was at once concluded that the Bible must be wrong—of course ! But a little patience only was needed. For it is now well known, that while the standard for calculating the talent of *gold* was the *same in Judæa as in Assyria*—hence both records speak of 30 *talents of gold*—the standard for calculating the talent of silver was *quite different in the two countries*. Indeed, it took *exactly 800 Assyrian talents of silver to equal 300 Hebrew talents*. So here, once more, the minute accuracy of the sacred record was confirmed.

The Rev. A. H. FINN said : I would comment on two small points :—(1) On p. 198 the paper seems to treat Pss. lxxvi and xlvi as songs of triumph composed *after* the destruction of Sennacherib's army. The Hebrew title of Ps. lxxvi, “ To Asaph,” would indicate a much earlier date.\* Personally, it seems to me that the wording of both Psalms is too general to have been framed after the event. Surely one composing an ode of triumph would have given more definite details. At any rate, the sentence on p. 199, “ the poet invites us to walk round the Holy City, and see how she has come unscathed out of this terrible ordeal,” reads more into the Psalm than is actually implied. The language used would be applicable

\* The LXX addition, *Pros ton Assyrian*, need not mean more than that the translators deemed the Psalm applicable to the rout of Sennacherib's army.

enough in David's time when Jerusalem became "a city that is at unity in itself" by the uniting of the royal city on Zion with the sacred site on Moriah. (2) On p. 201, the mouse is called "a symbol of pestilence." Of late years we have learnt to regard the rat as a conveyor of bubonic plague. Is it possible that the plague of the Philistines and the pestilence in Sennacherib's army—perhaps even the three days' pestilence in David's time—were outbreaks of the bubonic plague so sadly familiar to us of late? The word rendered "emerods" (1 Sam. v, 9) means "swellings" (? bubo).

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

Mr. W. R. ROWLATT JONES wrote: The learned author of that fascinating work *In and About the Book of Daniel* gives the date of this event as 701 B.C. But the difficulties to which he alludes, as "gathering around those opening words, 'Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah,'" will vanish if we recognize that the correct date of Sennacherib's invasion of Palestine and Philistia is 711 B.C., as given by Professor Schrader and George Smith. Then these "irreconcilable discrepancies" of the critics can be met and Biblical chronology vindicated.

Mr. Martin Anstey, in his *Romance of Bible Chronology*, accepts this date as correct, and gives the year 705 B.C. as the time of king Sargon II's death and the reign of Sennacherib as sole monarch in Assyria. There had been a joint-occupation of the throne during the previous six years. In the *Inscriptions*, both king Sargon II and his son claim to have conquered Babylon in the year 710 B.C., and both claim, in the cuneiform, to have conquered Ashdod in the previous year, 711 B.C., that campaign being the one ending in the *débâcle* at Jerusalem. In Isa. xx we read: "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod." "Tartan" and "Rabshakeh" are military titles, and I think we shall be historically accurate if we claim that the Tartan in this expedition was the younger co-regent, Sennacherib himself. Babylonian rule extended over so many lands that all three of its greatest conquerors, Nabopolassar, Nabonidus, and Sargon II, appointed their sons to reign conjointly with them. In this very year 711 B.C., Sennacherib, when reporting to king Sargon,

his father, styles himself "the Great Royal Son," which title was given to Asshur-banipal when co-regent with his father Esarhaddon.

This year 711 B.C. was a very notable year in Biblical annals. It witnessed the invasion of Philistia and Palestine by Sargon and Sennacherib, their victory on the borders of Egypt at Eltekeh and the repulse before Jerusalem; concluding with the embassy of king Merodach-Baladan to king Hezekiah. It also was the date of king Hezekiah's recovery from sickness (? leprosy), the end of his exile "without the camp" from his palace, and his composition of that joyful Psalm, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the House of the Lord," and also of the end of his long bachelorhood, which threatened the extinction in direct descent of the house of David.

#### AUTHOR'S REPLY.

Mr. BOUTFLOWER in reply, said: I am much indebted to the Chairman for his enlightening remarks as to the spread of bubonic plague. It is now clear to me that there was a plague of mice in Philistia at the same time as the pestilence in that country. Indeed, the Bible account says as much; compare the language of 1 Sam. vi, 5, "your mice that mar the land"; whilst at the close of the same verse the hand of the God of Israel is said to rest on the land as well as on its inhabitants. Is it possible that the hungry mice or rats in the starved city of Jerusalem sallied forth to taste the abundant supplies in the Assyrian camp outside, and so spread a plague amongst the enemy? With regard to pestilence, I omitted to mention that in the Assyrian Eponym List, with historical addenda, under the year 765 B.C., we meet with this entry: "To the land of Hadrach: pestilence"; and again in 759: "Disturbances in Gozan: pestilence."

I regret that I cannot fall in with the chronological scheme adopted by my kind critic, Mr. Rowlatt Jones, that Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah is to be identified with Sargon's expedition to Ashdod in 711 B.C. Several inscriptions of Sargon tell us of that expedition, but though Judah is described as disaffected, yet no mention is made in them of any invasion of

Judah. For the same reason I must beg to differ from Mr. Anstey, and to observe further that it is impossible to identify Sargon's capture of Babylon in 710 B.C. with Sennacherib's capture of that city in 689 B.C. Sargon was welcomed in Babylon as a deliverer; Sennacherib, with ruthless vengeance, sought to wipe out the very site of Babylon with the waters of the Euphrates, whilst his soldiers dashed the images of her gods to the ground. Both of these altogether unexpected acts were foretold by Isaiah: *cf.* chaps. xiv, 23; xxi, 9.

713TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,  
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, MAY 7TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

WILLIAM C. EDWARDS, ESQ. (TREASURER OF THE INSTITUTE),  
IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed.

The CHAIRMAN welcomed Monsieur Blocher—though regretting the illness which had prevented Dr. Saillens, under doctor's orders, to come over to this country—and thanked him for thus stepping into the breach, in the place of his father-in-law.

After the reading, in excellent English by Monsieur BLOCHER, of Dr. Saillens' paper on "Protestantism and Rationalism in France," the CHAIRMAN proposed a vote of thanks both to the author and reader of the paper.

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*PROTESTANTISM AND RATIONALISM IN FRANCE.*

By PASTOR R. SAILLENS, D.D.

ONE of the most constant characteristics of the French mind is its love for logic, clarity of speech, and reason. An American writer has remarked that "the more one enters into the French mentality, the more one is compelled to see that the French have no quality more specifically theirs than their passionate devotion to philosophy, this word being understood in its larger sense."\* This judgment is in agreement with general opinion. If the French are not always reasonable, they are at least great reasoners.

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\* A free quotation from the French translation of *France To-day*, by Barrett Wendell.

This natural propensity accounts, no doubt, at least in part for the fact that Roman Catholicism has met, in this country, with a more persistent and successful opposition than from any other Latin race. As far back as the twelfth century, the *Albigenses*, or *Cathari*, held nearly the whole of southern France, and even when that "heresy" had been drowned in blood, it left ferments of discontent which made it possible for the Reformation of the sixteenth century to have a rapid success in that part of the country. One cannot pass over the name of *Peter Valdo*, the rich and godly merchant of Lyons, who raised up his protest against the Romish superstitions and priestcraft, and finally joined the Waldensians, in the Alpine Mountains. Valdo was not a Rationalist, and yet his protest was as much in the name of Reason as in the name of Faith. Let us also mention *Pierre Abélard*, a learned monk of the twelfth century, who was, for his time, a bold Rationalist. "He accepted dogma as being intangible, but he considered it, not as Truth in the absolute, but as a problem which can be demonstrated by reason. His theory of Redemption was very near that of modern Rationalism."\* *Abélard* was followed by *Arnaud de Brescia*, *Pierre de Bruys*, and *Henri de Lausanne*. Even in the Middle Ages, and down to our own times, France, "the eldest daughter of the Church," has been a rather troublesome daughter.

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#### *The Sixteenth Century : The Humanists.*

The great movement, which was called *The Renaissance*, found in this country a most propitious field. From its very beginning two currents were predominant: the *Humanists*, who were entirely taken up with the rediscovery of Greek and Latin antiquity, and whose aim was to restore the rights of Reason and Learning against mediæval obscurantism, but who shunned, rather than welcomed, a great religious revolution; on the other side were the *Reformers*.

The greatest of the Humanists, probably, was *Erasmus of Rotterdam* (1467-1536). He has been called "the Prince of the Humanists" and "the Latin Voltaire." After having warmly applauded the first manifestations of the Reformation, and specially the first writings of Luther, he drew back, perhaps being

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\* Ch. Schmidt, *Dict. Larousse*.

moved by a jealous feeling against the young and fiery monk of Wittenberg, and because he was at heart a Rationalist, neither Protestant nor Catholic. His influence was very great on the literary world, in France as elsewhere. He led in that middle course in matters of faith, which so many are ever ready to follow, and which is more dishonouring to God than downright infidelity.

We can only mention the names of *François Rabelais* and *Étienne Dolet*, both Rationalists; the latter was burned alive, in Paris, for his bold opposition to Rome (1546). But we must stop a moment at the remarkable figure of *Michel de Montaigne* (1533-92), a country gentleman, not so learned as Erasmus but more witty and genial. In his *Essays*, he does not dare openly to deny our need of a revelation from God, but his whole system is summed up in these words of his, so often quoted: "Que sais-je?" (What do I know?). The impotence of the human mind to penetrate the mysteries of Nature and of the soul led him to a quiet Epicurism, a mild and polite contempt for all strong religious convictions. That same sense of intellectual impotence led, one century afterwards, our great Christian philosopher, *Blaise Pascal*, to yield himself fully to Jesus Christ, in simple, childlike faith.

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#### *The Sixteenth Century: The Reformers.*

Side by side with the Humanists, and often closely allied with them, we find the Reformers. They, also, for the most part, were men of letters, and some were second to none in that respect. But to them it was given to see—not at once, perhaps—that learning is not an end in itself; that the great object of the present life is to appropriate the Life which is eternal. We can only mention one or two of these great names.

*Lefèvre d'Étaples* (1455-1536) was at first simply a student of antiquity. "For a long time," says he, "I was concerned with mere human learning, and only touched with my lips the brim of Divine knowledge. But even then such a striking light shone from afar to me that human learning seemed darkness itself in comparison. . . ."\* In 1509, therefore, eight years before Luther came out, Lefèvre established, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, the great Reformation doctrine: "Justification by Faith alone."

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\* H. Lutteroth, in *Enc. des Sciences religieuses*.

*Guillaume Farel*, the great Reformation evangelist, was taught by Lefèvre that wonderful doctrine, which made him a happy man and a great winner of souls.\*

The man from whom the French Reformation took its definite and permanent character was *Jean Calvin* (born in Noyon, 1509 ; died in Geneva, 1564). He was a true representative of the French mentality ; a vigorous, clear-sighted logician, he was at the same time an intensely religious soul ; in him Faith and Reason harmonized, Reason leading to Faith, and submitting to her. And this is certainly the main cause of the deep, extensive, and lasting influence which Calvinism has exerted, and still exerts, upon most of the Protestant nations : England, Scotland, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary, the United States of America, and other countries. Calvin's theology has even influenced some of the best elements in the Roman Catholic Church. Rome has never been in France quite what she was, or is in other lands, ever since *Calvin's Institutes* came to the light. Calvin's doctrine came to him, through St. Augustine and St. Paul, from the Divine Book ; but Jansenius, the abbé de Saint-Cyran, Pascal, and all those great spirits of the seventeenth century, would not have rediscovered these truths if Calvin had not lived and worked before them.

“ Is there anything nobler than Reason, by which man surpasses all animals ? ” asks Calvin. And this would mark him as a Rationalist. But he adds at once : “ St. Paul does not condemn the natural intellect, or prudence, acquired by usage and experience . . . but he affirms that all this has no virtue to help us to acquire spiritual wisdom.” And again : “ The liberal arts and all the sciences are *the gifts of God*, but they have their limitations, for they cannot penetrate into the heavenly realm of God. *Therefore, they must be chambermaids, and not mistresses.*” (See Appendix, Note 1.)

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\* “ Thus it is manifest that the *French* Reformation was French to the core in its very origin. Lefèvre, and the few men who, at the dawn of the sixteenth century, had penetrated into the deep meaning of the Gospel, received the sacred spark direct from the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures recovered. “ There has been no historic movement more national than the French Reformation . . . It came out from the inmost part of our national soul . . . I still go further : I believe that all, or nearly all, of the moral civilization of the seventeenth century had its roots in the Reformation of the sixteenth.” Thus writes a distinguished writer of the present day, himself not a Protestant, M. L. Romier.



“ Chambermaid, but not mistress ! ” This, then, is the proper rôle of Reason, according to Calvin. The chambermaid opens the door, lets in the visitor, and then leaves him alone with the master of the house. This is the true Protestant—yea, we are bold to say, the true Evangelical—view. A Christian after Calvin’s fashion seeks his Master with his eyes opened ; but when he has found Him, he follows Him with his eyes shut, at His bidding, through those regions of the ineffable and the mysterious where poor Reason would lose herself. The great, the all-important thing, of course, is to be quite sure that you have found your Master. And there it is that Reason, with our other faculties, helps us to discriminate between the rightful King and the pretenders.

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*Rationalism at the Beginning of the French Reformation.*

French Protestantism, thus established on a strictly doctrinal basis, and especially on the absolute authority of the Scriptures—an authority confirmed in the experience of the believer by the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit—made of its followers heroic men and women. Their faith gave them a supernatural strength, a miraculous capacity for suffering. Would to God they had better understood one of the most important principles of the Gospel : the liberty of choice left by God to every human being in matters of religion ! Luther and Calvin would have been greater had they never met the Rationalists of their day otherwise than by argument.

However, we cannot pass over, without a short notice, the greatest Rationalist that Calvin encountered : *Michel Servetus*, the Spanish physician and philosopher, who was burned at the stake in Geneva (1553), chiefly because he refused to accept the dogma of Christ’s Divinity. We deplore Calvin’s grievous mistake : his error was that of his time, a remnant of his Romish education. Rome, even to-day, professes that a *Christian State* is bound to punish an heretic, even to death, if he persistently refuses to recant. But while deploring the intolerance of Calvin, we must acknowledge that Servetus’ rationalistic ideas—which would to-day appear very mild—constituted a real danger for the early Reformed Churches.

The evil fire, however, was not quenched by the death of Servetus. Another rationalistic movement of much greater

importance was started by the two *Socins*, the uncle and the nephew.\*

The Socinians denied the dogma of the Trinity, the Consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, the personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit, original Sin, and Redemption by the death of Christ on the Cross; it was radical Rationalism. The only point on which these Antitrinitarians nearly agreed with the Orthodox was on Bible inspiration. They believed in a supernatural Revelation, which they tried to interpret in accordance with their own views: Higher Criticism was not yet born.

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### *The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.*

Notwithstanding the subtle influence of Socinianism, which was more successful in Poland than in western Europe, French Protestantism remained orthodox during the seventeenth century; the only doctrinal difficulties which occurred during that period arose on the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination . . . Generally speaking, the seventeenth century in France was an era of great devotion; never before or since has religion occupied such a large place in French thought and literature. It was the era of *Bossuet*, *Massillon*, *Bourdaloue*, *François de Sales*, *Vincent de Paul*, the noblest leaders and preachers of the Gallican Church; of the Jansenist movement, with *Saint-Cyran*, the *Arnaud* and *Lemaitre families*, and, towering over them all, *Pascal*; of Quietism, with *Madame Guyon* and *Fénelon*. Nor can we pass over without a brief mention the name of the great philosopher of the seventeenth century, *René Descartes* (1596-1650). Descartes was a Christian believer, but he aimed at establishing the truths of Christianity, and every kind of truth, by pure logical reasoning, starting from this intuitive axiom: "I think, therefore I am," all other facts being methodically deduced from that self-evident aphorism. His celebrated *Discours de la Méthode* inaugurated a new era in French philosophy, and by the emphasis it laid upon Reason prepared the way for the more radical Rationalism of the following century.

As to Protestantism, sad to say, it was persecuted by all those parties together, including the Jansenists, although these were

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\* *Lelius Sozzini*, or *Socin*, born at Sienna in 1525, died at Zurich in 1562. *Fauste Socin*, born at Sienna, 1539, died in Poland, 1604.

far more akin to Calvinism than to Jesuitism! The Protestants were absorbed, all through that century, by the defence of the few liberties which the Edict of Nantes, granted by Henri IV in 1598, had left them, and which were torn away from them shred after shred, until the Edict was finally revoked (October 16th, 1685) and the profession of Protestantism made illegal. Their great preachers—*Abbadie, Jurieu, Claude*, and many others—had to leave the country. The few ministers and lay-preachers who managed to remain, hiding themselves in woods and caves, could only attend to the needs of a few members of their scattered flocks; Bibles were scarce, and religious books almost inexistent. Nor did the controversies between Calvinists and Arminians help much the spiritual life of the poor Protestant remnant. (See Appendix, *Note 2*.)

It is difficult to form a proper estimate of the state of French Protestantism during the hundred years that elapsed between the Revocation (1685) and the Revolution (1789). Nearly all the Protestant aristocracy seems to have recanted, when, the wars of religion being ended, there was no more hope of ever establishing the Protestant Religion on a legal basis. The leaven of Socinianism was present, though hidden. And yet some great Christian men worked and suffered during that time, thus saving French Protestantism from utter annihilation. *Claude Brousson*, who died a martyr at Montpellier in 1698, is one of the most attracting figures of our history. *Antoine Court* (1696–1760) restored the organization of the Protestant Church, and founded at Lausanne a Seminary which sent out to France a great number of ministers. *Paul Rabaut* (1718–94), by his long and faithful ministry, maintained the fire burning in the south of France.

Higher Criticism, strange to say, was born in France, chiefly through a Roman Catholic priest, *Richard Simon*, who published a *Critical History of the Old Testament* in 1678. He was followed by *Pierre Bayle* (1647–1706), the son of a Protestant minister; he published his famous *Historical and Critical Dictionary* much in the same spirit as that of Erasmus. “My gift,” said he of himself, “is to gather doubts.” In 1753, *Jean Astruc*, also the son of a Protestant minister, published his *Conjectures on the Original Documents of which it seems that Moses made use to compose the Book of Genesis*. In that work there appears for the first time the famous hypothesis of the composite character of Genesis based on the various names of God: “Elohim” and

“Jehovah”; an hypothesis which has broadened since then: Higher Criticism is discovering every day new authors of the Pentateuch!

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We have now come to the period which has seen the climax of Rationalism in this country, the spell of which is still upon us. The title of Thomas Paine's famous book, *The Age of Reason*, indicates the spirit which then began to prevail, and which found its expression in the writings of the two greatest writers of that century: Voltaire and Rousseau.

*Pierre Arouet de Voltaire* (1694–1778) was at first a student in a Jesuits' school. Still in his youth, he spent three years in England, where he became the friend of some of the leading English writers of that time: *Bolingbroke*, *Shaftesbury*, and *Chesterfield*. Their infidelity strengthened his own, and he returned to France a mere deist, as he had been before.

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1712–78), was born in Geneva from a Protestant father, who was a descendant of Huguenot refugees. Jean-Jacques kept, through all his life, the temper of a Protestant philosopher. While Voltaire wrote ironically, and often blasphemously, of the Romish religion and even of the Christian mysteries, Rousseau's Rationalism was ever respectful and moderate. His well-known homage to the Gospel and to Christ (in the *Confession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard*) would class him among the apologists of the Christian faith, if that homage had not been followed with reservations and denegations which utterly contradict it. Rousseau was, in fact, the most eloquent spokesman of Protestant Rationalism as it exists to-day. His initial error—which was also that of Erasmus, Montaigne, Voltaire, and the Encyclopedists, the error of the Rationalists of all times—was to believe in the natural goodness of human nature, which renders unnecessary and meaningless the intervention of Divine Grace.

Rousseau was the spiritual father of the French Revolution. His *Contrat Social* was the inspiration of the men who started, and led in, that tremendous upheaval. He died a few years before the Revolution began, but his preparatory work was greatly helped by another Protestant Rationalist, *Benjamin Franklin*, who was in Paris in the latter years of the Monarchy as the ambassador of the new-born United States of America.

Thus, it is a remarkable fact that modern France has had two godfathers both Protestant, and both Rationalists. It is worthy of notice that Rousseau was born and bred in Protestant Geneva, at a time when the Geneva Church was cold and formalist; and that Voltaire, also, spent twenty-five years of his life in the village of Ferney which, although on French soil, is but a suburb of Geneva, which city Voltaire swamped with his writings. *Necker*, the Minister of Finance of Louis XVI at the beginning of the Revolution, and his daughter, *Madame de Staël*, who had a great influence as a writer, were also nominal Protestants and came from Geneva. Several prominent members of the National Assembly, of the *Constituante*, and of the *Convention*, were Protestants, some of them pastors: *Rabaut St. Étienne*, *Rabaut Pommier*, *Jean Bon Saint-André*, and others, all more or less tainted with Rationalism.

Even while it was still being persecuted—in the second half of the eighteenth century—French Protestantism imbibed much of the spirit of Rousseau. A few ministers, however, kept loyal to the Evangelical faith: such were *Paul Rabaut* and *Gachon*, this latter having been under the influence of some Moravian Brethren who had visited the “Churches under the Cross,” and preached to them salvation through the blood of Christ.

We cannot help believing that, if in the course of that wonderful period—1789–92—when all opinions were free, and the right of speech was absolute—a new Farel, a French Whitefield or Wesley, had arisen, the Gospel in hand, and had raised his voice among the Parisian crowds, the fate of France would have been different. The all but complete absence of Gospel testimony at that unique moment in our history must be looked upon as one of the greatest misfortunes that has ever befallen our country. Long persecution, and the scarcity of truly consecrated and gifted preachers, had made French Protestantism very weak: this is the only extenuating circumstance that can be invoked as an excuse. In the inscrutable Providence of God, the hour had not yet come. But some of us live in the hope that the hour has not passed, and that there shall yet be in this country a powerful manifestation of the transforming power of the Gospel, a great religious Revival on Gospel lines.

A land in which a persecuting Church has been dominant for many centuries and has monopolized the training of the people, could not, when at last shaking its old fetters, be otherwise than intoxicated with her newly found freedom, and go into extremes.

The French Revolutionaries persecuted their former persecutors ; they even persecuted those who had been so long fighting for liberty : the Huguenots. Every form of religion was, for a short time, forbidden. Priests and pastors were compelled, to save their lives, to renounce their "superstitions" on the altar of the goddess Reason. That mad religion lasted only a few months, and was replaced by the worship of *l'Être Suprême* (the Supreme Being), pure Deism being made by *Robespierre* the national creed. After the fall of *Robespierre*, a new attempt was made to establish a cult without anything of the supernatural. It went by the name of *Theophilanthropy*, a magnificent, if somewhat clumsy, appellation. In that religion Christ was put on the same level with the great philosophers of antiquity. The cathedrals and churches were put at the disposal of this new cult, which was celebrated every *décadi* (the first day of the decade, which had taken the place of the week on the new Republican calendar), with orations and fine music, all at the expense of the State. Notwithstanding all this, the new religion did not succeed ; the people were utterly indifferent to those grand speeches and concerts in the honour of "the Divinity." It is said that one of the founders of the Theophilanthropy—*Larévèillère-Lepaux*, who was one of the five directors at the head of the Republic—complained to Talleyrand of this unexplainable failure. "Let me give you my advice," said Talleyrand, who had been a bishop in the Romish Church. "Die and be buried, and rise again on the third day ; I warrant you that your religion will have a tremendous success !"

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*The Nineteenth Century and the Present Times.*

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, French Protestantism was in a deplorable state. Most of the ministers who had studied in Geneva or Lausanne were imbued with Rationalistic ideas. The lay-people could not but share, somewhat, in the general feeling of gratitude for the memories of *Voltaire*, *Rousseau*, and the other liberal philosophers of the eighteenth century, to whom they were indebted for their new-found liberty. When *Bonaparte* established the Protestant Churches on the same basis as the Catholic, not only granting full liberty of worship, but appointing a salary for every regular minister either Reformed or Lutheran, he was hailed by many as the Restorer of Religion

and the Benefactor of the Churches. Our fathers did not perceive that the protection of the State might become as great a hindrance to the freedom and expansion of their Faith as persecution had been.

God, however, had great blessings in store for the poor weather-tossed Protestant Churches of France. In a quiet way, the Moravian brethren had visited some of them, and a few of the ministers had seen and accepted the truth with regard to the necessity of the new birth and of the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit. When, in 1816, *Robert Haldane*, that great and good man, visited Geneva, he found one or two ministers ready for his message; he was able, by God's grace, to bring to the full light of the Gospel a few young men, most of whom were theological students, whose names were to become famous: *Frédéric Monod*, *Merle-d'Aubigné*, *César Malan*, *Louis Gaussen*, and *Henri Pyt*. These young men, filled with sacred fire, were instrumental in bringing about a revival of the French Protestants, along with *Oberlin*, *Charles Cook*, and a few others. Another British Christian, *Thomas Erskine*, was the means of bringing to the full assurance of faith a young minister, *Adolphe Monod*, who became illustrious as an Evangelical preacher. In some parts of France it was like a resurrection from the dead.

I wish I could say that all the ministers and churches were aroused, and that they abandoned their cold and formal Deism. But has there been, at any time, a real Revival which did not encounter opposition? We cannot enter into the detail of the strife which was then raised; it is a long story, which is not closed yet. We prefer to point to the fact that most of the institutions which were needed for the very life of the Protestant Churches were born out of this Revival of the old Faith. Sunday Schools, a French Bible Society, a Tract Society, a Religious Books Society, and the Paris Missionary Society, with lesser but most useful Institutions, were all born at that time. Help in men and means came to us generously from our British brethren. All honour to them, with our lasting gratitude! (*See Appendix, Note 3.*)

Strange contradiction! Our Revival came mainly from England, through Robert Haldane, Charles Cook, and the early "Methodists" (which was then a sort of generic name for all those who professed and taught the Evangelical Faith); the British and Foreign Bible Society helped us to furnish our Protestant families with copies of the Scriptures, which had been

lacking for a long time ; and, at the same time, from Germany, the land of Luther, came to us a flood of Rationalism. Our Faculties of Theology were more or less poisoned with it. While the lay-people read orthodox books, many of which were translated from English writers, their pastors fed themselves on the writings of the German Higher Critics, which began to make themselves prominent : *Strauss*, *Schleiermacher*, and many others ; in the more recent days, *Harnack* and *Welhausen*. As said the Christian philosopher, Charles Secrétan of Lausanne : “ in matters of religion, the lay-people think English, while the ministers think German.” That contradiction, thank God, was not general ; we had then, and have still, a number of thoroughly Evangelical preachers. But the Rationalists have grown bolder with each successive generation. (See Appendix, Notes 4 and 5.)

The Rationalistic movement received a great impetus from the celebrated book of *Charles Darwin* on *The Origin of Species*, and from the theory of Evolution which was derived from that book. That theory, which is, so far, a mere hypothesis without real scientific foundation, has become “ the law and the prophets ” in our State schools of all grades. Add to this the influence, which was prodigious at one time, of the great writer *Ernest Renan*, by his *Life of Jesus* and other works of religious criticism. The views of Darwin, Renan, and Welhausen were adopted by a large number of theologians, much to the damage of the Evangelical cause in our French-speaking countries.

We must never lose sight of the fact that the natural heart is opposed to the Truth, which humiliates, and exacts the full obedience of holiness from those who profess it. To have *ascended* from the monkey is less humiliating, to the carnal mind, than to have *fallen* from God. For that reason, Rationalism finds a ready response in unregenerated man. At all times, and in every country, the way of the Lord has been, and ever will be, *the narrow way*.

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### *Conclusions.*

We must limit ourselves to the above condensed facts, a mere bird's-eye view of our religious history. After all, there is little difference to be made between Nationalities in the realm of religion. Everywhere trees of the same kind bear the same kind of fruit. Modernism is raging among Protestants of all countries, and its fruits are the same everywhere.



(1) Modernism has changed into a mere *Evolution* the doctrine of the new birth as it is set forth in Scripture, where it is shown to be nothing less than a *Revolution*. To have "passed from death into life," thus, and only thus, becoming "a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven," is considered an obsolete theory. Religion, for most Christians so called, is but a mere family tradition, a new form of Judaism. Personal contact with the living God has given place, in many cases, to a sentimental respect for ancestral religious forms, myths and memories. The sepulchres of the prophets are built by the very people who, if the prophets were alive, would scorn and persecute them.

(2) Christendom, under the spell of Rationalism (or Modernism) is becoming more and more akin to the heathen world. The difference between an educated "Heathen" and an educated "Christian" is being reduced to a minimum. Family life is increasingly desecrated. The Lord's Day, which, in memory of His Resurrection, ought to be set apart as a day of worship, has lost its meaning and has almost ceased to exist as a day of religious observance. Theatrical and other worldly entertainments are introduced in the very precincts of the Churches.

(3) While the Missionary Societies are still being supported, yet, for the Modernists, the word "Missions" has lost its primitive meaning. It does not mean, in their view, the effort of the Church of Christ in obedience to His last command, "to seek and to save that which is lost," but simply the work of civilizing the heathen. There is no "wrath to come," from which all men should be urged to flee; Sin has lost its tragic aspect, and its wages are nothing worse than the temporal and hereditary consequences of the infringement of natural laws; there is no hell, except misery on earth. "To make the world better," to improve the state of human society, so as to bring about a new social order, this is the great aim to be pursued. As to the next world, there is little mention of it, and one may be a Modernist "Christian" without much faith in its existence. All the concerns of the Modernist are of the earth. The Church, therefore, is to become, in this view, a temporal and political power for the good of the people. Her duty is to interpose herself, whenever she deems it necessary and possible, for the rightful settlement of this world's affairs.

This is the very principle professed by the Church of Rome, and never more loudly than at present. That principle leads, inevitably, to an alliance between the Church and the State,

the latter bringing in the help of the sword, if need be, for the furtherance of the Church's benevolent intentions. Of course, we readily admit that a true Christian, being also a citizen, has a duty to fulfil in this latter capacity. But *the Church's citizenship* is in Heaven; her kingdom is not of this world. This fundamental principle has been sinned against, more or less, by all the forms of corporate Christianity throughout the ages. It is high time that we should realize the wholly spiritual character of the true Christian Church.

(4) Modernism substitutes "Social Salvation by Social works" to the great doctrine of the Reformation: "Salvation by Faith." This is another trait of resemblance between Modernism and the Church of Rome.

(5) Finally, the Bible being discredited and discarded, ceases to be the sovereign rule of Faith and Practice. There is, therefore, no spiritual authority to which a final appeal may be brought on any question relating to the soul and its destiny. The poor, fickle, unsteady individual conscience, and, at the same time, the pronouncements of great Congresses linking all Churches together in a superficial and shallow unity, these are the only spiritual authorities recognized by the "Modernist." By this attitude towards the Bible, and towards the Christ of the Bible, the Churches born out of the great Reformation movement are denying their origin and renouncing their inheritance. They cease to be a part of a Divinely created Society with a Divinely given Charter; they become mere Associations for philanthropic and social purposes. This tremendous change in their fundamental principles gives to the Church of Rome the right to pose as the only "Defender of the Faith," particularly as regards the Divinity of Christ and the inspiration of Scripture, both of which are, she boldly declares, denied by the majority of the Protestant theologians.

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The future of the true Church of Christ would appear very dark if we had not the Lord's promise that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." At the times of the deepest gloom, God has never been without true witnesses in this world of ours. His Word has ever been sounding, bringing to life dead souls. "His Word remaineth for ever." If evil is progressing, so is Truth. There is not a day, not an hour, but that some sinner, somewhere on this earth, comes to Christ and is being saved. Thousands of faithful preachers and missionaries are at

work. In France, revivals are taking place here and there. Where Modernism is powerless Evangelicals are called to the rescue, and they succeed, by God's grace, in awakening dead souls and dead Churches. For all this we thank God and take courage, and we are looking forward to the coming of Him who, by His glorious appearing, shall put an end to all sin, to all error, to all apostasy, and shall make manifest the reality and universality of the true Church, clothed in the immortal beauty of Truth, Holiness and Love!

## APPENDIX.

## Note 1.

"The knowledge of all the sciences is but smoke when the heavenly science of Christ is not in it; and man with all his subtlety is as stupid at understanding the mysteries of God as a donkey is unfit for the accords of music."—*Jean Calvin*.

## Note 2.

*Jean de Labadie* (1610-74), canon of Amiens cathedral, when converted to Jansenism, established in his own house meetings for the reading of the Bible and religious exercises. He even went so far as to administer in these meetings communion, with bread and wine! That, of course, could not be tolerated in the Roman Catholic Church. He became a "Réformé," and his numerous wanderings led him to Geneva, where his sermons were much appreciated; but the ecclesiastical authorities forbade these private meetings, which were practically *ecclesiolæ in ecclesia*, and to which he held so much. At Geneva he had among his hearers *Spener*, who became his friend, and who seems to have borrowed from him the fruitful idea of those brotherly meetings (*collegia pietatis*) which became so much in use among the Moravian Brethren, and, later, in early Methodism.

## Note 3.

The most intelligent among the opponents of the Revival, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was *Samuel Vincent*, one of the pastors of the Reformed Church of Nîmes. Although he was himself a "liberal," he admired the zeal of the "Methodists," and blamed his "liberal" colleagues' intolerance towards them. He advised these Rationalist ministers to take example by the simplicity of the Methodists' preaching, and by their ardour in the work which they pursued.

## Note 4.

*Émile Faguet*, who died a few years ago, was a literary critic of great value, a Member of the French Academy, and a nominal Roman Catholic. This is a fragment of an article of his\* concerning the great Protestant preacher, *Adolphe Monod*, who was ejected from the ministry of the Reformed Church at Lyons in 1831, at the request of the Consistory of that Church, which was, and has remained to this day, Rationalistic:—

"All through his life, which was short, for he lived only about fifty years, and preached only for twenty-five years, *Adolphe Monod* had never

\* *Émile Faguet, Propos Littéraires* (4ème série).

a thought which was not in the Service of God. One may say that there was nothing earthly about him, and that he literally lived the eternal life, in constant communion with the Infinite. He was, in the absolute sense of the word, a Christian Soul.

"Of course, that made him appalling when he began his ministry in Lyons. The hearers looked at one another with bewilderment. Who was this one? Not at all 'the gentleman in decent dress who delivers honest discourses,' as Joseph de Maistre described the Protestant minister. Not at all the Rationalist, adorning with a few vague quotations from the Bible the profession of faith of the *Vicaire Savoyard*. Not at all the professor of ethics to whom dogma seems to be unknown, and who shows himself as good a teacher of Christianity as La Bruyère might have been. 'People ask for ethical preaching,' said Bossuet, somewhat disdainfully, 'and they are right, provided it be understood that Christian ethics are founded upon the mysteries of Christianity. What I preach to you, I say, is a great mystery in Jesus Christ and His Church; and that mystery is the foundation of that beautiful morality in which all Christians unite.'

"Adolphe Monod did not understand these matters differently; he did not draw back from dark truths which had to be made clear, or, which is braver still, from dark realities which had to be acknowledged and tremblingly worshipped; he appeared, to these Lyons gentlemen, about the year 1825, as a ghost from the sixteenth or seventeenth century, a Luther or a Bossuet, a Calvin or a Saurin, and it was a great scandal, a scandal such that they compelled him to come down from that pulpit from which fell words too austere and truths too hard to be listened to.

"The puny Rationalist protest of these gentlemen, breathing the pure philosophical spirit of 1780, is worth reporting in part:—

"'The agitations which have taken place elsewhere by the imprudent zeal of a few ministers *eager to exhume ancient doctrines which common sense and the reason of man, better developed than they were at the time of the Reformation, had wisely set under seal, had not yet, happily, invaded the threshold of our Church . . .* The outbursts of M. Monod, the anathemas which he throws at the human species, his own person being excepted, *his teaching of an ecstatic faith preferable to all works, . . .* all this cannot be tolerated side by side with the more rational and evangelical discourses of our other pastors . . . Let it not be in our Church that he should spread an uneasy feeling (*malaise*) and wound *Reason, emanated from the Divinity.*'

"Excellent *vicaire savoyards!*" (The italics are Faguet's.)

#### Note 5.

In a Pastoral Conference, about fifty years ago, we remember having heard the celebrated Professor Auguste Sabatier make the following statement: "There are two men in me: one is the son of a Huguenot mother, who was a believer in the old fashion; the other is the intellectual son of a German philosopher."

## DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN said: Whilst grateful to Mr. Blocher for coming in the place of his honoured father-in-law, Dr. Saillens, yet we feel greatly disappointed at the absence of the latter, and especially sorry that it should be caused by illness. Dr. Saillens is a veteran and trusted leader of Evangelicals in France, the founder and head of the Bible Institute at Nogent on the historic river Marne, and heart and soul with every good Gospel movement in France, and of conventions, such as that at Morges. He is one of the most eloquent preachers in France to-day. Had he been here I should have asked him to favour us with some of his paper in French, that we might appreciate the eloquence that yet lives in the French pulpit and enjoy the majesty and pathos of the French language.

That language can sing like the birds amidst the blossoms of spring-time, but it is also like a great organ that has hidden within it mighty thunderings that orators like Dr. Saillens can call forth. It was once said of a good man "that he loveth our nation," and of no man can that be more truly said than of Dr. Saillens—"he loveth our nation." He loves it because of its witness to Truth—Bible Truth—and because he has here so many spiritual relatives, brothers and sisters in Christ, and that love is, I am sure, reciprocated by every one who knows Dr. Saillens, his life and his work.

Had Dr. Saillens been here, I should have introduced him as the beloved friend of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and what greater compliment could I pay him? or what better introduction and recommendation could he receive to the audience now before me?

The valuable and beautiful paper to which we have listened with so much pleasure is full of points for discussion. It is my duty, as Chairman, to propose a vote of thanks both to the reader and the writer of the paper, and to open the discussion.

What is Protestantism? It is not a verbal explosion against some error or evil, but a protestation for and concerning Eternal verities, based upon the sure foundation of Holy Scripture—the all-inspired Word of God—"The Bible, and the Bible alone is the

Religion of Protestants." I feel tempted to say a few words for Calvin, whom I regard as one of the greatest of uninspired teachers since the days of the Apostles. He is blamed for everything that happened amiss in Geneva. It is the same as in our own country: every wrong committed here between 1648 and 1658 is debited to Cromwell. Calvin was plagued by perverse and wicked men among the 200 who ruled Geneva at that time. Those wasps and gnats are gone and forgotten, but the giant reformer remains.

Referring to Servetus, I remember to have read that Calvin wrote a letter in which he said that he tried to save the life of Servetus; but those efforts were, of course, verbal, and the only evidence is found in the letter. Our lecturer has paid generous tributes to Bossuet, Massillon, and others, although they were Roman Catholics. Their sermons are still vibrant with power, and the strongest opponents of that Apostate Church can yet appreciate their moral value. Did not Louis XIV say of Massillon: "I am often satisfied with my chaplains, but when I hear Massillon I am dissatisfied with myself?" As regards Fénelon, I am afraid that we must take him off the roll of honour, for his secret letters discovered in the Archives of Paris show him as aiding and abetting the dreadful persecutions of the Huguenots.

I am glad that in the Appendix of the paper Saurin's name appears. He was a great preacher. I remember years ago to have read one of his sermons, which made a great impression upon me. It is the one on Paul before Felix, and he says—I translate freely and quote from memory:—"How many times has a prisoner trembled before his judge? but here for the first time in the history of the world the judge trembles before his prisoner—his Christian prisoner."

A word about the Huguenots. I hold in my hand an old pamphlet, dated 1686, describing the awful persecutions that preceded and followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685. One can only groan like Habakkuk when reading these harrowing details. Why was it permitted? Maybe this visitation saved the Reformed Church of France from Rationalism and Apostasy, and many Churches of other nations from the same abyss. Those fires of persecution purified that visible Church, and out of that furnace there came to us in England, as a gift from God, a purified people.

Our so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688 was largely influenced

by the sight of what was done by the Romish King and Government in France to the spiritual élite of that nation—the most intelligent and industrious people of that kingdom. Their coming helped us in 1688, and probably saved our country from the tragedy which overwhelmed France a century later.

Perhaps more than half of the audience before me can boast of Huguenot connections. I see some who, like myself, are Fellows of the Huguenot Society. We have not only a sense of *spiritual* fellowship with French Protestants, but *real blood* relationship. Let our hearts go out in love to them. Let our prayers ascend to God on their behalf.

Mr. W. HOSTE, from his experience of some years lived in Paris, remarked how difficult it is for us to understand our neighbours across the Channel. Sometimes one hears over there criticisms of ourselves, which also are current here of them. For instance, though it might be difficult to find a society like the Victoria Institute, where such papers as the one to which we have listened could be heard, yet French Christians know what is going on in the great Ecclesiastical circles, and they may think we, too, are eaten up with Rationalism, or are all going back to Rome, and they may ignore much earnest work going on unseen and unadvertised.

While deploring there, as here, the spread of religious infidelity and superstition, let us not forget the good testimony that Evangelicals like MM. Saillens and Blocher, and many others, are carrying on in their country.

We must not forget how much French blood has been shed for Christ in the past centuries, nor how much we owe to those persecutions which drove into our arms thousands of the noblest sons of France, who brought with them a rich blessing to our land. All Christians in England should pray for their brethren in France, who are seeking faithfully to preach Christ and walk in the old paths.

Dr. H. C. MORTON expressed his appreciation of the paper, and greatly wished that Dr. Saillens could have been present in person. He thought, perhaps, that it was important that the Philosophic Society of Great Britain should make it quite clear

that the Rationalism of which the lecturer spoke was not the philosophic Rationalism, but the religious Rationalism. In Philosophy, Rationalism is a system of thought which regards knowledge and experience as impossible apart from certain fundamental elements or principles supplied immediately by Reason itself. For his part he had no quarrel with that Rationalism: but Rationalism in the religious sense as opposed to supernaturalism makes Reason, exclusive of Revelation, our authoritative guide in faith and conduct. It is important to keep strictly to definition; and what Dr. Saillens says on p. 228, namely, that the initial error of all Rationalism has been to believe in the goodness of all human nature, appears to confuse one of the results of Rationalism with Rationalism itself. Religious Rationalism affirms that Reason is our sole guide and our adequate guide in faith and conduct.

In a very real sense the lecture we have heard is a sad one. So, likewise, would be any lecture delivered in Paris upon Protestantism and Rationalism in Great Britain. We are faced with a strange contradiction. Protestantism is New Testament religion, and yet Protestantism is infected with Rationalism. It is a terrible fact, which Dr. Saillens affirms on p. 232, namely, that Modernism is raging among Protestants of all countries, and Modernism is essentially Rationalism. *Why* is this the case? It would be most interesting to learn something about the atmosphere of French Protestantism. What is the character of its preaching? Does it preach human sin and human need? Does it exalt Christ? The atmosphere produced by such preaching would be deadly to Rationalism. But if Protestant preaching has been switched off such lines, the way has been paved for the exaltation of Reason above Revelation. On a recent visit to France, at Biarritz and Pau, I felt saddened to find no Protestant services on the Sunday evening, but the streets crowded, and the Roman Churches busily at work.

Professor William James, in his famous volume, *The Will to Believe*, has argued cogently that it is certain influences born of the intellectual climate which make hypotheses possible or impossible for us. Speaking in his lecture room to Americans, he said: "Here in this room we all of us believe in molecules and the conservation of energy; in democracy and necessary progress; in Protestant



Christianity ; and the duty of fighting for the immortal Munroe—all for no reason worthy of the name.” Perhaps it is an extreme statement and a little bit flippant, but there is no doubt about the truth underlying it. Then what is it in the intellectual atmosphere of French and other Protestantism which has favoured the exaltation of Reason, and frowned on the authority of Revelation? In British history we know that Protestantism was born in revivals, and whilst the revival spirit survived in its preaching, Modernism was kept far away. Here, it has been a change of mental climate which gave Rationalism its opportunity. Has French Protestantism the same history? Has it had revivals? Has it experienced revivals like those of Britain? And to what extent has its preaching retained the revival note?

Protestants may wisely remember that Rationalism sounds the death-knell of Protestantism, and gives Rome her special opportunity. Humanity never long stands upright without a prop outside itself: and when it ceases to believe in Revelation, it is apt to lean upon the arm of the priest.

MR. AVARY H. FORBES: I feel deeply grateful to Dr. Saillens for his valuable and interesting paper. There is only one sentence in it on which I venture to join issue with the doctor, *viz.*—“ We deplore Calvin’s grievous mistake ”—in the matter of the burning of Servetus at Geneva in 1553. Servetus had gone about Europe for twenty years speaking and writing against the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. “ If he comes to Geneva,” wrote Calvin, “ I will never permit him to depart alive.” To us these words savour of bigoted cruelty; but they were at that time the voice of Christendom.

Servetus was arrested in France, tried before the Inquisition at Vienne, found guilty and sentenced to be “ *burned in a slow fire.*” He escaped, however, and went to Geneva. Calvin just then was far from being the dictator he had been. There was, in fact, a fierce quarrel raging between him and his enemies, the Libertins and the Geneva Council. Calvin’s fall, with sentence of death—or at least of banishment—was fully expected by his foes. And it was, no doubt, relying on this that Servetus came to Geneva.

Calvin accused Servetus, and drew up the indictment against him ; it was, indeed, *part of his official duty*. Servetus was arrested, but, still believing that Calvin would be condemned, and that he himself would succeed him, he loaded the reformer with abuse and charged him with grievous crimes. Calvin was not condemned, but his influence on the Council was now at zero, for he and the Consistory had been stripped of all ecclesiastical power. Servetus was tried before the Council, but before deciding on a verdict they took the opinion of the magistrates and churches of Basel, Bern, Zurich and Schaffhausen. These all voted for a capital sentence, and the Geneva Council accordingly condemned him to be burned. The verdict was that of Reformed Switzerland, and with it Calvin had personally NOTHING TO DO. Calvin implored the Council to employ the sword instead of the stake ; but they would not listen to him. Servetus besought that Calvin would visit him in prison. To interest oneself now in any way in Servetus was dangerous. Yet Calvin visited him in prison. " Not without danger to my life," he wrote afterwards, " I offered to deliver him from his errors."\* Servetus apologized to Calvin, but would not recant.

Five years later Calvin published his *Defence of the Secret Providence of God*, in which, referring to the tragedy, he says : "*Pro quo tamen me fuisse deprecatum, testes sunt ipsi iudices*" (For whom I earnestly interceded, as his judges themselves are witnesses). He was indeed the only person who appealed for mitigation.

True, Calvin threatened Servetus from the first with death. True, he framed the accusation. True, he approved the death sentence. But it is *not* true that he was responsible for the verdict, nor that he approved the mode of execution. Protestants may condemn Calvin—and Melancthon and many others—for his view of the matter. But it was an age of intolerance. Servetus had already been condemned by the Church of Rome, and the tribunal at Vienne demanded that Servetus should be sent back to them to undergo the first sentence—a demand which Servetus, with tears, implored the Council to refuse. To the Papal Church Servetus was " a monstrous heretic . . . unworthy to converse with men "

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\* *Calvini Refut. Errorum Serveti*, viii, p. 511. Ed. Amstel.

(*Bungener*, p. 239); and his death was, to that Church, nothing more than one of the 40,000 "heretics" burnt by the Inquisition in the same century.

Wylie, in his *History of Protestantism*, gives chapter and verse from Rilliet, Ruchat, Gaberel, and others for the foregoing facts.

## 714TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, JUNE 4TH, 1928,

AT 4.30 P.M.

DR. JAMES W. THIRTLE, M.R.A.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the Election of the following as Associates:—Mrs. Marian Little, Arthur G. Harris, Esq., J.P., the Rev. A. J. Williams, M.A., Finch Perrott, Esq., and William H. Dempster, Esq.

The CHAIRMAN then called upon Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., the President, to give the Annual Address, entitled "Relativity and Reality."

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## ANNUAL ADDRESS.

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### *RELATIVITY AND REALITY.*

By DR. J. A. FLEMING, M.A., F.R.S. (*President*).

**T**HE subject selected for this Address is too large and complicated to permit anything more than the mere fringe of it to be touched in the time at disposal, or for anything that could possibly be called adequate treatment by the present writer. Nevertheless, it is one which will afford us a number of points for consideration, no doubt revealing different views and opinions, and may, therefore, be acceptable as a

topic. It is the opinion, I believe, of more than one of our Members, that in the subjects selected for discussion at our meetings we do not sufficiently attempt to justify our secondary title as a Philosophical Society. Hence I have ventured this afternoon to point the way into regions where careful philosophic thought is required if we are not to lose ourselves in the mists of fruitless disputation.

### I.—THE PHENOMENAL AND THE REAL.

Every one who has visited Switzerland and been to Zermatt remembers well the outline of the sharp peak of the Matterhorn mountain which there dominates the view.

If a picture or photograph without any subscript or title taken at this place were shown, such visitor would no doubt exclaim, "Why, that is the Matterhorn!" Not so many persons have seen the mountain from Breuil, on the Italian side, and fewer still from such western point as the Col du Lion, where the outline is again different. Suppose photographs were taken at these three places; anyone who did not know the district might think they were photographs of three different mountains. Such pictures are in two dimensions—that is, they have height and breadth but not thickness, the latter being only suggested by perspective and shadow. Hence, all distances in the direction of the observer are foreshortened, as an artist would say, or are distorted and made to appear as less than they are in reality. Points that are actually separated like two peaks of a mountain may, from one direction, appear as a single peak.

A closer contact with the mountain, as in climbing it, or by the inspection of a model of the mountain made in clay, convinces us, however, that these pictures are merely the appearance from different points of view of one and the same object having three dimensions—that is, length, breadth, and height.

This is merely a simple illustration of the familiar experience that all contact with the external world involves—first, a sensation or an impression made on a percipient mind at a particular place or from a certain point of view, and secondly, as is commonly believed, a permanent source of those impressions which is often called the thing-in-itself.

The fundamental problem of all philosophy is the nature of Reality, and the relation of the apparent or phenomenal world

of our perceptions to a possible real or external world independent of our percipient minds.

To the question, What is the ultimate reality or source of phenomena? we may say that, broadly speaking, the philosophic answers may be grouped under three headings, respectively called Materialism, Idealism, and Realism.

The answer of Materialism is that the source of all phenomena is Matter or Substance in some form, and that the effects we attribute to Mind are solely the result of changes or operations of Matter in peculiar states, or else that Material Substance possesses not only physical but psychical powers which cannot be separated.

In its extreme form, as presented by Vogt, Moleschott, Büchner and Haeckel, this materialistic philosophy denied all possibility of Mind, Soul or Spirit, as distinct from Matter; but it has in this aspect been discredited because it gives no valid explanation of the fact of human self-consciousness nor of the source of the order, beauty, and adaptation we find in the Universe, which are evidence of Mind. In a modified form it is, however, still with us in that theory of Evolution which regards the physical Universe as self-produced or produced by non-self-conscious agencies or principles. This theory is then driven to account for psychical phenomena as merely the operations of a highly organized unstable form of living substance called brain, or nervous tissue.

In Idealism we are supplied with an entirely different answer to our question. In the form in which it was presented by Berkeley, its teaching is that the ultimate reality in the Universe is Mind, and that the external or phenomenal world as perceived by us is simply the result of the direct operation on our minds of the ever-acting Divine Will and Intelligence. We have, therefore, no true knowledge of anything except our own perceptions and ideas. David Hume, however, pressed this philosophy to a point at which it resulted in almost complete scepticism.

Immanuel Kant sought to restore to philosophy a right appreciation of the relation of object to subject or thing perceived to the percipient mind.

Subjective Idealism in the form expounded by Berkeley fails as a philosophy to explain how there could be any Universe apart from conscious minds to perceive it. It is surely impossible for anyone to doubt that the Solar system, for instance, existed in some form long prior to the advent of any human intelligence to

perceive the sun, moon, and planets, and that it might continue to exist even if all humanity was annihilated. Modern Idealism does not deny the existence of an external world, and unites itself closely with the third form of philosophic thought, viz., Realism.

In this are postulated both the actuality of an external Universe of things, as well as truly existing percipient minds possessed of independent self-consciousness and freedom of choice as conjoined factors in all cognition. It has, therefore, sometimes been called Dualism, as it postulates two related but different entities, viz., Matter and Mind.

This Dualism seems, however, to be distasteful to much present-day scientific thought, and the latter inclines to a Monism in which Matter is regarded as a double-faced entity having inseparable psychic as well as physical properties. This Monism hopelessly fails to give any sufficient account of some unquestionable human experiences.

The most satisfactory reconciliation of our experience and intuitions is that which views the external world as a real existence, but operating as a means of communication between the Infinite Divine Mind and our finite minds.

In following along this path of Realism or Dualism we have to avoid falling into two errors of thought which border it on either side. We have to avoid carefully any confusion of the Divine Thought and Will which creates and the actual created Universe, which confusion leads to Pantheism, and, on the other hand, to refrain from adopting the view which has sometimes been called "the carpenter theory of creation," which regards the external world as something brought into existence and then left to itself. The true idea seems to be that the external world is continual concrete or embodied Thought, but in our present state of existence we cannot form any conception of the nature of the transition from Thoughts to Things.

The world of phenomena speaks to us, as it were, in a strange tongue, but we find ourselves not without power to interpret the thought expressed by it little by little. It is like some cryptic or cypher message which time, patience, and skill enable us to decipher. The very fact that the phenomena of Nature are to some degree intelligible to our minds is the highest proof that it is the product of a Supreme Intelligence not our own. Hence, the object of scientific investigation is the analysis and interpretation of these Divine ideas of which the physical or biological

phenomena we observe are, as it were, the letters or words expressing thme, whether these are directly manifested to our senses or through special sense-exalting instruments such as telescopes, microscopes, spectroscopes, etc.

The physical Universe speaks to our minds through phenomena in symbolic language, and our object in scientific investigation is to penetrate behind these words to the underlying idea and thought.

We have learnt by our experimental and inductive methods to put questions to this speaker and obtain replies which we have to interpret as best we can.

Scientific investigation then finds its proper arena of operation in that region in which phenomena appear in an orderly and constant manner. Our scientific facts when truly ascertained are, so to speak, words which are constantly repeated to us. Our scientific theories are our interpretations of them in terms of our human range of thought.

But that interpretation proceeds by stages and may be quite erroneous and imperfect at any stage. Hence, from time to time we have to cast these theories aside and begin again, because we find them irreconcilable with augmented observation. Whilst, therefore, there are definite and final discoveries of fact, there is no necessary finality in our explanations or theories of them, although these may be stages in our approach to a right interpretation. Thus Newton observed certain effects in optics, and inferred that Light consists of particles he called Corpuscles shot out from light-producing sources. This interpretation explained some facts but not others. Huyghens, Young, and Fresnel made the supposition that Light consists of undulations in a universal medium called the Ether. The latter explained consistently vastly more than Newton's hypothesis, but it has been found of late that the undulatory hypothesis alone cannot explain certain effects such as those of photo-electricity. Recent experiments by Professor G. P. Thomson, described in a lecture by Sir J. J. Thomson, entitled "Beyond the Electron," have done much to reconcile these two theories.

## 2.—THE PERSONAL FACTOR IN OBSERVATION.

The subject of our scientific investigation may not be merely some particular phenomenon in Nature, but also certain general



ideas produced in our minds by the sum total of phenomena such as the ideas of Space, Time, Energy or Mass.

These conceptions are quantitative—that is, subject to measurement in terms of certain units.

Up to a few years ago it was assumed that the measurements of them by different observers would always be in agreement. The searching analysis by Einstein and his followers has shown that this is not the case, but that the observer himself contributes some personal element to them.

The term "Theory or Principle of Relativity" which has been applied to this analysis is not, perhaps, the most illuminating which could be employed. It might better be called "The attempt to restate physical facts in such form as to be true independently of all observers." The word "Theory" connotes in most minds a mere speculation or hypothesis, and the term Relative is opposed generally to Absolute, and hence such phrases as "The Relativity of Knowledge" or "The Reign of Relativity" convey to some readers the idea that there is no possibility of attaining absolute truth on any subject.

The mathematical theory of Relativity which alone concerns us here is, however, not based on speculation, but rests upon a foundation of well-ascertained experimental fact and logical deduction therefrom. Its aim is to enable us to determine actuality or reality in a certain region of inquiry as opposed to mere appearances or phenomena. It may be well, then, to state in outline the nature of its basis.

Our knowledge of the external world is mostly obtained by vision, and the agency of vision is Light. A fact of fundamental importance is that Light takes Time to pass through Space, and the latest measurements have shown that its velocity is 299,850 kilometres per second, or 186,319 miles per second.

When anything takes time to pass through space we can only think of it as either the transmission of an actual object or else it may be a particular state which is propagated through a stationary medium such as a sound wave through air or a ripple on the surface of water. We have already referred to the two classical hypotheses which have been suggested to explain a ray of light. There are some reasons for thinking that both these theories have an element of truth in them, but that each is an imperfect view taken by itself. Astronomical observations seem to show, however, that the ether, if it exists, does not partake of the orbital or rotary motion of the earth, and therefore the ether must

pass freely through it. If this is so, then there must be a sort of ether wind blowing through or over the earth which in some direction may have a velocity of as much as 20 miles a second. Suppose a very long airship was flying through quiescent air. To those on board it would appear that a wind was blowing against them. If a man at the centre of the ship fired a pistol, a man at the stern of the ship would hear the bang a little before a man at the bows, because the former is moving to meet the expanding sound wave of the pistol and the man at the bow is moving away from the centre or source of the wave. Hence it follows that if a sound wave were to travel up a certain distance against a wind and be reflected back again, it would take longer to go and come than to travel there and back an equal distance across the wind.

As far back as 1887 an exactly similar experiment was tried with light, the moving earth being in this case the airship, but the experiments of Michelson and Morley, which have been carefully repeated since, showed that there was no observable difference between the velocity of the light in the two directions. It does not depend upon the motion of the source of light or the observer or the frame of reference, whether stationary or moving, with respect to which it is measured. It is a constant of Nature. In this respect light differs entirely from other types of wave motion. When this fact was expressed in mathematical language it was seen by H. A. Lorentz and by A. Einstein to involve consequences of a very astonishing kind. We cannot here give the proofs in detail, but they are furnished in many elementary books such as the lucid treatise by Mr. L. Bolton in his excellent *Introduction to the Theory of Relativity*.

The results, however, are as follows :—

Suppose two observers we will call A and B, both having identical clocks and similar measuring rods, and some standard of mass like a 1-lb. weight. Let these observers with their instruments move away from each other at a uniform rate and high speed, and let us suppose them to have telescopes or other appliances for seeing each other's clocks and rods.

If the observer A compares the rate at which the clock of B flying away from his is going, he would find it goes slow compared with his own clock—that is, its pendulum would appear to make less swings per minute when timed by his own clock than his own clock does. Also, he would find that if the measuring rod of B flying away from him has its length held in the direction of motion,

that it would appear shorter than his own rod which is stationary by him. Again, the moving mass would appear greater than when at rest close to him. Also as Einstein shows, two events such as two flashes of lightning might appear simultaneously to one observer, but would not necessarily be simultaneous to the other. The final result is that such quantities as lengths, times, velocities, masses, and coincidences are all relative in their measurement to a particular observer or frame of reference, and are different for various observers. Each, so to speak, sees a different universe. These differences are very small, because any speeds which we, as human beings, can command are excessively small compared with the velocity of light. Even the earth flying along in its orbit at 20 miles per second would appear to an observer outside the earth in a fixed position to be only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches less in diameter in the direction of its orbital movement by reason of its motion.

Most persons might then say, Why make such a fuss about so small a change? The answer is, that the size of the change is not the important matter, but the fact that there should be any change at all. If we deal with atoms and electrons the speed at which they can move does affect their sizes and masses to a notable degree.

When we endeavour to analyse more searchingly the reasons for these apparent changes in physical properties it becomes clear; that is because we have become accustomed in thought to separate two conceptions of Time and Space, whereas they are, in fact, merely different aspects of the same entity. The founders of dynamics and kinetics or the laws of motion were Galileo and Newton. Newton started with the idea that Time flows, as he says, uniformly without respect to any events happening in it. He assumed Space to be mere unlimited emptiness and as affording only the possibility of motion for material things, and that motion may be in any direction or with any speed. He assumed that the geometrical properties of Space are everywhere the same. He also assumed that a material substance left to itself either stays in one place or moves uniformly in a straight line. If it changes its speed or direction of motion, that is ascribed by him to the action on it of an agency he called Force. He assumed that between all particles of matter a gravitational force exists which varies in amount inversely as the square of this distance and is proportional to the product of their masses.

All these are now known to be arbitrary assumptions and in some cases not quite correct. They are justified, however, to

a certain extent because they enable us to predict astronomical events such as eclipses, etc., within very narrow limits of time. They are not, however, the only basis upon which a consistent natural philosophy can be built up.

### 3.—THE STARTING POINT OF THE RESTRICTED THEORY OF RELATIVITY.

Einstein starts his philosophy from one experimental fact, viz., the absolute constancy of the velocity of Light in all frames of reference, and next upon the almost axiomatic truth that the form of a mathematical equation or expression for any law of Nature must retain its form when the frame of reference is changed—in other words, must be an *invariant*. For the sake of those who are not mathematicians, this last term may receive a little further explanation. We determine the position of a point in Space by measuring its distance from three planes or three lines of reference or axes which are generally taken at right angles to each other. Thus the position of a point in a room is fixed when we know its shortest distance from the floor and adjacent two walls at right angles. These are called its coordinates. Time is also measured from some era such as midnight on January 1st or the beginning of the year A.D. 1. If, then,  $x, y, z$  denote the coordinates of one point and  $a, b, c$  that of another point, it is clear that the distance between these points is  $\sqrt{(x-a)^2 + (y-b)^2 + (z-c)^2}$ .

If the origin of the coordinates remains stationary, no matter where it may be taken, it is clear that the distance of these points will remain unaltered, and the expression for it is said to be invariant, because it retains its mathematical form. If, instead of considering two *points* in space, we have two *events*—say two electric sparks or anything else happening at two places—then we have to consider not merely their distance apart in space but their interval apart in time. Now we have seen that for observers in uniform motion with respect to the locality of these events, neither their space interval or time interval measurements are the same.

There is, nevertheless, a certain combination of Space and Time which remains constant for all observers.

If we multiply together a time interval and a velocity we have an equivalent space distance. Thus, if we can walk three miles an hour and walk for two hours we have covered a distance of

six miles. In the same way, if we multiply a Time interval in seconds by the velocity of light which is denoted by the letter  $c$  and is 186,319 miles, we have an equivalent Space interval. This product is called the *time coordinate*.

Now it is a remarkable fact that although neither the space distance of two events nor their time interval taken alone are invariant, the difference between the square of the space distance and the square of the time interval is invariable for all observers.

This means that time so converted to space, when a negative sign is prefixed, becomes a fourth dimension of space.

Space and Time considered separately are, therefore, as the mathematician Minkowski said, only shadows. They have no separate reality. The only measurable quantity which has real existence and remains constant for all observers is the above combination of space and time or four dimensional space, the fourth dimension being the product of time and light velocity.

We cannot visualize the nature of this four dimension space, because we can only visualize some combination of things actually seen, but mathematical rules allow us to determine its properties and powers.

There is one important difference between the time coordinate and the space coordinates, and that is that we are carried along the time coordinate without power to arrest or reverse our movement. We can come back to the same place in a certain framework of space reference, as, for instance, to the same place in this room as often as we please, but we cannot put ourselves back in time nor reverse or repeat the order of events which have taken place in between. The continuous series of events taking place in one object or person is delineated by a series of event-points forming a line called by Minkowski a *world line*. We cannot visualize the world line in the four dimensional space, but if we consider a material body such as a planet moving round the sun in one plane, then the space coordinates are reduced to two, and if the time coordinate is taken in a direction perpendicular to the plane of motion, then it is easy to see that the world line of the planet is a spiral line.

When events are thus translated into their equivalents in the four dimensional Space-Time they are stated in such manner as to be independent of the position and motion of the observer, and may, therefore, be said to have a reality which, compared with their appearance to us with our disunited space and time

mode of thought, is similar to that of the relation of the actual Matterhorn mountain to pictures of it taken from certain points of view.

At this stage it may be well to point out that apart from anything else the finite velocity of light is an obstacle to obtaining more than a phenomenal view by vision alone of the starry heavens. When we look at the star-spangled sky by night we see each star in the direction in which its rays of light reach our eyes, but on account of their immense distances and proper motion stars or nebulae may have long since vanished from their visible position.

Thus, light takes  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years to come to us from one of the nearest stars, viz., Alpha Centauri. It takes 8 years from Sirius, 10 from Procyon, 30 from Aldebaran, 44 from the Pole Star, 100 from Vega, 120 from Arcturus. But these distances, vast though they are, are small compared with those of many star clusters which are probably "island Universes" lying far outside of the Milky Way. Thus, Dr. Harlow Shapley, working at the Mount Wilson observatory, in the United States, has shown that the great globular cluster of stars in the constellation of Hercules is about 36,000 light-years distant, while some of the Magellanic clouds are upwards of 100,000 light-years away from us, and still fainter star clusters or spiral nebulae on the boundary of our Universe as much probably as a million light-years or even hundreds of millions of light-years. When we remember that the light-year itself is a distance of nearly six million million miles, we see that long, long before the utmost limits of geological time these clusters have disappeared from the positions in which we now see, or think we see, them.

#### 4.—THE GENERAL THEORY OF RELATIVITY.

So far we have only been concerned with what is called the Restricted Theory of Relativity, or that which concerns itself with uniform motion.

Most of the motions in the Universe are, however, accelerated—that is, the speed continually changes either in magnitude or direction or in both. Thus, if a stone is dropped from a height its speed continually increases during its fall. It falls 16 feet in the first second, 48 feet in the second, and 80 feet in the third.

The direction in which the earth moves in its annual motion round the sun is continually changing in direction and amount.

Newton laid it down in his *Laws of Motion* that this change of speed is due to an agency called *Force*, and in the case of gravitational force between masses such as the sun and earth he postulated that it is inversely as the square of the distance. It is clear, however, that this Newtonian expression for the law of gravitation cannot be the true one, because it is not invariant, since the measurement of distance depends or may depend on the motion of the observer.

Einstein set out, then, to discover a law of gravitation which should be invariant—that is, expressed in the same mathematical form in all frames of reference—and with remarkable mathematical skill he found it. An objection has always been raised against the Newtonian law, and that is that it assumes action at a distance. Newton himself felt the force of this objection and mentioned it in a celebrated letter to Bentley. Einstein has discovered a mode of explaining gravitation without the necessity for assuming any “force” acting at a distance.

We all know that the shortest line between two points on a plane surface is the straight line joining them. If the two points are situated on a sphere such as the earth then the shortest line is not a straight line or one drawn straight on a flat Mercator map, but is a line which is part of a great circle of the sphere passing through these points. Thus, ships voyaging across the Atlantic ocean travel as far as possible on great circle lines. These lines are also called geodesic lines.

In the four dimensional Space-Time there are also “world lines” which correspond to geodesic lines and may therefore be called by that name.

Newton said that a material body given an impulse and then left to itself moves in a straight line or shortest line. Einstein has substituted for this a more general statement which is true independently of all observers. A material body given an impulse and then left to itself follows a geodesic world line in four dimensional Space-Time. The geodesic world line is not the shortest line merely in space measurement. Moreover, Einstein made the remarkable discovery that the geometrical qualities or properties of Space-Time are altered in the neighbourhood of massive, or as we say, heavy bodies. Thus, in proximity to our sun the qualities of the space are not the same as at places very distant from it, and the form of the geodesic

lines are altered and become more curved. The difference, then, between the ideas of Newton and Einstein as regards the motions of the planets in the solar system are as follows :—

Newton said that a heavy or massive body such as the earth, when given a push in empty space and left to itself, would move away in a straight line due to its so-called inertia. If, however, it is in the neighbourhood of the sun, then in virtue of some agency called gravitational Force there is a pull drawing it to the sun and the combined action of the force of inertia and the gravitational force causes the earth to follow a slightly oval path round the sun called an ellipse.

On the other hand, Einstein says : There is no such pull or force. This so-called force of Newton is a mere philosophical fiction. The earth tends to follow along a geodesic line, and this line near a massive body such as the sun is a very curved line. The true orbit or path of the earth is not an ellipse which is traversed again and again, but a path equivalent to that of an ellipse the longer axis of which rotates in its own plane. This displacement or rotation of the "line of the apses," according to the Newtonian theory, is produced by the attraction of the other planets on the one considered. It has long been known that this rotation of the line of the apses is greater in the case of the planet Mercury than for any other, and moreover the Newtonian theory could not account for it entirely. But Einstein's theory explains it perfectly and predicts almost exactly the observed amount. Again, Einstein's theory predicts that light, being a form of radiant energy, has mass, and that therefore a ray of light passing near to a massive body like the sun should have its path slightly bent or deflected. This effect was found to exist in observations made at a total eclipse of the sun observed at Sobral in 1919, and again at another in 1922. In the third place, the Einstein theory predicts a change in the colour of a ray of light proceeding from a very massive body. Atoms are like clocks in a certain sense. They emit radiations of a definite frequency. Thus in the spectrum of the light emitted by a hydrogen or an iron atom we observe certain rays which present themselves as bright lines. Einstein predicted that when these rays proceed from an atom in a very massive star or sun, the frequency of vibration should be slightly decreased or the line slightly shifted towards the red end of the spectrum. Recent measurements made in the United States by Dr. C. E. St. John on 1,500 lines in the solar spectrum, have confirmed this prediction.



But although Einstein has thus been able to give a **consistent** explanation of gravity and the reason for the orbital motion of the planets round the sun, he has not been able to **explain in a similar manner** a far more potent force, viz., electrical attraction.

The force with which an atom of positive electricity called a proton is drawn towards an atom of negative electricity by electric attraction is so vastly greater than the mere gravitative or mass attraction between them that to express it numerically the number 22 would have to be placed in front of 38 cyphers, an inconceivably great number.

All that has been achieved, therefore, by the mathematical Theory of Relativity so far is a partial solution of a great problem.

All our theories of physical phenomena are, therefore, only imperfect interpretations of the underlying reality.

This does not mean that they are necessarily mere hallucinations and have no relation to truth. They may be partial interpretations of the Reality lying behind phenomena and have elements of truth in them.

They may, however, be perfectly erroneous if they start from the assumption that the final link in the chain of Causation is to be found in anything other than the Thought of a single Supreme Divine Intelligence and Will.

If this Universe is only a manifestation to us of the ever-acting Thought and Will of God, the ultimate realities must be spiritual and, therefore, not necessarily capable of being expressed or comprehended by the unaided intellect of man. No explanation, therefore, that our minds can devise or express of phenomena in the material universe is a final or ultimate one. It is relative to our present state of existence, and even in matters of pure physical science, all that we can say is, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part but then shall I know even as also I am known!" (1 Cor. xiii, 12).

##### 5.—THE RELATIVITY OF HUMAN VALUES.

There is another field in which the difference between the relative and the real is strongly manifest, viz., in the arena of religious and ethical ideas and values.

This material Universe not only presents itself as a series of physical phenomena to percipient minds, but these last as self-conscious personalities or spirits having power of free choice,

desire, and action, have relations to each other and to their Creator.

The fundamental quality of spirit is sensibility, or the consciousness of personal states of feeling, or states of mind produced by various stimuli from without or within the personality. These produce in turn actions, or where these last are inhibited they engender desire. Some of these states are congenial or pleasant and some unpleasant. Hence, for each individual there is a certain value or degree of importance or desirability which attach to each of these sources of feeling. These are relative to the individual. We have all a set of values peculiar to ourselves with regard to these influencing states or stimuli.

One man, for instance, may consider that the highest importance and value attaches to the increase of personal possessions or wealth, but he may attach a small value to the risk of injury to others by questionable methods of obtaining it. Another may regard influence over his fellow-men or fame to have the greatest value, but a third may regard the pursuit of wealth and fame as of small importance or value compared with benefiting in some way his fellow-men or increasing the general welfare or happiness.

These different human values may be compared with the relative impressions as to form and size made by some object in the physical world on different observers; the absolute or real values with the dimensions measured in some system independent of all observers.

The question then arises, How shall we ascertain the absolute or true values or importance of these various objects of pursuit or desire in the mental and spiritual Universe ?

Before attempting any answer to this question, we may glance at the various modes of classification of desires, actions, or values.

The first broad division is into right and wrong. Looked at purely from the human point of view, we call an action wrong which operates against the welfare of other persons or the community as a whole or ourselves. Thus, to steal is wrong because experience has shown that a stable human society cannot be built up on general dishonesty. There is another way of regarding the distinction, and from the latter point of view the terms right and wrong have reference not merely to human welfare, but to the accordance or discordance of the action with the Divine Will as expressed in a holy and all-perfect moral law.

Apart from this distinction as to right and wrong, there are other classifications of actions into wise and foolish, timely and untimely, or prudent and imprudent, safe or dangerous. An action which cannot be classed as wrong or foolish when done in moderation may be so when conducted in excess.

This leads us to notice briefly the very different relative values which nowadays attach to certain activities or things as compared with similar estimates in former times.

Consider, for instance, the altogether excessive importance which the conductors of daily newspapers, who reflect only average public opinion, attach now to success in competitive athletic sports and games. Those who excel in golf, lawn tennis, aviation, football, or cricket, whether men or women, are given a fame and notoriety compared with which the most eminent contributors to art, science, religion, or literature are mere nonentities.

These athletic pursuits or games are useful for bodily recreation or physical improvement, but the adulation and lavish attention given at present to those most successful in them is a mark of deterioration in the general power of assigning correct and true values to pursuits.

It is the same with certain other things, such as dress, theatrical performances, and other amusements. They have at the present time a much greater value or importance attributed to them than formerly, whilst many other serious and more beneficial occupations have a much-diminished value.

Just as the theory of Relativity shows that in physical matters each of us sees a different Universe as regards dimensions and duration depending on the position and motion of the observer, so each of us sees, so to speak, a different moral and ethical Universe in which various objects of human desire or activity have different values and importances. The objects which loom large in the mental and spiritual eye of some men are small in the eyes of others, depending upon the direction in which they are moving in a moral and spiritual sense, whether up or down.

It is the same with more important matters. The essential differences between them as regards real value are not perceived. Some are, as we say, "blind" to the true character of certain acts or activities, and these have a fictitious or distorted value given to them because viewed from only one point of view.

Thus, for instance, how few see the common vice of gambling in its true aspects? It is pursued simply for the chance of easily obtained wealth for the individual without any regard to its aspects from other points of view.

#### 6.—REVEALERS OF TRUE SPIRITUAL VALUES.

We return, then, to the consideration of the question how to reach an appreciation of the true values to be attached to various objects of human pursuit or desire.

In the physical world the agency which enables us to see material objects in right relation and proportion is Light. When we enter a new country in the dark or at night in feeble light, the nearer objects loom large. Hills which are near, but small, seem larger than distant mountains. But when the day dawns and sunlight comes these false values are corrected.

Hence to see ethical, moral or spiritual things in true relation and real importance we require an interior or spiritual light. This is something more than a mere phrase or figure of speech. There is a true inner illumination which can come to the soul of man, which reveals these human activities or desires, as well as moral and spiritual actions or states in their real magnitude or value, as compared with the false or relative values which imperfect human thought attaches to them.

This light originates in three sources. There is (i) the feeble light of Conscience; (ii) the clearer light of Revelation in the inspired Scriptures, or written Word of God; and (iii) the light which came to us from direct contact with the living Word of God, the final and true Light of the world, as revealed by the Divine Spirit to the believer.

Great efforts have been made to show that conscience is nothing but a so-called tribal instinct arising from the experience that the doing of certain things is inimical to the best interests of the tribe or race.

This, however, seems an insufficient account of it because it warns often against neglect to do good as well as doing that which is evil.

Shakespeare, who knew the human heart better than most men, does not regard conscience merely as a tribal instinct, but as an

internal witness to an external moral law. Turn to the plays of "Macbeth" or "Richard the Third," and many instances will be found.

These seem strongly to indicate that Shakespeare, at least, regarded conscience not simply as the result of human experience, but as a sturdy witness to a mighty moral law, independent entirely of human thought or experience.

Moreover, as Bishop Butler says in one of his Sermons on Human Nature, Conscience unless forcibly arrested magisterially exerts itself, and always goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence which shall hereafter second and confirm its own.

Nevertheless, neglect of its monitions causes its faint light to die away, and be replaced by a deeper darkness than before.

St. Paul shows this clearly in his first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the neglect by mankind to observe and follow out to their logical issue the evidences of Divine Wisdom in the material creation is followed by an interior darkness which prepares the way for the commission of deadly sin.

It is unquestionable that the light of conscience is at best a faint one and may easily become erroneous. It can become a Will-of-the-Wisp instead of a guiding light. Much evil has been done under the guidance of a supposed good conscience, and terrible cruelties inflicted by those who supposed themselves to be following the dictates of a conscience void of offence.

Then, next, we have the clearer light of revealed truth in the Holy Scriptures.

Here, again, rationalism has taken immense pains to try to prove the purely human origin of this literature; to abbreviate or delay the time of its production, multiply its authors and editors, and generally to undermine belief in its Divine origin and minimize its authority. But that superhuman origin and Divine authorship is supported by four great lines of argument which cannot be refuted. There is first the unity and uniqueness of this literature. There is no other literature of any ancient people, the production of which was spread over 1,000 to 1,500 years, and coming from the pens of more than threescore human authors, which has the peculiar character that when put together it seems to make one book and not many, and that all the parts elucidate and explain each other.

Then, in the next place, this literature has a singular tone of authority. It does not argue or demonstrate; it simply states or

asserts. In the earlier parts we have the phrase, "And God said;" in the middle portions, "Thus saith the Lord;" and in the Gospels, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." The third great evidence is in the predictive element of it. No efforts of the higher criticism have been able altogether to disguise the fact that there are predictions of events in it, and fulfilments of them at later dates. The history of the race, the Hebrews and Jews, with whom this literature originated is the standing proof of this fact. The Jews are the ever-enduring witness to the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Then, lastly, there is a peculiar and supernatural force or power about its words. A single verse of it seems to carry more appeal to, and food for, the human spirit than libraries full of merely human words.

What astonishing power it possesses to arrest attention, convict of sin, bring assurance of forgiveness, create hunger and thirst after righteousness, and rob death itself of its terrors.

There is no man-made literature which possesses the smallest fragment of this power.

The Bible compares itself as the Word of God to a light-giving source.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"  
(Ps. cxix, 105).

"The Commandment is a lamp and the law is light" (Prov. vi, 23).

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light" (Ps. cxix, 130).

The prophetic element in it is compared by St. Peter to a "light that shineth in a dark place."

The Bible, then, is a source of light because it reveals to us the great realities of human life in their true magnitude and proportion.

On this point it is very likely some may offer the criticism that readers with equal sincerity and desire for the truth have yet drawn very different conclusions from the same passages of Scripture.

The Rationalist is accustomed to point out that whilst the Romanist seeks for certainty in the utterances of an assumed infallible church, the Protestant has looked for it in the statements of an assumed infallible book.

Perhaps the best answer to this difficulty is in the suggestion

that the Bible is not infallible when interpreted solely in the light of the unassisted human intellect, but is infallible in all matters pertaining to human salvation, when interpreted by the Holy Spirit to the spirit of man willing to make the great adventure of faith in carrying out its logical issue and in practice the truths so far revealed by the inner light already granted.

This our Lord explained in the statement, "My doctrine is not mine but His that sent me. If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii, 16, 17).

This leads us to notice in the third place the true inner illumination that can come to the soul of man by direct contact with the Spirit of God.

#### 7.—THE ABSOLUTE OR FINAL REALITY.

God Himself is the great Reality, in the sense that He is the final, sole, and permanent Source of all things and effects. It is only when things and events are seen from His point of view, and close to Him, that they appear to us in their true values and proportions.

It is in this sense that Christ said, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John viii, 2). "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me should not abide in darkness" (John xii, 46).

The phrases "walking in darkness" or "abiding in darkness" used in Scripture, seem to mean not seeing facts or things in true relation or proportion or attaching false values to them.

That power of revealing absolute truth or true intrinsic values which appertains to God alone is signified in Scripture by the term Light, everywhere most appositely applied to the highest revelation of God in Christ. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John i, 9). "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John i, 5).

No one can look carefully and thoughtfully at much of the religious teaching and thought of to-day without noticing how widely different are the values given to certain things from the human and from the Scriptural or Divine point of view.

In one arena we see a large importance given to material symbols of spiritual things. We live at present in a material world, and are obliged, therefore, to use material things as symbols of spiritual realities. It is, however, essential that the symbols should be used as sparingly as possible and strictly in accordance with Scriptural instructions, so as to avoid the danger of resting on the material thing rather than the reality which lies behind it.

In the childhood of the race and under the Old Testament dispensation the things yet to come were denoted by material types, but now that the anti-types have appeared the attention should be fastened on them.

Hence, although certain material objects may be used to symbolize great spiritual realities, it is possible by an overwrought ceremonial religion to make the symbols themselves occupy the attention of the worshipper too much or else erroneously, and thereby check the growth of spiritual faculties.

The apostolic writers in the New Testament, following the example of their Lord everywhere, insist on the primary importance of spiritual things or events—the faith, the hope, the charity, the love to God and to man.

On the other hand, there may be and often is a movement in an opposite direction. Christianity is not infrequently preached at present as if it comprised only an all-embracing philanthropy, and what are called the social implications of the Gospel made the exclusive subject of attention.

Without doubt Christianity includes an unlimited philanthropy, but that is not the whole of it. There are explicit doctrinal teachings as to the individual relation of the soul to God, and especially as to the stupendous realities which underlie the words Sin, Atonement and Judgment.

It is a false value to regard sin as a mere imperfection, and to disregard the distinctly Scriptural teaching that it needs a remission which cannot be made by man to God, but only by God in Christ on behalf of man.

We cannot possibly adhere too closely to New Testament teaching if we are to apprehend and act upon the great realities there revealed.

The answer, then, to our question—How shall we ascertain the true realities or values of things and events in the moral and spiritual world?—is that we must “walk in the Light.”



If we ask the meaning of this phrase, the reply is perhaps best given in the words of Charles Wesley's fine hymn :—

“ Christ, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only Light,  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
Triumph o'er the shades of night ;  
Dayspring from on high, be near ;  
Daystar, in my heart appear.

“ Visit then this soul of mine,  
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief ;  
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,  
Scatter all my unbelief ;  
More and more Thyself display,  
Shining to the perfect day.”

After the reading of the paper, the CHAIRMAN proposed a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. J. A. Fleming, F.R.S., which was passed with acclamation.