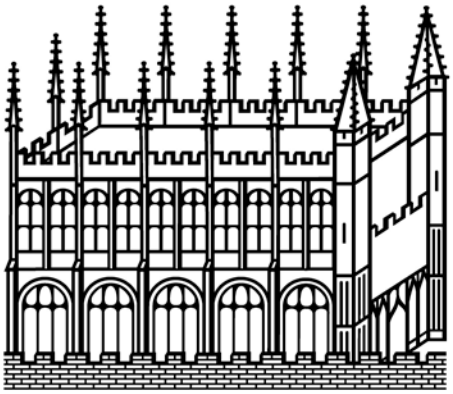


Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

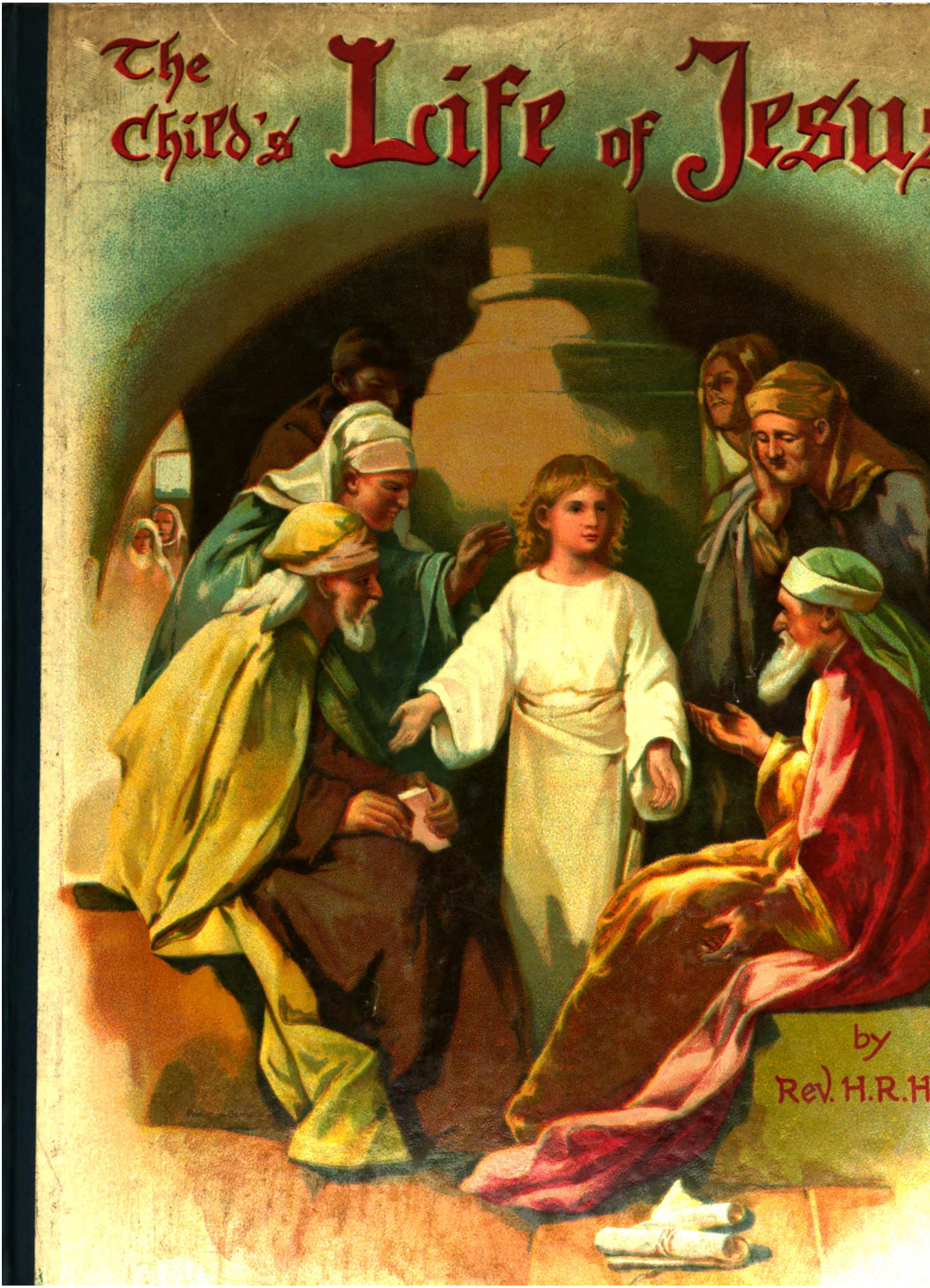
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks

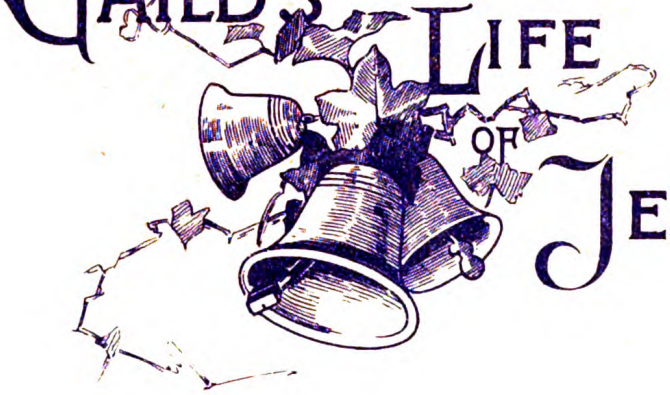
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

The Child's Life of Jesus



by
Rev. H.R.H

THE CHILD'S LIFE OF JESUS



Christ in the Carpenter's Shop

THE CHILD'S LIFE OF JESUS

BY

THE REV. H. R. HAWEIS, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "MUSIC AND MORALS," "ARROWS IN THE AIR," "CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY," ETC., ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN LAWSON,

ETC., ETC.

No. 4645.

Raphael Tuck & Sons, Ltd.
London - Paris - New York

Publishers by Appointment to Their Majesties
The King & Queen Alexandra.

LIBRARY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	OUT OF THE EAST	9
II	WHO ARE THE JEWS?	12
III	THE KING OF THE JEWS	14
IV	THE LAMB OF GOD	16
V	JESUS CHRIST IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM	18
VI	JESUS AT TWELVE YEARS OF AGE IN THE TEMPLE	21
VII	JESUS AT THIRTY YEARS OF AGE IN THE DESERT	26
VIII	JESUS RETURNS TO THE NORTH	30
IX	MIRACLES	32
X	THE INTERRUPTED SERMON	35
XI	WONDERS	37
XII	THE CALL OF THE TWELVE	40
XIII	CHRIST ON RITES AND CEREMONIES	44
XIV	JESUS ON BAPTISM	48
XV	THE GREAT SERMON	50
XVI	MISSIONERS	60
XVII	THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM	62
XVIII	SOME DRAMATIC PARABLES	64
XIX	JUDGMENT PARABLES	71
XX	THE TRANSFIGURATION	79
XXI	AT. JERUSALEM	82
XXII	AT BETHANY	88
XXIII	LAST DISCOURSES	89
XXIV	THE TRAITOR	91
XXV	LAST DAYS	91
XXVI	THE LAST SUPPER	92
XXVII	GETHSEMANE	95
XXVIII	THE TRIAL	96
XXIX	JUDAS	100
XXX	CALVARY	100
XXXI	THE REAPPEARANCE OF JESUS	104

LIST OF COLOURED PLATES.

CHRIST IN THE CARPENTER'S SHOP		Frontispiece.
"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST."	Page	19
THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN.	„	23
CHRIST AND ST. JOHN.	„	27
CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.	„	34
JESUS IS BAPTIZED.	„	38
CHANGING THE WATER INTO WINE	„	43
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.	„	47
THE SOWER.	„	54
THE PRODIGAL SON.	„	58
THE GOOD SAMARITAN.	„	63
THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS	„	67
THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.	„	74
THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.	„	78
THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.	„	83
"SAVE US, WE PERISH".	„	87
THE LAST SUPPER.	„	94
THE RESURRECTION MORNING.	„	98
BY THE SEA OF GALILEE.	„	105
THE ASCENSION.	„	108

Publisher's Note.

There is a pathetic and particular interest attached to this "Child's Life of Jesus" — the posthumous work of the gifted author. Mr. Haweis only completed the book a short while before his death, which came so suddenly, and it is the last work of importance among the many volumes of high literary value that he has given to a large and appreciative circle of readers.

Mr. Haweis was energetic and enthusiastic in the extreme in all his undertakings, but in none more so than in the writing of this story; he threw himself into the work, body and soul, with the result that is before us; it is only to be regretted that he is not here to have the satisfaction of seeing the outcome of his labours brought to light.

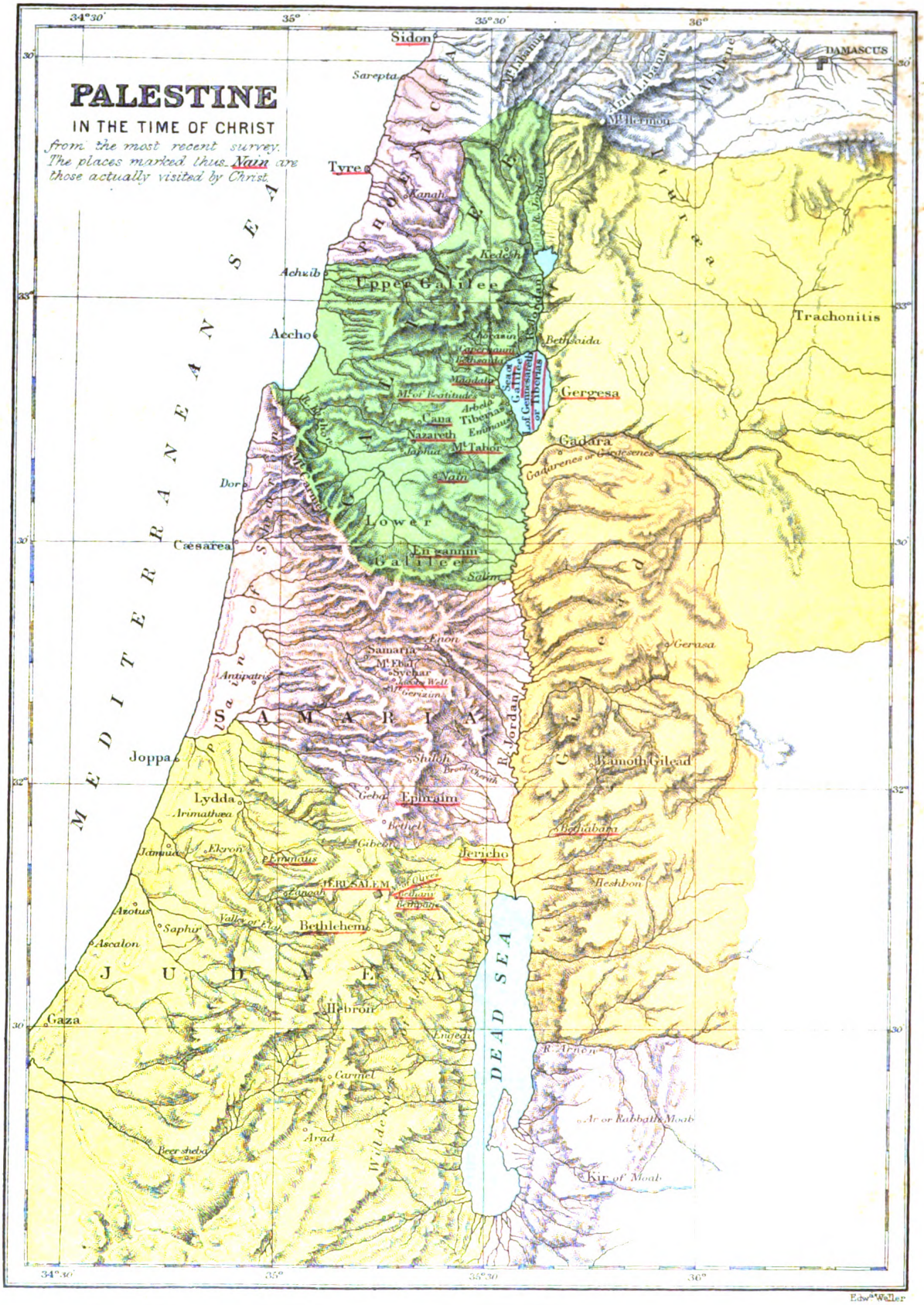
Preface.

This attempt to present the lifework and person of Jesus Christ to children is not intended to supersede the reading of the Gospel.

Wherever it has been found impossible to give a full narrative or detailed discourse of our Lord, it is intended that the teacher or reader should refer to the Gospels, chapter and verse, where this seems most advisable, will be found indicated in the text.

Further descriptions of the pictures will thus be obtained, fuller accounts of some of the parables and miracles — fuller versions of Christ's utterances — fuller details of many events which for want of space have only been briefly alluded to. At the same time the book with its pictures just as it stands may be profitably read without any such direct reference to the New Testament; whilst complete in itself it seeks to provide a key to the Evangelists and is so constructed, I hope, as to be of permanent value to the child as it passes out of childhood, as well as helpful to readers of maturer age.

F R Havergal


PALESTINE
IN THE TIME OF CHRIST
from the most recent survey.
The places marked thus Nain are
those actually visited by Christ.
34°30'
35°
35°30'
36°
Sidon
Sarepta
Tyre
DAMASCUS
Mt Hermon
Kanah
Kedesh
Achsib
Upper Galilee
Trachonitis
Acchoo
Bethsaida
Gergesa
Gadara
Cana
Nazareth
Mt Tabor
Nain
Dor
Lower
Galilee
Cæsarea
Engannim
Salim
Samaria
Mt Ebal
Sychar
Jacob's Well
Gerizim
Antipatris
SAMARIA
Joppa
Shiloh
Bamoth Gilead
Lydda
Arimathæa
Ephraim
Bethel
Gibeon
Jamnia
Elzron
Jericho
Beth-haran
Heshbon
JERUSALEM
Olives
Azotus
Saphir
Valley of Eshcol
Bethlehem
Ascalon
JUDÆA
DEAD SEA
Hebron
Gaza
Engedi
R. Arnon
Carmel
Ar or Rabbath Moab
Arad
Beer sheba
Kir of Moab
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
R. Jordan
Wilderness of Judæa
Edw.d Weller

I.

Out of the East.

Across the haze of the Desert, about 2000 years before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, comes a great Caravan.

The Chief or Sheik, known by his brilliant scarlet robe and a long spear, is mounted high upon his tall camel, and leads the way. He is followed by a crowd of white-robed attendants, mostly armed, and a long file of heavily laden camels and asses, bearing all his substance, including the women and children, who bring up the rear.

It is early morn, the travellers, weary with their long night march beneath the Eastern stars, are glad to rest ere the day grows intolerably hot, beside the gushing spring, and a deep clear pool, swarming with fish. It was called in later days Callirhoe, or the Beautiful Water. The camels lie down to be unloaded, the tents are unfurled, the caravan rests amidst sheltering cypress trees and cool verdure.

Who are the travellers?

Abraham, and Sarah his wife, and Terah his father, and Lot his nephew, and their respective families.

And where are they going?

They have come forth from "Ur of the Chaldees" out of the dep
of Armenia to go into the Land of Canaan, and we read that "into the L
of Canaan they came."

2000 years before Christ they came, carrying their idols,yes, t
worshipped "gods many and lords many;" they made little images of th
even after two generations Isaac's wife Rebecca was so devoted to her id
that she kept them hidden in her black camel's hair tent wherever she
camped on the sands of the desert. Why hidden? Because Abraham
ancestral head of the pilgrim emigrants had abolished idol worship.

In the visions of the night he had been shown that there was one g
God of the starry heavens, and rolling wind-blown sands and the mig
rivers they crossed with fear and trembling, and the distant mysterious oc
towards which they were travelling, now known as the Mediterranean.

This one great God alone was to be worshipped. To Abraham
to his Family, Isaac and Jacob his sons and the twelve patriarchs,
committed this knowledge that the world and all that is in it is ruled ove
one Sovereign Power, Whose mighty will holds the stars and planets
place and causes all things to "live and move and have their being," f
the tiniest blade of grass to the mightiest forests, from the smallest in
to man who is alone capable of appreciating the works of nature and "look
up through nature to nature's God."

One other thing was shown to Abraham "the Hebrew," or "the
who had crossed." Crossed what? Why the Euphrates, the great river (l
at the map) that rises in the Armenian mountains and flows into the Casp
Sea, and forms the water boundary or frontier which separated Abraha
first home in the Far East, Ur of the Chaldees, from the Land of Can
into which he came.

What was that other thing which Abraham "the Hebrew", the
who had crossed,was taught?

Besides the truth later on repeated, I may say thundered, by M
from Mount Sinai—"Hear O Israel the Lord thy God is one Lord" — wh
means the *abolition of Idolatry,* Abraham was taught by a strange ev
another great truth, *the abolition of Human Sacrifice.*

It happened thus. — On one occasion Abraham had lifted a knife to
his only son Isaac, in obedience to what he understood to be a Di
command. Well, the spirit command or angelic voice which cried at
moment, "Slay not thy son thine only son" — signified practically the *abol*
of Human Sacrifice.

As in those days idolatry, so in those days human sacrifice was alm
universal. People thought that "gods many and lords many" were ple
with the sacrifice, and liked to see any blood, especially human blood, flow

But from the moment the words "Slay not thy son" — and, "Thou hast not withheld thine only son from Me" — came to Abraham, the need of human blood-shedding was exposed as a piece of cruel superstition, and a true idea of sacrifice — the only sort of sacrifice which can be acceptable to God, — was clearly indicated, which is the perfect submission of the rebellious will of man to the good and perfect will of God.

All animal sacrifice was seen henceforth to be merely an outward and visible sign, token or symbol of obedience to a Divine Will. The way — quite suitable to those primitive times — of expressing this submission of man to God, was suggested to Abraham by the ram or lamb caught in the thicket.

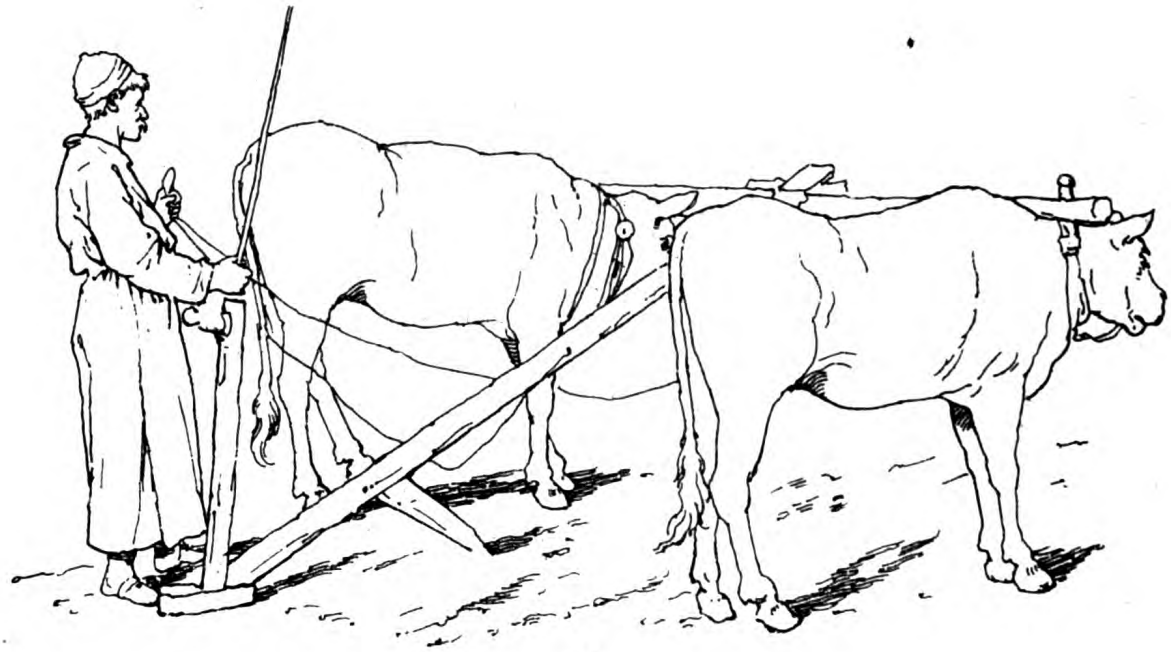
He understood. He offered up the lamb. It was to him and all his race after him the sign of his willingness to give up himself and all that was most dear to him to what to the best of his knowledge was his duty — that is to what was the right thing to do — that is the Will of God. And the spiritual and really religious Jew learned to grasp this. It was not "the blood of bulls and goats," still less the blood of men, women or little children that was wanted, but it was the, "Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God, yea I am content to do it" — that alone was wanted. And that is the only thing that can ever take away the sins of the world.

To do this perfectly — we all do it very imperfectly — is to bridge the chasm which disobedience has fixed like a great gulf between God and man. Perfect obedience is the removal of all sin. Jesus Christ, as we shall presently see, has offered this perfect obedience to God. That is why He is "the Lamb of God," as we are told in the Bible.

So these two precious truths — first one God Whose Sovereign Will rules the universe or the *abolition of idolatry,* and secondly a loyal and perfect obedience even unto death to that Sovereign Will, as the only way of safety and everlasting joy, involving the *abolition of human sacrifice,* and the conversion of animal sacrifice into a symbol or dramatic sign of that submission — these great truths were made known to that ancient Chief, that strange Hebrew who came riding 2000 years before Christ out of the haze of the desert, purposing to go into the Land of Canaan.

Now observe, he was directed to get right away from his old haunts and companions, bearing with him his reformed faith and his purified doctrine of sacrifice, and although he became the mighty King of Damascus among the heathen, as we should call them, he and his Hebrew family were ordered never to backslide, but to transmit their convictions about God and their simple prayer and praise, and symbolical worship of sacrifice to their descendants. And so we read Abraham begat Isaac and Isaac begat Jacob and Jacob, the Father of the Faithful, begat the twelve patriarchs of whom Joseph

became by far the best known, and who carried down with him into Eg
the unspoiled traditions of Abraham. And from this remarkable Family sec
or tribe of the human race came at last our Lord Jesus Christ.



II.

Who are the Jews?

The Hebrews were a branch of the "Semites" or so-called descend
of Shem one of Noah's sons.

To this wonderful Hebrew race belong not only Abraham, Isaac, Ja
and Joseph, but Moses the great Law Giver, Samuel the great Judge, D
the sweet Singer, Soldier, Poet, Solomon the mighty King, Isaiah the
forming Prophet, and lastly Jesus Christ.

But, you will ask — Why were the Hebrews chosen specially to t
the world the will of God and the whole duty of man? And why wa
most fitting that Jesus should come of that race?

I can only answer — Because the Jews by their special gifts a
people were specially well adapted for being the religious instructors of the w

If I want a swift runner, I look out for someone with a wiry muscular b

If I want a clerk for my counting-office, I seek a man who has a
for figures.

If I want someone to teach music, I look for a German, or to t
singing I look for an Italian, or to teach gardening I look for a Scotchma

so God Almighty the Sovereign Wisdom and Will, the Educator of the World, chooses special nations for their qualities, teaches us laws of beauty and the art of literature through the Wise Men of the East, practical jurisprudence and the art of good Government through the Romans, morals and religion through the Jews, because in that nation was found an unsurpassed love of righteousness, as formulated in the Ten Commandments, and an unequalled perception of the importance of personal religion, as in Isaiah, Joseph, David, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist.

To these rare gifts seem also to have been united a singular brightness, vivacity and keenness of intellect, and an indescribable magnetism and charm of person.

The grand patriarchal faces and the beautiful Jewesses have become as much types fixed in the imagination of the world, as the great Egyptians, such as Rameses II., the beautiful Queen Nofreari or Cleopatra, — the great Greeks such as Alexander, the great Romans, such as Augustus or Julius Caesar, and we may become as familiar if we will with such captivating and stately women as were doubtless Rebecca, Judith, Esther, the Magdalen, the Virgin, as we are with Livia, Sabina, Aggripina or Berenice.

At this moment nearly the whole of our religious literature as contained in the Bible is of Hebrew origin.

The Jew's method of keeping himself and his religion apart has proved at once his strength and his weakness. It was strength, in so far as it enabled him for centuries of captivity and disaster, to keep comparatively uncorrupted his morals and his religion, two things often divided by the heathen, but which it was the glory of Moses to have inseparably bound together.

But this jealous aloofness and refusal to share their privileges became their weakness when it ceased to act as a protection to the special truths committed to their teaching, and prevented the world from learning the good life which is to belong exclusively to neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, but was, in fact, the life of God Himself, lived out under human limitations.

The hard truth of their unwisdom or shortsightedness came in due course to be told them by one of themselves, according to the flesh, one Jesus of Nazareth, a popular Rabbi or Preacher, who would have been claimed by the whole nation as a Divine deliverer and singular prophet, nay even the long promised Messiah, had He only taken up arms and headed a victorious revolt against the Romans in A. D. 32 or thereabouts, for at that time the Romans held the Jews in subjection throughout Palestine. But when it was clear that Christ would do nothing to deliver them politically, but only sought to destroy the barriers between Jew and Gentile, of which they were so proud, and re-state and expound the Jewish religion by new and liberal teachings transforming it into a religion for all the world, why, then

Christ was rejected by His "own to whom He came, and who received H not." But since that time He has been accepted by the civilized w — "the whole world" of the Roman Empire, and a great deal more — as a tribal Jewish deliverer or Messiah, but as a far mightier potentate whom indeed, the ancient prophets had really spoken, even "the King Kings and Lord of Lords," and the Saviour of the World.

III.

The King of the Jews.

I said that the Jews had a special gift for discerning between r and wrong, and knowing about the mysterious Power that rules the wo a special desire to make acquaintance with Him, to come closer to Him understand what He wanted them to be and do. They wished to kn whether He was disposed to help them, and teach them how to live, would permit them to be on good terms with Him. So it came to that they themselves were taught by God through prophets like Mo who ordained Priests, that is, consecrated teachers to lead the prayers of people, and carry out the symbolic sacrifices.

Prophets were men who spake and wrote out the deep things wh God had put into their hearts; they also had the gift of foreseeing eve especially events affecting the interests of the Jewish people.

Now whenever the priests got dull and stupid, or worldly and grasp and whenever they laid more stress on the act of sacrifice, than a good of which sacrifice was the mere sign, the prophets were always there remind them that a formal or ceremonial religion was worse than use and a sort of mockery of God. But what excited even more public atten was the constant assurance of the prophets that although the Jews were o in trouble, hard pressed in captivity, One would certainly some day be b Who would deliver them from their enemies, and set up a rule of per righteousness, because He would be "Wonderful," a mighty "Counsellor" and "Prince of Peace," and of His kingdom, unlike the kingdoms of Assyria, Eg and after them Greece and Rome "there would be no end" because would reign over all, even the most distant "Isles of the Gentiles," such England and Ireland.

It would have been well for the Jews if they had remembered that t own prophets had foretold this world-wide reach of the Saviour's Kingd and not supposed that the Jewish religion, of which Christianity was natural expansion, according to St. Paul, was for ever to be only for Jews; when Messiah came they were no more entitled to keep Him al

themselves than the Ten Commandments or the knowledge of one God.

One of the most singular prophecies concerning Christ was made by a certain Balaam who was not a Jewish prophet at all. As he looked down from the top of a mountain on the Israelitish tents encamped on the very threshold of the Land of Canaan or the Holy Land, he exclaimed, fourteen centuries before Christ, "I shall see Him but not now; I shall behold Him but not nigh; there shall come a star out of Jacob and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel." But Isaiah is very bold, for he declares broadly "in His Name shall the Gentiles trust."

Now the Jews in A. D. 1 were not badly governed by the Romans, but they thought they were.

The fact is, they never seemed to be able to govern themselves for long, and did not know when they were fairly well off — which they certainly were under Herod and Pilate. If they could only have kept quiet and been law-abiding; but they nursed their grievance of a foreign rule.

Palestine (look at the map) that wonderful strip of land with its Mediterranean sea-board, whose cities Jerusalem, Damascus, Tyre and Sidon, took all the caravan commerce of the East, and handed it on through Phœnician ships to the coasts of Asia Minor, to Athens, Corinth, Rome. Palestine, whose very position on the map made it cosmopolitan, in whose marts and markets and squares the populations of the world jostled one another — Palestine could not possibly belong to the Jew alone, he would never have been able to hold it, much less govern it, yet, because it was not his, he fretted and rebelled, and every young Jewess dreamed that she might become the mother of the great deliverer or Messiah, who should lead the final revolt of the Hebrews, and establish their temporal kingdom on the ruins of the Roman Empire.

Well, at last this Messiah, this Deliverer and King was about to appear. But His Kingdom "came not with observation." His power was to be set up

in the hearts of men, not with the noise of military camps; He was to upon no earthly throne; His rule was over the realm of conscience; His p force was the compelling power of Love; His wealth was the riches of g ness; His victories were the victories over "the world the flesh and the d — His enemy was not Caesar but Sin; no man could disfranchise or rob citizens of His kingdom of their inalienable rights and special privileges, "I said He "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you."

IV.

The Lamb of God.

The Jordan River lies 1300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean You will notice in the map it flows out of the Sea of Galilee on the N and after a zigzag course of 200 miles it empties itself 1300 feet below level into the intensely salt Dead Sea, which is supposed to mark the of Sodom and Gomorrah, those two infamous cities destroyed by fire in days of Abraham.

Draw a straight line from Jericho to Jordan and you will about the fords or shallows which were always thronged by crossing caravan travellers.

Here, somewhere near A. D. 30 came one John, called John the Bap preaching and baptizing. John was a man of the desert, a man of pra a prophet, some thought he might be the promised Messiah, others E the prophet come to revisit his old haunts. He was rudely dressed wi coat of camel's hair and a leather girdle and his food was locusts, perh the locust bean, and wild honey. Close to the spot where, in old c Elisha and Elijah had crossed those same fords and by which Elisha a returned, stood John, daily preaching and daily baptizing.

Men and women flocked about him, he taught them to be sorry their misdeeds and urged them to amend their lives, and he had a w of practical advice for everybody, bad thoughts and words and deeds said, were like so much filth, and should be washed away like the impur of the body; let them everyone then and there descend into the Jordan, as they washed their bodies also purify their hearts unto repentance w meant sorrow for sin and amendment of life. Water, it was true, could do that, but it was the sign of cleansing and he, John, was sent to tell t that One was at last coming Who could and would cleanse them.

This One was none other than the Messiah, the promised deliverer. He was already in the world.

* * *

A certain morning there came in the crowd a stranger seeking baptism. But He was no stranger to John. Like and yet unlike all the others, upon Him seemed to rest, as He descended into the Jordan Waters, a gleam of bright light, a radiance of a white dove, with wings as it were "covered with silver", and whilst John hesitated in his humility to administer baptism to such an One as he knew Him to be "I have need to be baptized of Thee, comest Thou to me?" "Suffer it to be so now" was the reply, and so he suffered Him, and a voice rang in his ears — "This is my Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." There could be no longer any doubt.

The next day this gracious Being walked abroad, and John, standing with his disciples, pointed Him out. "Behold," h said "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world What should that signify to those who heard it?

Remember, from the days of Abraham animal sacrifice stood to th Jew for safety and deliverance through obedience and submission symbolize It was the simplest thing when in the last plague of Egypt the death the first-born of all the Egyptians was decreed, for the blood of a lamb, th Paschal Lamb, to be spread on the door of every Israelite house as a toke that safety and deliverance was assured to every Israelite on account of h fidelity to the God of his Fathers. Death passed over his house; just as entered and slew the first born in Pharoah's house on account of that Monarch disregard of and disobedience to Moses the servant of God.

Now the blood poured forth was not only a sign of death as a symb of submission, but of life. "The blood was the life;" and so the Blood Christ, the Paschal Lamb of God, bears also this double signification — th submission in death but also victory in the life of Christ — that "victor which overcomes the world."

The bondage of sin is worse than the bondage of Egypt. A willin slave to evil is worse than a body bound with chains. All, therefore, wh heard John call Jesus "the Lamb of God," understood that He was to be some sort the Deliverer but especially a saviour from sin, teaching obedienc and being Himself obedient — even unto the death on the Cross.

V.

Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Where did this wonderful Being come from? This Christ baptized in the Jordan, who for 1900 years has given His name to the religion of the most civilized nations of the world.

Where did this Jesus, this Lamb of God, this Deliverer from sin come from?

His parents lived in Nazareth, in Galilee, but He was born at Bethlehem in Judea.

You will see from the map (look at the map) that Nazareth is a South Galilean village midway between the Jordan and the Mediterranean but Bethlehem is not far from Jerusalem — the Royal city of David in Judea; — David, the psalmist, the conqueror of Goliath, who lived 1000 years before Christ.

Dreams and visions preceded His birth, and the birth of His forerunner John the Baptist. Shepherds feeding their flocks by night saw Angels and heard them sing "Glory to God and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." The mothers of the boys were friends; the boys were doubtless companions in childhood. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was the betrothed wife of Joseph who was warned in a dream that the son that would be born was of divine origin — "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall o'ershadow thee," said an angelic appearance to Mary, which is equivalent to saying that Almighty God intended to make a special use of humanity in order to reveal His divine life and His gracious purposes towards man.

About this time it was noticed that a bright light was visible in the evening sky. Wise men — some say great chieftains — came from the far East, bringing presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The light appeared to hang over Bethlehem. They were probably travelling up to be taxed at Jerusalem according to the Roman Emperor's decree. So it was also with Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, or as St. Luke says — "supposed to be the father," and Mary his wife.

Joseph and Mary were people in moderate circumstances. Joseph was a carpenter, though, as for the matter of that, every Jew had to learn a trade,

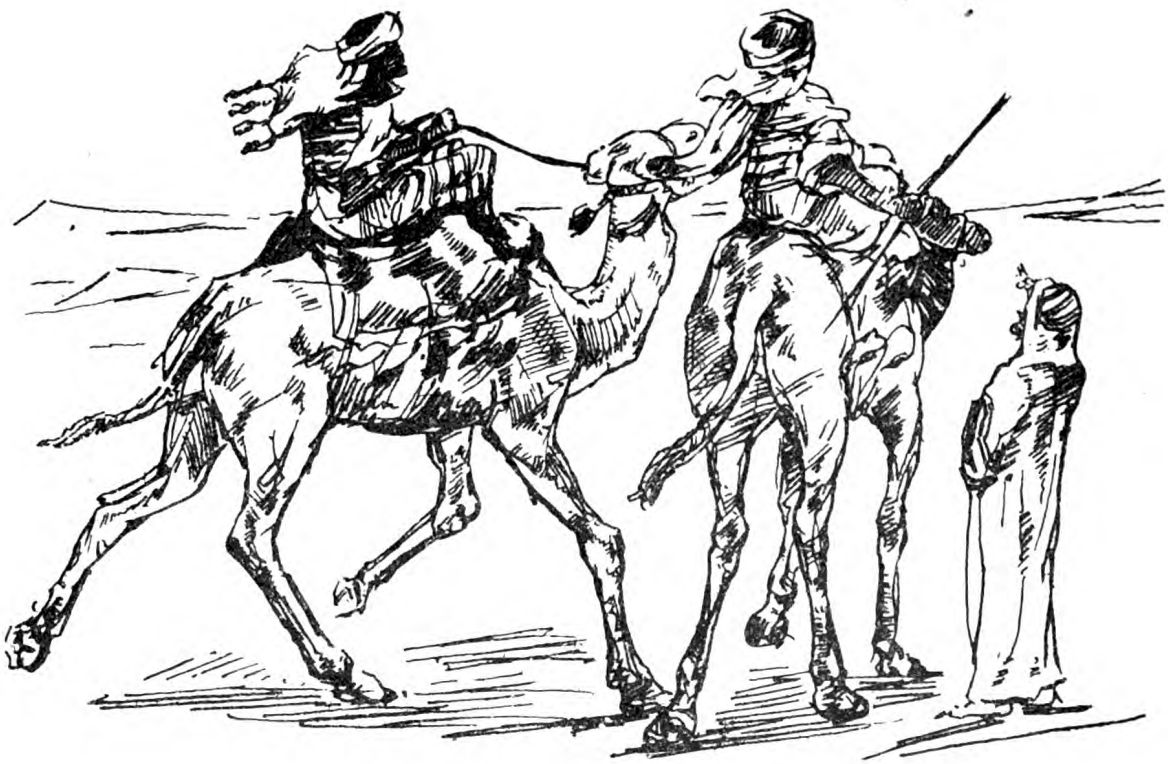
"Glory to God in the Highest."

that he might in case of need be able to support himself. He might poss
afford his children a very good education, for carpenters, as we know,
sometimes very well off. Still, at such a time Jerusalem was no dou
very expensive place, and Mary might prefer a little village like Bethle
not far off. But even that seemed to be over-crowded, and "there wa
room for them in the inn," and in a sort of hayloft, probably merely a
open to the air, which in that delicious climate would not be disagree
Jesus was born.

Like Mary and Joseph the Wise Men had their guiding dreams,
they came and worshipped the Babe. It seems about this time there
a general idea throughout the Empire that a great Reformer or Pro
perhaps a King and Conqueror was presently to appear.

Now Herod was King under the Roman Emperor Augustus Ca
over a portion of Palestine. It soon got known at Jerusalem that the
men of the East had recognized in a wonderful Babe born in Bethle
and heralded, it was said by Angels, one who was destined to be a pro
deliverer. Perhaps the Messiah Himself for whom the Jews were anxio
waiting to relieve them from the Roman oppressors.

At the right time the Babe was taken into the Temple to be cir
cised, a rite which corresponded somewhat to our dedication in bapt
The aged priest Simeon officiated, and was also inspired to recognize



wonderful character of the Babe. His conviction is embodied in that beautiful psalm known as the Nunc Dimittis and occurring in the evening Service in the Prayer-Book — "Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace. etc.,"

Now, Herod, having enquired where the Babe was to be born under cover of worshipping Him, for he himself was a Jew, treacherously ordered the slaughter of all the babes in Bethlehem hoping to slay Jesus amongst them, for he thought he might be a usurper, destined to throw off the Roman yoke under pretence of being Messiah. But Joseph and Mary, warned in a dream, got away to Egypt and for a time the Holy Family were concealed from view.

VI.

Jesus at twelve years of age in the Temple.

The death of Herod the tyrant was tne signal for the return of all the family.

No doubt, Joseph was glad to get back to Nazareth and to open his carpenter's shop, although I have no doubt he made himself very useful in Egypt. If you can do anything, and do it well, you will always be wanted.

Nazareth was a quiet little village, nestling in the Galilean Hills, shaded with tall cypresses, and fringed with the dull blue green of the cactus and the prickly pear, which made very good hedges for the little garden plots outside the villages protected by fierce dogs.

Once a year, like all good Jews, Joseph and Mary — and we may be sure the Child Jesus was not left behind — went eighty miles up to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple.

As the child grew t
about six or seven and sho
extraordinary intelligence, t
no doubt, called His atte
to the various places far
in Jewish history through w
they had to pass. Shu
where Elisha had lodged
the hospitable widow's ho
Jezreel where the dogs
Jezebel a Sidonian Princess
wife of wicked King A
Megiddo, where Sisera
routed and assassinated a
lay in the tent of Jael the
of Heber the Kenite. And
there was Jacob's well sa
even then, and more sacred as the scene of Christ's conversation with
woman of Samaria some twenty-five years later — a conversation in w
He declared that the water that He could give was of a kind that all
drank of it should thirst never more. Then there was Sechem, the an
burial place of the Hebrew race, where to this day deep down in an
explored vault still, in all probability, lie the bones of Abraham, and J
the Father of the Faithful.

How eagerly as He grew older did the thoughtful boy look out fo
already familiar walls of David's City, Jerusalem gleaming white in the
of the rising or setting sun, against the olive trees of pleasant Gethsem
across the valley. Once a year — only once a year; how the event
have been looked forward to!

By the time Jesus was twelve, the age when Jewish boys were repute
have reached manhood, and took the baptism of Moses, His knowledg
the Jewish Scriptures — that is our Old Testament, for the New Testa
was not yet written — was no doubt complete.

But the perusal of it suggested then, as it suggests now, many quest
Boys are fond of asking questions — though they do not always liste
the answers. But Jesus listened.

We read that on one memorable occasion His parents missed
and actually left Jerusalem without Him on their homeward journey. T
were hundreds of travellers coming and going up to the Feast of the Pass
They travelled in companies or caravans, and they naturally got to k
each other as modern tourists do who travel together. The absence of

The Visit of the Wise Men.

or another would not be immediately noticed; but when Joseph and Mo
Mary had missed Jesus for a whole day, they began to get quite anx
They had not been anxious at first. They knew the boy could be trusted
of their sight. He was sure to seek only good company. All parents do
feel this about their children, because they know by experience, how
they are to get into mischief when out of sight. Is it not nice to hea
parent say — "Oh, he is all right, she's all right we can trust him or h
But they did not want to lose their boy, and then it was so unlike Hi
be away so long. So they sought Him sorrowing, and at last found Hi
the Temple at Jerusalem, in one of the Temple courts surrounded by
scribes and Learned Doctors of the Law both hearing them and asking t
questions.

A studiously inclined child may often retire into a corner absorbed
some story book and actually fail to hear those who call. "Son, Son," c
Mother Mary as she catches sight of the boy Jesus, half hidden by
throng of the wondering Rabbi who crowd about Him, "Why have you tre
us like this? Your father and I have sought you sorrowing."

At that moment the boy knew
had to go, exciting and enthralling as
the occasion.

Do you know what it is to be ca
away in the middle of some keen spor
delightful pleasure? To Jesus, to see
hear the learned men of the day, as
Himself grew in knowledge, to ask quest
He had been hoarding up for months
He rested after His labours in His fath
workshop, or strolled out on the Green
pastures above Nazareth — to Jesus s
moments were filled with wondrous mean
and now suddenly to be stopped, ta
away to go home, and not return fo
whole year — to go home far away f
the delightful stir of Jerusalem with
novel sights and sounds, away from
varied conversation of learned and w
informed people, who were so kind
took such pains to teach Him what
knew, and listened so wonderingly
sympathetically to all He said — away
twelve more months to quiet, nar

perhaps even dull little Nazareth and its common-place folk, and its common-place toil — yet, when called, He showed no sign of irritation or annoyance — with a wisdom deeper than theirs, a little pained, and oh, so full of regret, and more surprise at His inmost needs and His inward call not being recognized by those who loved Him best, "I wish you could have left Me alone, I wish you could have felt that if I came not it was because I had something important to do, as important as any carpenter's business at Nazareth. It is My Heavenly Father's business "how is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

His parents, we are told, understood not the saying, but you may be sure it was one of those which Mother Mary kept and pondered in her heart.

But Jesus obeyed. He did not ask to stay; and thus He taught all children for all time that obedience to parents, and not arguing with them or resisting their will is a child's first duty.

Every age has its lesson to learn, but obedience is the lesson to be learned in childhood if a life is ever to be good and useful and happy. So, "He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them." Yes, you must learn to serve before you can hope to govern.

* * *

We get no other glimpse of this marvellous person for about eighteen years. We see Him for a moment in the manger, then in the Temple, then no more, till He came to be about thirty years of age, then again we find Him in the environs of Jerusalem. He makes His way to the shores of Jordan to seek, as we have seen, the new baptism of John, the friend of His boyhood, as He had sought, eighteen years before, in the Temple the traditional wisdom of the Jewish elders.

VII.

Jesus at Thirty

years of age

in the Dese

The muddy Jordan River, flows from the Lake of Galilee the Red Sea is fringed on either with bright green vegetation, trop in its luxuriance of flowers, and passingly beautiful in the short e March spring. The trees heavily la with blossom dip into its wa huge grasshoppers sing, and bril moths and glittering dragonflies among the tall grasses and re growing in the shallows and flowe flags that spring everywhere, and themselves in tangled thickets half immersed copses, a refuge the infrequent birds and many w rats. The banks rise but a few and on a fertile level some hundred yards broad grow fruit trees, oli lemons, oranges and the prickly pear. Fifty feet higher begins another terr and this stretches away with ever diminishing green, the soil getting sand rockier and drier until it becomes a mere barren waste, up to the foo the enclosing hills beyond.

This desert space, forsaken of man, save for a few wandering Bedo and Outlaws, or some poor leper shunned of all, has ever been the ret of anchorites or hermits who may have retired to seek solitude, medita and prayer, far from the madding crowd of Jerusalem and Jericho.

Hither came Elisha, hither came John the Baptist, hither came Jesus Ch after His baptism by John at the Jordan Falls, to listen to the Heav voices and prepare Himself for that wonderful course of divine teaching that great struggle with the world which was to end on Calvary in two a half, or at most three short years from that time.

Christ and St. John.

Behold Jesus alone in that barren sandy waste, rough boulders mi
with small round grey stones that looked in the blinding light of the Sy
sunshine like loaves of white bread. Jesus alone sheltered only by cave
exposed to the attack of mountain leopards, with which the place swarn
and which gives its name Bethabbara or Beit-mar — the place of the leo
beyond Jordan.

It was a weird and desolate spot, yet Jesus felt not alone, beca
as He was wont to say, "His Father was with Him."

There was no more carpentry to be done now; He had learned
lesson of obedience and subjection at Nazareth. He had received the syn
of purification in baptism and fulfilled all righteousness under John, hencef
He was "to be about His Father's business" and that only.

Absorbed in meditation, lifted up in spirit above the earth, He
stained from food.

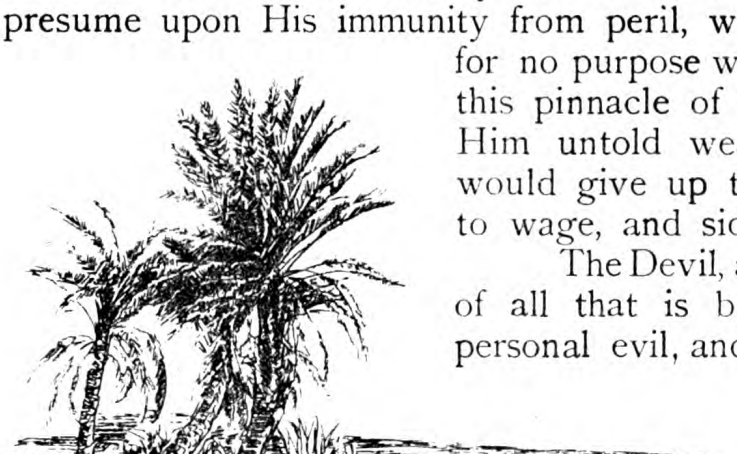
Fasting in old days often accompanied prayer. In those hot count
heavy meals were held to indispose people for pious exercises and reflect
But Jesus was human as well as divine, and after many days He w
up as out of a sublime trance and felt hungry, as we might do after s
long sleep.

At this point, three of the Evangelists introduced into their acco
what is known as the Temptation of Christ in the Wilderness.

An evil spirit appears. We are not told in what form. In pictu
he is usually represented as a dark looking being with black spiky w
— and it is as good as any other sort of representation.

First the Tempter appeals to the appetite of hunger. Pointing to
round loaf-like stones of the desert, he said to Jesus — "Command th
stones to be made bread."

Next he used flattery to induce the claimant to Divine Power
presume upon His immunity from peril, which He was urged to incur,
for no purpose whatever. "Cast Thyself down f
this pinnacle of the Temple." Lastly he prom
Him untold wealth and dominion if only Je
would give up the war against evil He was ab
to wage, and side with the Devil — as he is cal



The Devil, as we all know, is the impersona
of all that is bad. It is a convenient word
personal evil, and as we believe in personal g
— whom we call God —
alas we cannot but believe,
there is such a thing as perso
evil. Indeed, there may be m
Devils as Christ undoubte

taught, and the general belief of the Jews at this time that one called Satan was head Devil or King of the Evil and Rebellious Kingdom called Sin, seemed to receive some countenance. Jesus Christ, indeed, nowhere explains or endorses this theory, but He often spoke of Evil Spirits and cast out Devils that had entered into and possessed themselves of people's bodies, and His words sometimes seemed to imply the existence of some one Archfiend. But it is not always quite clear to us at this distance of time, and with the very short fragmentary, and sometimes confused reports that we have of His words, where matter of fact ends and parable and imagery begins; for without a parable we read, He taught not the people. The language of the Apostolic writers, especially St. John and St. Peter, is equally vague.

If now, you ask, what exactly happened to Jesus in the desert, Jesus alone knew, and Jesus alone could have told. Many good writers assume that the chief temptations that meet us all at the beginning of life presented themselves to Jesus, our Great Example, on the threshold of His career, and were vanquished or set aside by Him as in a dream or vision.

Now we act in dreams of the night very much as we should act under the same circumstances if awake. The power of comparison, even the sense of proportion, is often dormant. If we see a mouse as big as a house, it causes us no surprise whatever. We think it all quite natural. But conscience, or the moral sense, is as active asleep as awake. We are tempted, and fall, or we resist; just as we should if we were awake.

He was hungry. It is not wrong to be hungry; but He was not going to make bread, or break bread, with the Devil, for all that. He is next invited to cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the Temple, and thus use capriciously powers which He never used except for the good of man and the glory of His Heavenly Father. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," is the reply to all that presume upon Divine protection, when they neglect natural forethought, and the natural means of self-protection. Jesus needn't have cast Himself down, He could have come down by the staircase.

The high mountain to which He is next hurried is the scene of the subtlest of all three temptations. It was the promise of a short cut to glory

and power, leaving out the struggle and the pain and the dreadful Ago The Devil anticipated the mood which actually did come to the Lord Gethsemane. "You are, or you wish to prove yourself a King," says tempter, "but you know that your kingdom is one that you must enter throu much tribulation. Your Throne will be a gibbet; your Crown will be m of thorns; you want to make the Kingdoms of this world your own. W you can have them all without lifting a finger, without Gethsemane, with Calvary and the Cross. You need not drink the cup you will most sur dread when the time comes. You have only to fall down and worship now, and I will make everything over to you here at once. They are mine, and I will give them to you instantly."

But the claim was disallowed. "Satan, they are not yours to g Human beings are not children of the Devil as you assume. They are sons of God, and the Kingdoms of the Earth are the Kingdoms of God and His. Christ."

This is the whole meaning of Baptism. Remember it, and underst it well. You are signed with the Sign of the Cross, *because* you are a Cl of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus disarms Devil and claims His own Kingdom.

At that Sovereign Proclamation the Devil vanished. For the De also believe and tremble. The Father of Lies found that his gigantic fr was discovered and he fled. Adoring Angels, whom Jesus had refused summon "to bear Him up lest He should dash His foot against a sto came and ministered unto Him. Then Jesus set His face to go towards Jerusal and the terrible news reached Him that John the Baptist, the friend His boyhood, had at last incurred the anger of Herodias, the wife of Hero brother Philip, whom the King or Tetrach Herod had taken to be his w and of whom John had said — It is not lawful for thee to have her."

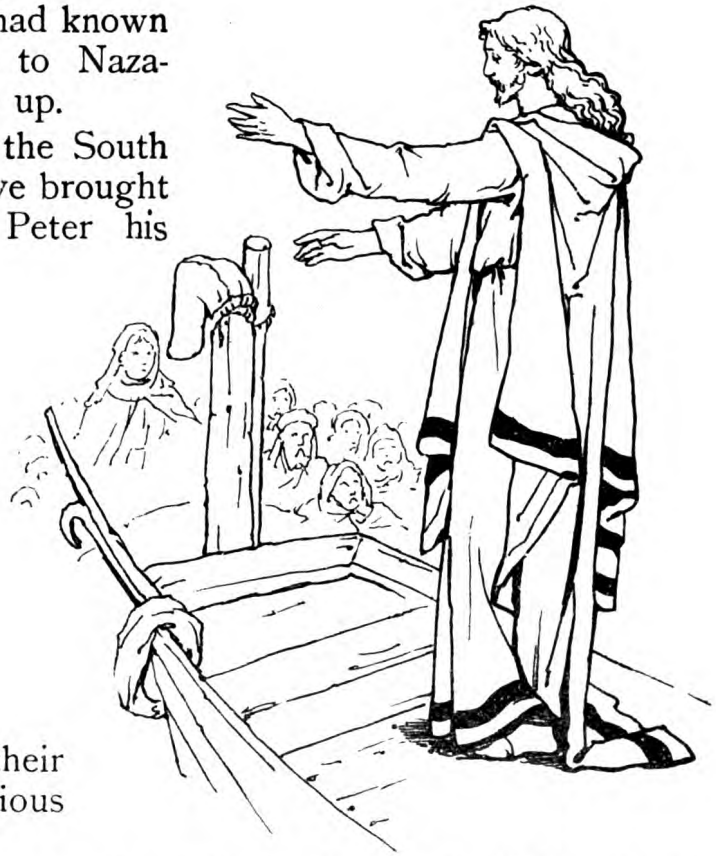
VIII.

Jesus returns to the North.

With the untimely removal of John the Baptist, the immediate attractio the Jordan Waters was gone, and the ministry in the Judæan Synagog where Jesus was beginning to teach, at such a crisis might have brought own career to an abrupt close. Danger to the friends or partisans of J seemed everywhere. The family of Jesus were all at Nazareth — nea eighty miles away. He was not averse — though His call must have seen to all His friends a strange one — to revisiting the scenes of His early da

and speaking to the people who had known Him from boyhood; so He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up.

He did not, however, leave the South unaccompanied. He seems to have brought with Him, Andrew and Simon Peter his brother, whose industry as fishermen lay about the Sea of Galilee, and whom He met on Jordan's banks, visitors like Himself to the Feast of the Passover at Jerusalem.



Quantities of fish went from the Sea of Galilee by rapid transit through the Roman Postal Service, over the splendid Roman roads to the capital, and Andrew and Peter no doubt looked after their trade interests along with their religious duties.

On their journey back they fell in with Philip, and Philip brings Nathaniel known as Bartholomew.

The nucleus of the twelve Apostles is already formed, and even thus early Jesus comments suggestively on Peter or Cephas whose name means a stone, for on that rock was His Church to be founded.

Some people seem to think that religion must be dull, and can only be professed by people with long faces. They appear to be of opinion that anything that is at all pleasant must be a little wrong and therefore scowled at. But Jesus would not have agreed with them. He always had a pleasant smile and a kind word for everybody. He was very popular with the children; He always had time for them; and made them feel that what He had to say was just as much for them as for anybody else. They seem to have crowded about Him a good deal, and He would not allow them to be driven away. He caressed them lovingly, and brought them into His addresses and parables, and won them over to such an extent that the very street Arabs were shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David," and we all know that it is rather difficult to get street boys to attend to anything in the shape of a clergyman.

We might not expect to find the Divine Master, the greatest prophet who has ever appeared in the world, entering with the kindest active interest

into the festivities of a Weddi
breakfast, and going out of His v
to find the best wine with su
delicate regard for the host's feelir
that the host himself did not ev
know where it came from, Je
being so careful not to divulge
secret, even when the admir
attention of the company was cal
to the excellent quality of
wine.

It happened on this wise. T
wine, it appears, had run short;
Mother of Jesus perceiving that
large number of the guests pres
belonged to their suite, thought t
Jesus who had attracted such a cro
was the proper person to supply
deficiency, especially as it was
custom in poorer circles, at least wh
many were invited, for the guests
bring a contribution of wine. "S
she said "they have no wine." Je
at once accepts the situation, the pots were filled with water by
Lord's orders, and when resorted to were found to contain excellent wi

IX.

Miracles.

Now a word about miracles.

The Gospel History is full of what is called a miraculous element a
some people have thought, because such things do not happen often, perha
they never happened at all — that people only pretended to do them, or
have seen them, or that they were all capable of some natural explanat
according to known laws. But that is not at all the case. For not only
the Old and New Testaments have wonderful things been recorded, such
people being aware of what was going on hundreds of miles off, furnit
moved, doors barred and unbarred mysteriously without a visible mea
diseases cured suddenly without the usual physic, bodies lifted in the

strange apparitions, sometimes of the so-called dead, sometimes of angels and spirits, people raised from what at all events appeared to be the dead — voices and signs and wonders. No one with any sense supposes that such things, if they really do happen, happen without causes, for everything must have a sufficient cause, but there may be many causes which are yet unknown, just as once we did not know what caused thunder and lightning, or storms, or cholera, and may other diseases. Doubtless there is nothing the cause of which may not yet be found out, and we have not yet found out everything. When a fact is undoubtedly proved to have happened, and it cannot be explained by any known law or attributed to any mere fraud, delusion or conjuring, why, the reasonable thing is to admit the fact and say that we don't know how it happened.

Now this is exactly what we have got to do with a great many wonderful things recorded in Greek and Roman History, as well as in the Bible, and also through the Middle Ages, and also in our own time, and especially of late years, when apparitions, and what is called second-sight, and wonderful cures, and a good many other strange things, have created so much astonishment, that Societies of learned men have met together to examine into them, and, if possible, to find out their, at present, unknown causes.

But still nothing is gained by explaining away this or that Miracle, as undoubtedly there remain many others which cannot be explained away and belong to occurrences, the cause of which remain at present undiscovered.

The people seemed very much surprised at the abundance and marvellous character of Christ's mighty works. But He Himself called their attention to the fact that they belonged to a class of events with which they ought to be perfectly familiar both in past history as well as in contemporary experience. They themselves, He told them, could cast out devils, heal the sick, see visions, dream dreams, enjoy immunity from poison, and were capable of doing many wonderful things — greater things He said even than they saw Him do could be done by them if they had faith. In this way He asserted that His own miracles were not different in kind, though perhaps in degree and frequency, from the exercises of power that belong properly to human nature, though so little use was made of them and so seldom. Indeed He was careful to point out that what wonders He wrought He wrought in His character of "the Son of Man." The peculiarity of His miracles was, they were never done to excite mere wonder, gratify curiosity,

Christ in the Temple.

or to selfish ends, but always to call attention to things which belonged to the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven, which, He said, He had come from the Father to set up on earth.

X.

The Interrupted Sermon.

Now the Kingdom of Heaven is none other than the outward and visible Church of Christ on Earth. The Church of Christ not only means bishops, priests, deacons, clergymen, cathedrals, churches and chapels, but is composed of all those who call themselves Christians, and who believe in Christ and follow Him. The Church, Jesus said, was to be like leaven hidden in a lump or like a light shining in darkness. Signs and wonders might indeed attract men, and might be useful in their way, but love and good works could alone lay the foundation of the Temple not made with hands, and that silent and spiritual kingdom of the heart of which the visible Church, after all, was only the outward sign.

It is not quite clear whether He went to see His parents immediately on His return to Galilee, or whether He first went to the lake and began His ministry in the Synagogue of Capernaum, but it is quite certain that He did not avoid Nazareth, although the people who had known Him from childhood were not prepared to honour Him as a prophet, and even His own family seem to have been alarmed and not over-pleased at the amount of notoriety that His extraordinary sayings and doings had already won for Him.

The critical moment came at last when on a certain Sabbath day at Nazareth, He entered the Synagogue or village Chapel, and stood up to read a Chapter. It was quite usual to invite people of learning who had a gift of speech to read and comment on some parts of the Old Testament, and great curiosity was felt when the young Rabbi — for such most people now recognized Him to be, — appeared as a teacher in His own native village.

Strange stories about Him already passed from mouth to mouth. Simon Peter, the fisherman, told how He had visited his own wife's mother when her life was despaired of, and how the fever had at once left her.

The families round the lake were loud in His praise. He had healed so many sick people by His touch. His very words seemed to have some remedial power. He therefore returned to Nazareth with reputation already made, and the people were rather disappointed that He did not at once show them some specimens of His power, but seemed more bent upon teaching and explaining the Scriptures.

I daresay, if you have been to a chemical lecture, or any other instruc where a black board and chalk were to be used, you may have felt impat at the long explanation which had to be gone through before the amu experiment or the interesting drawings on the black-board came off. It the same with the people of Nazareth. They would have liked a mir

But now watch the scene.

As Jesus stands in the pulpit, they hand Him up a roll of the prophet Isa Before Him are a crowd of expectant faces, such as small landholders, fisherme Scribe and a Pharisee, a Doctor of the Law, and no doubt His own fa and relations.

Behind a lattice sat the eastern women veiled as was the custom. He re "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me." "Does He mean Himself?"mutte scribe. The young Rabbi goes on — "He has anointed Me to preach Gospel to the poor." "I wonder who has anointed Him?" whispers anot "To heal the broken hearted," "Good!" "recover sight to the blind" — "t say He healed a blind man by the Lake yonder" — "to preach the accept year of the Lord" — — — Then He suddenly closed the Book.

They were now all staring at Him. His manner no doubt led the expect that something unusual would follow. And so it did. But we s never know what that sermon was. He handed back the roll to the C and sat down according to the custom to preach. "This day," He said, the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." A searching application no doubt follo The rights of the poor and despised were advocated. The sick,and the cla

of the needy were no doubt consid in detail, at the expense perhaps of comfortable and well-to-do. Some have been pointedly told their du to their neighbours for the first t and may not have been well plea A great many were strangely mo no doubt, and attracted by the Prea indeed they hung upon His lips, wondered at His gracious wo But the conceited gentry shrug their shoulders and grew impat They had not come there to be lectu but to see a young Rabbi cred with miracle working. "Enou someone shouted "A sign! A sign! T say you work miracles. Can't show us something of the sort."

interrupted Rabbi replied readily — "You shall have no sign. Those who heed not My word shall see none of My miracles. You are no better than your fathers who persecuted the prophets. Well, the prophets will go to others, not only to the poor whom you see and despise, but to the Gentiles. Your privileges will not save you."

These were some of the words of Jesus Christ's first recorded Sermon. They rose at Him furiously, and in the scene of wild confusion, in which that Sabbath morn service broke up, the fearless Teacher was hurried out of the Synagogue, up the steep path to the top of the hill; they intended to cast Him over the crags into the valley beneath, but those sturdy fishermen, Peter and James, and John and Andrew were doubtless not far off, they proudly rallied round Him and got Him clear of the village, back to Capernaum and the friendly shores of the Lake of Gennesaret, where the people adored Him for His gentle and beautiful words, and His wonderful works of love and mercy.

We do not hear of His returning to Nazareth. The secluded mountain village had indeed cast Him out, the world received Him.

XI.

Wonders.

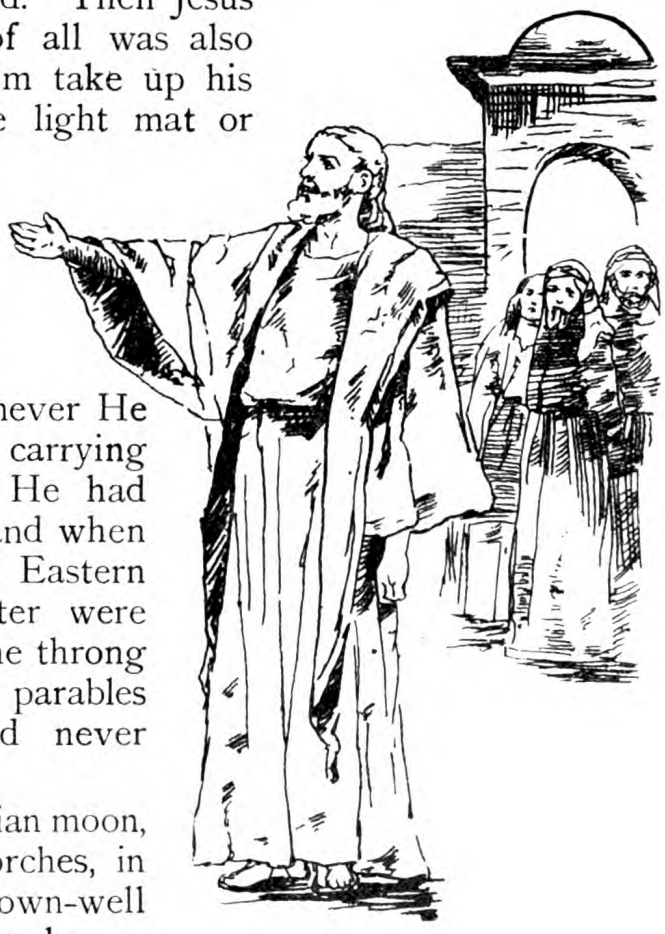
A marvellous outburst of wonder working power seems to have followed Christ's rejection at Nazareth. Wherever He went crowds followed Him. The quiet benign Presence moved in and out amongst men, doing good. Little groups of chosen disciples were very soon recognized, and although one Levi better known as Matthew, afterwards credited with writing the Gospel which bears his name, who sat at the receipt of custom as employé of the Roman Government, rose up and followed Him, and the fishermen left their nets — they do not seem generally to have abandoned their employment. It is not necessary always to give up what you are about in order to be Christ's Disciple, you can be a Christian and remain in your calling or profession whatever it is, if it is not a wicked one like that of a pick-pocket or a smuggler.

The Disciples were now beset right and left by people who wanted their sick healed by Jesus, or wished to enroll themselves amongst His acknowledged Disciples. They seem to have continued to work and trade as usual, but such scenes as now daily occurred had never been witnessed before in those little Northern towns. Now it was a man covered with leprosy, a loathsome skin disease, so loathsome that no one could come near him, nor was he admitted into any house or place of worship, but he fell down at Jesus' feet, was touched and was healed.

Jesus is Baptized.

At another time, a poor man with a withered hand came into the Synagogue, and, before all the people, his hand was restored.

Again there was another poor man so afflicted with palsy that he shook all over and could neither stand nor walk, so they took him straight off on a couch to a house where Jesus was. The place was crowded and numbers stood about the door to catch even a word that fell from the great Teacher's lips. It was impossible to get in with the couch so they climbed up to the roof. Now the roofs in Palestine were flat, and mere platforms made of baked clay at the top. Here people came out in the evening to breathe the cooler air, and you could sometimes go from roof to roof and meet your friends; the women thronged there and a great deal of gossip went on. So they got the poor man up, broke a hole in the clay roof, and let the sick of the palsy down into the crowded hall where Christ was teaching. When He saw them, He merely said to the man "Thy sins be forgiven thee". But what the poor man wanted was to be healed. People did not understand that Jesus was going to use the man's infirmity to represent the sickness of the soul; it was His way to make a parable out of everything. Some were angry "Who can forgive sins?" they said. Then Jesus showed that He who was the Lord of all was also the Healer of sins. And He bade him take up his bed and walk. The man arose; the light mat or carpet on which he lay was quickly rolled up and shouldered, and he walked home to his own house, before them all, as sound as any of them.



There never had been such a physician — a good physician of soul and body too. No wonder whenever He appeared the crowds followed Him, carrying their sick or praying to be healed. He had no time so much as to eat, we read, and when the cool of the evening came, the Eastern story-teller, snake-charmer, and fire-eater were forsaken; indeed they formed part of the throng that gathered to listen to such stories, parables He called them, as the people had never heard before.

Under the bright light of the Syrian moon, far into the night blazed a glare of torches, in the Market-place in the street by the town-well at the door of the Synagogue, where lay a

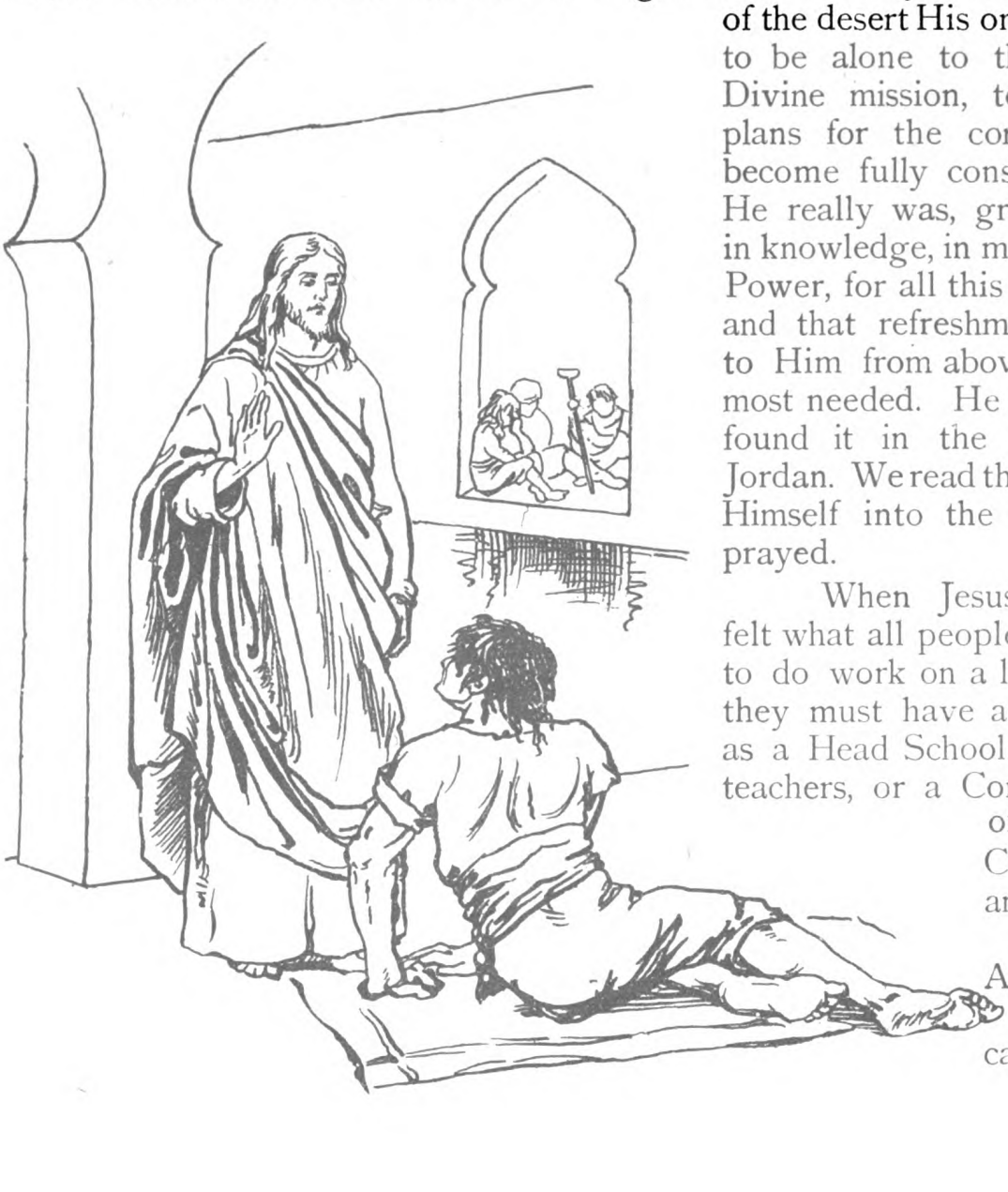
great number of sick folk; indeed Capernaum at night must have looked
a great out of door hospital or fair, and the Healer went about the w
and booths, and the patients rose up, and those who looked on at
amazing spectacle praised God who had given such magnificent powers to

XII.

The Call of the Twelve.

After a great strain, the body and mind need repose. Our Lord se
to have felt the necessity of retirement for meditation and prayer.

To be alone after incessant crowds day and night; alone with
Father as He had been before He began His ministry, the wild leop
of the desert His only compan
to be alone to think over
Divine mission, to lay out
plans for the coming work
become fully conscious of
He really was, growing in g
in knowledge, in mastery of Di
Power, for all this He felt soli
and that refreshment that
to Him from above was wha
most needed. He sought and
found it in the desert bey
Jordan. We read that He witho
Himself into the wilderness
prayed.



When Jesus returned
felt what all people feel who
to do work on a large scale,
they must have assistance.
as a Head Schoolmaster requ
teachers, or a Commander
officers, J
Christ's Teac
and Officers
the twelv
Apostles.
When
came back

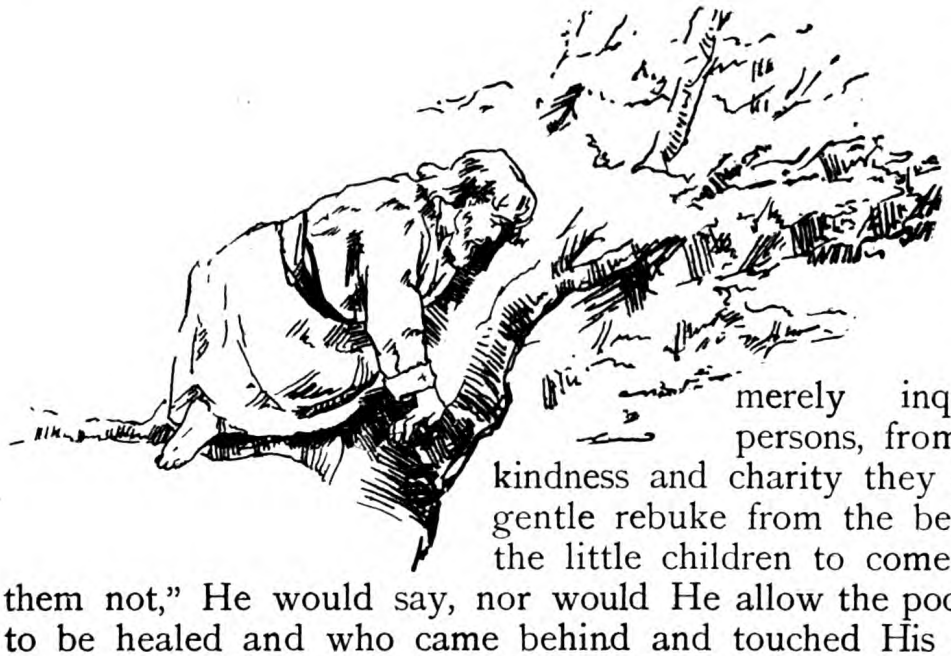
the desert, to begin work in right earnest, He selected Peter, Andrew, James and John, the most prominent of His followers, and then went on to choose Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphæus and Simon the Canaanite, who belonged to an earnest, and religious sect named Zealots, — a word we use even now for people who show much zeal or earnestness, — Judas, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed Him.

You will notice there were two Simons, two James and two Judas's. You must be careful not to confound them. One James was the brother of the Lord, supposed to be by a previous wife of Joseph, he was afterwards identified by some with the Bishop or Overseer of the Church of Jerusalem. He was afterwards killed at Jerusalem. The other was supposed by some to be the writer of the Epistle, and the Son of Alphæus, but the Epistle General is perhaps more fitly attributed to the Bishop of Jerusalem. One of the Simons was surnamed Peter, Greek for rock or stone, the other Simon was known as the Zealot. Judas was the brother of James, also son of Alphæus, and the Judas the Traitor, was known as the man from Kerioth, or Iscariot, as it is called in the Gospel stories.

Of these twelve privileged men, the Apostles, Peter, James and John seem to have been closest to our Lord. To Peter, the rock, afterwards the companion of Mark, John Mark, of the Acts, we owe very largely the earliest Gospel which was known as St. Mark's Gospel.

To John, the beloved Disciple, we owe the substance of the latest, the Gospel of St. John. To James we owe the Epistle General, to Matthew, the Publican, we owe the Gospel containing so many fragments of Our Lord's discourses. A few stray words or a stray incident and a great many doubtful traditions are all the other records which remain of Our Lord's doings and sayings upon earth.

From this time forward, Jesus seems seldom to be unaccompanied by one or more of these dear companions. One Judas carried the bag, he was probably a good man of business, he acted as general treasurer, secretary and almoner as well as caterer in chief for the little group of wandering missionaries. In the East, everyone begs, and what we call tips, of all kinds, are expected, nor in those days in the absence of poor laws and Workhouses, was there any adequate provision for the destitute, so that everybody had to help them according to their means. Others of the company looked out for



lodgings, and s
between Jesus an
sorts and condit
of men, women
children, who c
around saying
we would see Je
In their anxiety
prevent idlers
merely inquisitive importu
persons, from abusing His inf
kindness and charity they sometimes met wi
gentle rebuke from the beloved Master. "S
the little children to come unto Me, and fo
them not," He would say, nor would He allow the poor woman, who wa
to be healed and who came behind and touched His garment, to be dr
away, nor the desponding blind man Bartimæus who cried out in the st
to be silenced, nor the eager Zacchæus who climbed up a sycamore tre
be put aside because he was a hated tax-gatherer.

Still no doubt Jesus valued the services which His devoted follo
were ready to render, and we know that He found great comfort in His
inner circle to whom He explained His parables at leisure, and whom
initiated into the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

By the Kingdom of Heaven He meant the Church He was going
set up in the world. By the Church He meant a company of faithful pe
whose great object in life was to be good, to do right and make other pe
happy, by teaching them how to please God and love one another.

In this you might think there was not much mystery; but the Ch
of Christ proposed to teach people what might be known and believed a
God, and God is very mysterious; to teach what was meant by prayer,
how to communicate with God, and that is again very mysterious, for ou
a right knowledge of God and a right use of prayer comes the knowle
and the will and desire to be good, that is to do right and make other pe
happy as well as ourselves.

Changing the Water into Wine.

XIII.

Christ on Rites and Ceremonies.

Having selected His body-guard Jesus had to face the situation how t set about preaching that new Gospel or new commandment as St. John cal it which was to save the world. And this brought Him at once into collisio with the Jewish Rabbis of the period.

You have probably often heard that the Jews lived under the law Moses, the Ten Commandments, and many ceremonial observances which the thought quite as important as the Ten Commandments. The Ten Comman ments is the best known of all the laws of Moses, and you can probabl repeat them. St. Paul's Epistles, which contain so many wise things, tol his countrymen the Law of Moses was a school-master to bring them to Chris He spoke of a letter — the letter of the law — and of a spirit or the spir of Christ; and he explained that there was a great difference. For instanc the letter of the law said, that no manner of work was to be done on th Sabbath day, or the one day in seven devoted to religious worship — tha was the letter. But when Christ Himself worked on the Sabbath day an was rebuked by the Scribes and Pharisees, He declared that it was lawfu to do good on the Sabbath day, and that to all rules most sensible peopl feel that there are certain exceptions.

The use of rules is to teach the secret of right action. That is wha we call principles of action. The use of being governed by others is to teac people to govern themselves. When they are able to do that, they will d all and even more than any rule bids them to do, besides rules may som times be applied in an unreasonable and absurd way. I make a rule to g to my Office punctually at nine o'clock, but if my child is dying I ma stay at home.

If I understand the meaning of a rule, I shall act in the spirit of i though I may sometimes put aside the letter of it. Now the Jews who cam out of Egypt, an undisciplined race under Moses, were like children and the had to be taught like children. I say to my boy of six, "Johnnie, you mus not go beyond the garden gate alone," that's the rule. But he must be very stupid boy or a boy not fit to be trusted at all who may not go beyon the garden gate to save his dog from being run over, and I should be a ver stupid father to impose such a rule upon him at all when he had reache the age of twelve or fourteen.

The rule meant that he must not get into mischief; the rule was fo his education and protection. When he had learned the lesson, the rule ma safely be relaxed or dispensed with altogether. Just as a child soon dispense with the leading strings, and the hand that supports his toddling steps, and th lame man throws away crutches when he gets strong enough to walk without then

But the Jews harped upon numbers of laws and precepts, sometimes quite forgetting the real object of them, and they attached so much importance to the exact letter that the rule which was originally to help them like a crutch or walking stick, actually got in their way; they, as it were, stumbled over it. For instance they would make certain acts, like paying sums to the priests, or a contribution of herbs or spices, take the place of good dispositions, and just or kind actions. Better do away with all such outward observances, if they make you forget more important things; for God does not care so much for what you have got or what you can give, He only regards what you are.

The Jews frequently attacked Jesus for breaking the Sabbath Day, but He put it to them whether any of them would not pull out of a pit an animal that happened to belong to them and which had fallen in. Yet they blamed Him for healing a poor man who had a withered hand and told the man he ought to have come on a week-day, but Jesus said the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. And we must remember that His words apply equally to the Lord's Day or Sunday as we call it, and yet a great many people forget that if Christ disallowed the rigid abstention from all work on the Sabbath Day to which Moses devoted a whole commandment, much more may Christians claim a freedom of action on Sunday which is called the first and not the seventh day, and to which the letter of the Fourth Commandment does not apply. It is true that the duty of rest and worship was common to both days, but Christ by walking through the corn-fields and allowing His servants to pluck the corn as they passed, by healing the sick and committing other practical breaches of the Fourth Commandment, has practically taught us that we are permitted to decide for ourselves how much or how little it is reasonable or beneficial for us to do on Sunday, so only we keep the spirit of the day by claiming rest for ourselves and others, engage in special prayer, public and private and above all imitate the Lord in doing good, by some act of definite kindness or helpfulness, on the great holiday which is no longer the Sabbath but the Lord's Day.

From the earliest time the Christians consecrated the First day as that on which Our Lord re-appeared amongst His friends after His Crucifixion. They do not seem ever to have formally abolished the Sabbath, and for at least a century or more, both days were kept holy, by the Jewish Christians. But as the separation between the Jews and Christians became more marked, and alas the enmity too, most of the Mosaic Jewish rites and ceremonies fell into disuse, and amongst others the observance of the Sabbath, leaving to the Christian Church in its stead the Lord's Day, a day of joy, of free rest and free worship.

You might suppose from the way Jesus treated the Jewish Sabbath that He was averse to rites and ceremonies. But this was not at all the case.

Instead of abolishing them, He adopted them, He came, He said, not to de troy, but to fulfil the law; that is to teach its real meaning, improve and ad to it just as fast as the people were fit to use something better; but H always taught the people by what they were familiar with and understoo

He found the Sabbath Day, He paid due respect to the day, and o served it, but warned the Jews not to let the narrow manner in which th kept it stand in the way of true humanity and sincere religion.

He found the Synagogue. Well, He entered into the Church or Chap of the period freely, and preached the most interesting sermons there, H spake with an authority which made them listen, instead of giving them du routine sermons which sent them to sleep.

He found old religious books there, the books of the Old Testame He opened or unrolled, read appropriate chapters and explained them, such a marvellous and exciting way that the people hung upon His lips an could not take their eyes off Him.

He found baptism by water, He was not only baptized Himself, b He selected the rite and made it the sign of Church membership, but H gave it a higher meaning as we shall presently see when He comes to e plain it to Nicodemus who came to Him by night.

He found it was customary to teach the people by telling them stori and anecdotes (Haggada) with a moral or lesson attached to them: peop love stories, so He told them quantities of delightful tales with morals lessons attached to them. They never had heard such beautiful tales as H told them; and there seemed to be any amount forthcoming; some becam favourites and had to be repeated again and again, until people could almo say them by heart; and a few of these got written down in time, very brie no doubt, only just the outline, but even from these scanty notes we can s how delightful and interesting they must have been, when spoken with t indispensable dramatic action and gesticulation, and filled in with what w call local colour and any amount of detail.

Imagine the Prodigal Son of which we have only a bare sketch, ju a few verses, but which lasted possibly an hour or more, until the audien felt they knew every member of the family, and had been through eve incident of the Prodigal's career. Well, Jesus found this method so effecti and popular that without a parable He taught not the people. They d not remember the story because of the moral, but they remembered t moral because of the story.

Even His final Sacrament, known to us as the Lord's Supper, was found on the Feast of the Passover, the greatest of the Jewish ceremonials, and t one dearest to the heart of the Jew as I shall have to explain by and b

The Sermon on the Mount.

XIV.

Jesus on Baptism.

I have alluded to Nicodemus and Baptism. The story of this ruler o the Synagogue's interview with the startling new Teacher will help us bette than anything else to understand the real meaning of Christian Baptism. is also an excellent example of Christ's way of gratifying those who seriousl wished to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

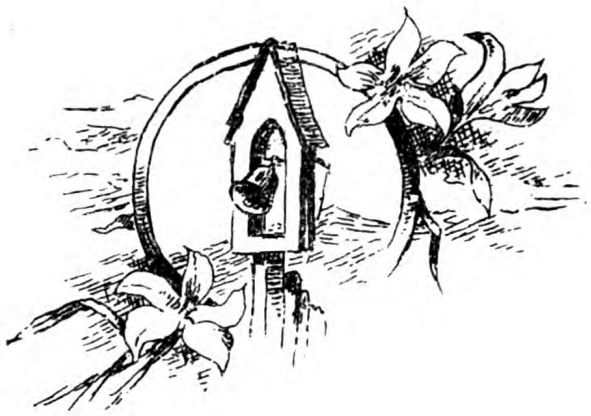
Nicodemus doubtless thought that he might have suffered if it wa known that he openly sought for or favoured, the teaching of Jesus who wa looked upon as a brilliant but not very safe guide by the religious teache of the day, whom He had already alarmed by His very liberal and independe utterances. Nicodemus comes therefore to Jesus by night and confesses tha he has been attracted by miracles so powerful and beneficent that in his op inion He who worked them must be thought to come from God. Jesus wit quick sympathy caught his mood. Miracles! I will tell you something mor wonderful than anything you have seen: to belong to My company, to ente into the Kingdom I am come to set up, a man must actually be born agai Was not that wonderful? How could it possibly be? *Born of Water?* C course every Jew is figuratively born of water, and baptized with the baptis of Moses. Yes that is so. But for My baptism, to qualify for citizenship My Kingdom, water is not good enough. A man must be born of wate *and the Spirit;* the outer purification shrinks to a mere sign, the inner chang

or purification which is wholly spiritual and of the heart, is all in all in My baptism. Remember, water *and the Spirit*, air, wind, breath, is subtler than water. The wind bloweth where it listeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit. The Spirit is even subtler than wind, breath, air. I retain the baptism of water of Moses as a sign of purification, but remember the Spirit, the Holy Influence that acts on the heart is the only thing that really cleanses the soul; water is but the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

Some people have thought that sprinkling water on a little unconscious baby infuses a Holy Spirit, but Christ nowhere says that the Holy Influence, that alone purifies and which the heart alone can receive, is necessarily simultaneous with the sprinkling of water. No doubt when grown up people who believed and confessed Christ were baptized, their emotions and prayers at that time were good evidence to them that the mysterious Power which came like the wind was, as it were, breathing on them. But a little baby cannot be conscious of this or of anything of the kind. It only cries with impatience and annoyance, and the sign in such cases is separated from the grace which can alone be received when the faculties are sufficiently developed.

In infant baptism, the child is indeed made an outward and visible member of Christ's Church, later on the rite of confirmation is the sign and seal that the child, now grown up, accepts the situation, and heartily rejoices to be born of the Spirit.

That this is really the meaning of baptism may be seen from the Apostolic teaching. In the early Apostolic times baptism almost always followed instead of preceding the Spirit birth. Philip baptizes the Eunuch because he had already believed with all his heart. Cornelius and his household were baptized because they had actually received the Holy Spirit. These persons had a right to the sign because they were in soul members of Christ, children of God, inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let us put a familiar case; we say because the lawful king has a right to the crown, crown him; because the woman is in heart and assent and agreement a wife, she has a right to the marriage ring — give it her; because the heir has a right to the title deeds, hand them over; because the believer of Christ has a right to the outward and visible sign of membership, because he is a child of God sign him with the sign of the Cross, baptize him. This is the only scriptural view of baptism, which belongs to the whole body of outward and visible signs, which are entirely worthless without the inward and holy grace, but which may be the means of ratifying it, but only valid when the inward and spiritual grace is conferred and accepted. He must be born again of water, *and of the Spirit.*



XV.

The Great Sermon.

Jesus Christ was not averse to preaching in what we should call Chap or Churches, and what were then called Synagogues, or places of religi assemblies; but I think He preferred the open air.

In that land of Palestine, where people never say — "What a fine d because every day is fine until the rainy season comes and then every is wet, open air meetings of every kind are customary. People live out doors, much more than we do; so to preach out of doors was quite natu What is called the "Sermon on the Mount" marks the beginning of Jesus Chri marvellous career of open air preaching and mixed instruction to all sorts people. He chose His place as carefully as He chose His subjects and methods; He was also very careful to be well heard; He opened His mo when He talked to people, speaking most distinctly, so as to reach the re test confines of the crowd. Sometimes He would push out on the lake i little boat whilst the people crowded on the shore because sound travels w over water.

On this occasion He probably stood on a grassy level, whilst the peo climbed the hill in front of Him and sat as in a natural amphitheatre. T Greeks always built their amphitheatres tier above tier in a semi-circle beca sound rises, so then, when most of them were seated, He opened His mo and taught the people.

He may have been an hour or two or more in speaking, whilst vast crowd before Him changed and shifted, as crowds will, but we can re through the recorded Sermon on the Mount in a few minutes. This sho

how comparatively few of Christ's words have been preserved and handed down to us, but those few how interesting and suggestive they are!

I have very little doubt that this sermon is in reality one mass of fragments, which in one form or other Our Lord was in the habit of repeating. Many verses in the Sermon on the Mount occur in the other Evangelists, in quite different connections. The Lord's Prayer, for instance, in Matthew forms a part of the Great Sermon; and appears to have been uttered before a crowd, but in St. Luke it is said to have been given to a few Disciples privately, in answer to a request that Jesus should teach them how to pray as John taught his disciples.

I think therefore we are not bound to find a rigid connection between all the parts of this wonderful utterance, and yet it is not difficult to do so, for as the Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai contain the substance of what is most important in the teaching of Moses, so the Sermon on the Galilean Hill has been rightly said to contain the sum and substance of the Gospel which Our Lord was in the habit of preaching.

Standing on the green sward, in early spring time, with the red lilies of the field to which He was fond of alluding, growing about His feet, and the rows of eager faces in front of Him, poor villagers, well-to-do idlers from the farms, fishermen, here and there a townsman, traveller or stranger, Jesus broke out blessing all the most unblessed, the poor in spirit who had had hope crushed out of them in the struggle for existence, the mourners who were left alone to weep without a comforter, the meek who did not seem to get on in a rough and tumble world, all those who could not feel much about or understand religion but who wanted a religion of some kind, the merciful who sought to alleviate and soothe pain and sorrow, the pure in heart, who were not very highly esteemed in a world of selfishness, where every one seemed bent on money-making and honest people went to the wall, the peace-makers, who did not count for much, in a society where fighting was the fashion and violence stood for glory, and might passed for right, the persecuted for righteousness sake, that is those who were laughed at and made uncomfortable or injured for saying and doing what they thought right, instead of what was usual or fashionable to do.

Well! all these people who in different ways had suffered, who were pas by, or despised, Jesus had a good word and a blessing for.

This was very new, very strange sort of talk, but what had He to say about the Law of Moses? That was the question they all watch for. Well, He was coming to that. Allusions to and praises of the L formed the stock in trade and staple of all common preaching. He was wise and subtle a speaker not to know the power of commonplace; so set Himself to win the average hearer by at once declaring that He ca not to destroy but to fulfil the Law, and He proceeded to give six inst ces in proof of His fidelity to Moses, in spirit at least, intimating that Mo would have taught just as He, had the people of Moses' day been educa enough to take it in.

The Law, for instance, had attacked murder. Well, the Gospel w further and forbade angry, spiteful, or contemptuous feelings.

The Law admitted an oath for the confirmation of a word or v but the Gospel said, Swear not at all! It taught that a man's word sho be as good as his oath, because it is evident if a man need not be belie unless he swore, it was likely a habit of insincerity would grow upon him that soon his oath would be as unreliable as his word, which is actually case throughout the East, where perjury or false swearing has becom regular practice, so that you can buy any quantity of people to swear quantity of lies in a Court of Justice by paying them enough; he gener wins his case who can afford to pay most false witnesses.

But some may have thought as they listened to Jesus, surely this is high a standard? This control of thought and feeling and tongue, this regulat of the desires of the heart, is too much to ask. To which Our Lord answer the unspoken objection replied, "You cannot have too high a standard; be perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect". He does not say as per as the Father, but perfect as, or after the manner, or in the direction, of Father's perfectness — that is so far as it is imitable. Always look up something better than you can attain to and you will attain to someth better than you are. Nothing short of the best is good enough for you aim at. A man who fires at a target with a bow and arrow tries to hi golden bull's eye; perhaps he never succeeds or never hits the very cent but if he aims any where else, he will not be likely to go so near it.

Many sermons have been preached and will, as long as the world la be preached on almost every sentence of the Sermon on the Mount, and course you will read the Sermon as well as my remarks upon it; they not very many, because here I have time and space only for a few of chief points.

This is what Jesus says on the following subjects:

1. Forbearance. 2. Alms-giving. 3. Prayer. 4. Sincerity. 5. Good works.

1. — Forbearance — (with allusions to retaliation or vengeance). The old law, Jesus reminded them, exacted an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, implying revenge and retaliation; but a higher law taught forbearance. We might show men that we were superior to taking offence; that we could overlook or forget a slight and it is surprising how grateful people often are if you will sometimes forget an insult, and refuse to resent an injury. It might be often better to do this when not actually foolish or cowardly or injurious to others, for sometimes forbearance may be directly injurious to a third party. In His own picturesque manner Jesus pictures a man smitten on one cheek offering the other, or a man despoiled of his cloak giving up his coat; He enjoined kindness to all, even to enemies, and people who might have done us injuries. You see it is unsafe to apply literally such counsels of perfection to all cases. It was Christ's way to teach principles and foster habits by these striking expressions and figures of speech. Every one can understand how much finer it is sometimes not to strike back and not to give, as we say, tit for tat because we are what is called too generous or magnanimous. To make allowances; to forgive and forget, and to return good for evil. These are noble precepts. Oh, but you might say, "That would never do, people would only laugh at you and despise you and tread you under foot; you would go to the wall at once and lose all consideration and respect". Well, but Christ and His early followers thought otherwise. Christ's Disciples were sent forth as sheep amongst wolves, and told that they were citizens of a kingdom not of this world, and forbidden to fight with temporal weapons, and they actually believed this and obeyed, and some of them were maltreated and put to death; but they conquered the world for all that. Jesus would not let Peter strike a second blow for Him; "put up thy sword", He said: and Jesus was crucified! But the religion of forbearance and patience in three centuries conquered the world, and the faith of the despised, non-resisting Galileans was proclaimed by Constantine the Emperor of the Eastern and Western world to be the official religion of both. "Blessed", said Jesus, "are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth". It sounded most unlikely, but it has come true. This shows us that it is not always wise to go by appearances, probabilities or immediate results, but that to do right and to be right is sure to win in the end above all counsels which seemed to make for present comfort or mere expedience. Queen Victoria when she came to the throne was a mere girl, only nineteen, but when she was asked by her Prime Minister to sign a document on the ground of expediency of which she could not morally approve, replied, "I have been taught, my Lord, the meaning of what is right and what is wrong, but expediency

The Sower.

is a word which I do not recognize nor desire to understand the meaning of". This was Christianity; and it was because our beloved Queen Victoria always did what she felt to be right that she won the confidence and affection of her people above all English sovereigns that had ever sat upon the throne.

2. — Alms-giving. — The Pharisees were a class of people who laid great stress upon outward observances and ceremonials, but our Lord noticed that they often neglected the weightier matters of the Law, often gave money in public merely to show off, and get credit for qualities of heart which they did not possess: in fact they gave neither for the good of man nor for the glory of God, but only to glorify themselves. Probably also, they gave what, in proportion to their means, cost them very little. That is why on one occasion Jesus pointed to a poor widow who put into the collection box two small copper coins, and Jesus declared that she had given more than all the rich people or others who give their alms to be seen of men and cast in of their abundance while she had made a real sacrifice for which she was likely to get very little credit on account of the smallness of the actual contribution; but then it was all that she had got, and such a sacrifice made for a worthy object in the sight of God was of great price.

Some people give money to compound for their sins, as it were paying to let them off easily. That is the worst kind of superstition. Others subscribe to this or that charity to be praised of men and thought ever so much better than they are. Others give grudgingly and of necessity because they are afraid to be thought as mean and stingy as they really feel. Well, all that sort of thing which went on right and left, whether it could be covered by Moses' ceremonial law or not, was worthless in the eyes of Jesus. True charity came from a true impulse of generosity and love for others, and a desire to help them; but even that was not enough: it must not be merely the gratification of a pleasurable impulse, though that was right and natural, and showed a good disposition, but the deed must be consistent with the real good of the recipient. Charity must be thoughtful, for you will see that it is quite possible to do more harm than good by giving money to beggars in the street, or to drunkards who pull a long face with tears in their eyes and lies in their mouths: you must take care to give wisely as well as liberally, and to take trouble not to do more harm than good by trusting to thoughtless impulse. Jesus took infinite trouble with everybody, but we like to do something definite when the fit is on, and have done with it; but you never can be done with that thoughtful loving ministry to your fellow men of which alms-giving is but a small part. In the end if you wish to be a real disciple and like Christ, you must go in and out amongst men doing good. Yes, you must do all the good and kindness with all the thoughtfulness

you can; — loving service, nothing short of that. Did not the beloved M
say, "I am among you as one who serveth".

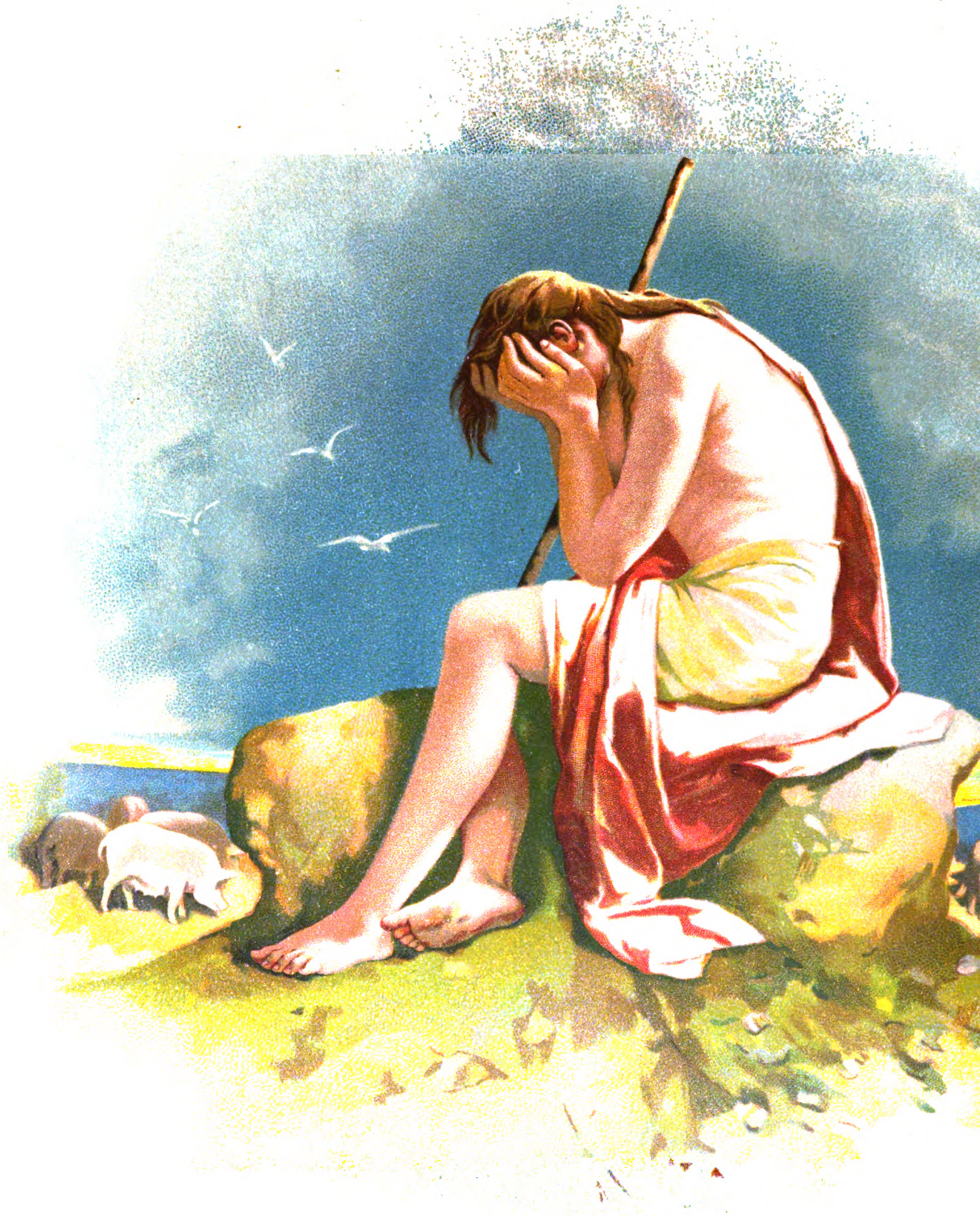
3. — Prayer. — Christ taught that prayer was a real attempt to
proach the real spiritual loving Power, that inspires and rules the whole
verse. He also certainly taught that Prayer was a real sort of machi
set up and instrumental directly in getting what we prayed for. — T
might be many reasons why we should not get exactly what we asked
always — but the Disciples felt the need not only of invoking a higher po
than their own but also of seeking for that guidance, strength and cor
that they were quite sure Jesus Himself found in prayer. We all of us
at times to be and to have many things which we are not or have not

We want for instance contentr
happiness, freedom from pain, suc
hope, comfort, friends, affection, all
of things. We are sorry after the e
that our tempers have got the b
of us, that we have struck blows
jured others, damaged ourselves,
lies, made enemies, eaten too m
been cruel or unjust; we see people
are so much better, or wiser, or more
pular, or happy, or contented, or cl
ful, or kindly, and when we are in
most sensible moods we feel we w
willingly be like them, only some
we can't: we can't get what we want
can't be what we should. The Disc
felt all that: we all feel it. So
said to the Lord, "Teach us hov
pray." That is let us get near
who can give us what we want
us ask for it. And Christ said,
and ye shall receive. Seek and ye
find, Knock and it shall be ope
unto you". Well, that was very g
news indeed! But how shall we p
He said "Not as the Pharisees
use many words and only pray
show off before people". But you
not require many words; a few sir
sentences are best, which you

develope for yourselves; that is quite enough to teach you how to pray. You do not want an audience or admiring spectators: you've got to be alone with yourselves and God. Enter your room, shut the door; then you'll have no temptation not to be sincere. And you must be both sincere and earnest, and your Father who "seeth in secret shall reward you openly"; but remember that your sincerity and earnestness is indispensable to your getting what you want, just as indispensable as asking for bread when you are hungry from someone who can give it you, or your act of going to a chemist for a remedy or calling in a physician if advice is necessary. There is the chemist, there is the doctor, but your decisive action is needful before you get any benefit; therefore in prayer ask, and ask earnestly; it is the violent that take the Kingdom of Heaven by storm. But you may say, suppose I ask and don't receive? Well exactly what you ask for you may not receive. But you are bound to receive. Remember you pray or ought to pray quite as much to be guided as to what is good for you as to get some special thing which you happen to fancy. No doubt we often get exactly what we pray for; if we did not there would be very few people still left praying in the world at this time of day; they would have got so disheartened by apparent failure that they would have given it up, and a good many thoughtless and unwise people have done so. This is because they have not paid sufficient attention to Christ's teaching and example. What He promises will be given is not always exactly the thing prayed for; but always good things — the Holy Spirit, the change of mood, the Divine communion, the guidance to enlighten, to soothe, to reconcile, to remove heart-ache and bring peace, and revive courage. The Apostle says "we know not what we ought to pray for as we should;" people who are impatient at not getting what they ask for, forget that there are all sorts of good reasons why they should not; what they want may not be good for them now, or it may be unjust for others, or in itself impossible consistently with other more legitimate claims elsewhere and so forth. And this brings me to the second more important object of prayer as shown by the direct example of Jesus Christ Himself.

The chief good of prayer is that whether it is asking for some gift, seeking for some forgiveness, or seeking to find comfort in the midst of some pain or loss, it is always an effort to bring us near to God, and make us to feel and know and want to do His will, willing to give up our own if necessary: that is why Jesus Christ prayed at the time of very great trouble and terrible anticipation of coming torture on the Cross, "If it be possible let this cup, (or as it were bitter draught) pass from Me, nevertheless not My will but Thine be done."

The prayer was not granted: it was not possible: the cup did not pass: Christ was crucified. But surely the prayer was answered? For there appeared an angel from Heaven comforting Him and He was able to say in perfect acquiescence,



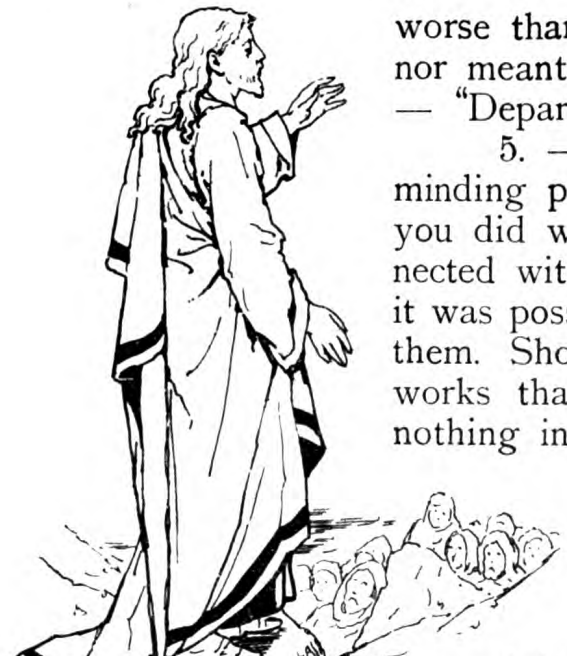
The Prodigal Son.

willingness to suffer what He prayed He might nevertheless have been spared "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Now I should like to point out in reference to the Lord's Prayer that it was given in answer to a request that Christ would teach His Disciples how to pray; not that He would teach them a prayer. The Lord's Prayer is to teach us how to pray and not to make our own prayers unnecessary. Each sentence may be expanded by us according to our special needs, just as we might give a man a telescope; if he is a sailor he looks at the sea and the ships, and if he is an astronomer he looks at the stars, and if he is a soldier he looks out for the enemy or watches the effect of the long-range guns upon distant mountains, or the movements of troops — so we must use the Lord's Prayer. When you say for instance "Give us this day our daily bread," yes bread for the body and bread for the soul; Lord make me temperate in eating and drinking, but grant me sufficient; nourish me also with the Heavenly bread that comes down from Heaven; good thoughts, good resolutions, good impulses, the desire and love of truth, "and grant me this and every day to live more nearly as I pray," "Thy will be done," or, "Thy Kingdom come." Take one petition at a time, and apply it to your particular wants or needs — that may be enough for a whole prayer, long or short, and some of the best prayers may be the shortest. Lord help me now; Lord let me prosper in this undertaking; Lord open my eyes; Let me see in this difficulty what to do; Put into my mouth what to say; Enable me to give the soft answer that turneth away wrath; Let me not speak hastily or unadvisedly with my lips, and so forth.

If the Lord's Prayer teaches you how to pray for yourself, why it will now, nineteen hundred years after it was given, teach you just what the Disciples of Christ felt they wanted to be taught when they said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." And Jesus said, "When ye pray, say, Our Father."

4. — Sincerity. People who seem insincere are not always so. They say one thing one day and another thing the next. But they mean what they say at the time; they are more inconsistent, unstable, than insincere. But one who professes to be your friend, abuses you behind your back, or shams saying his prayers whilst he does not believe a word of it, or talks grandly about honesty at the very moment he is picking your pocket or stealing your spoons or emptying your purse: for such an one the Lord Jesus showed a most sorrowful contempt and abhorrence. "Not every one," He said, "who says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in Heaven." Then He would quote their own prophet Isaiah, who said, "this people honoureth Me with their lips but their heart is far from Me." Nothing, so Jesus taught, was



worse than pretending to be something you were nor meant to be. He had only one message for s — "Depart from Me ye wicked."

5. — Good works. Jesus was never tired o minding people that it was no use to mean well u you did well. No doubt well doing was nearly nected with well meaning. But He also noticed it was possible to have fine feelings without acting u them. Show sentiments were no more use without g works than an egg shell turned upside down nothing inside it. People would be judged by they did, and by what they felt or profe as well as by what they were. There He said, "Let your light so shine before that they may see your good works." the same time Jesus cautioned people ag judging others hastily. It was much safer to m your own ways than to be always finding with others. You would best assist them to a better life by becoming b yourself. How silly a man looks when he has got an eyelash worrying and proposes removing an eye-lash from someone else whilst he himse half blinded. "First take out what is in your own eye and then you wi able to see clearly to take out what has got into your brother's."

All this was very simple and practical teaching. It came like ref ing dew to dried up flowers upon the listening crowd, who had been wea with disquisitions on the washing of pots and pans, endless observances innumerable ceremonies the meaning of which was not half explained to t At last, they said, someone has come to us "with authority," someone says what sounds likely, what is interesting and useful. Yes, He tea with a power which appeals both to head and heart, and not as the scr So the people, we are not surprised to read, "were very attentive to H — quite convinced and delighted. "They were astonished at His doctr

XVI.

The Missioners.

Later on in His ministry, after selecting His body guard of twelve, usually went about with Him, Jesus called to Him seventy men whom instructed especially to go about in neighbouring mountains and village heralds, teachers and healers like Himself.

These were the first Missioners: they were to be poor, finding sup amongst those who wanted them; they were to speak from their heart, to

the tidings of the new Teacher, to declare God to be the Father of all men and no respecter of persons; to teach brotherhood, to be helpers, consolers and healers of all sorrowers and sufferers. This is the true kind of missionary. He has not to be protected by the police. The people are not coerced for him or taxed by him; they give him what he wants if they want him, and if they do not want him and will not clothe and feed him he must go elsewhere. I do not say that there is no other way of teaching the masses, here and abroad, who are ignorant of religion or profess an unsatisfactory or corrupt sort; I am merely telling you what sort of Missioners our Lord Jesus sent for: how He told them to act. They were to go unprovided, to rely entirely on the merits of their cause, not to force their services, but to offer them freely, and to leave to themselves with a warning, those who refused to receive them, and go elsewhere.

Presently the seventy returned. They had succeeded beyond their expectations. Their strength had been equal to their day; they healed the sick, cast out devils and worked wonders as Jesus promised they should, if they had that faith, earnestness, will-power, which works such marvels that we may say it can "remove mountains."

There were three things by which the Missioners became known far and wide and by which men took notice that they "had been with Jesus." The first was their fidelity. No family ties, no prospects of self-advancement, no fear of danger or death could shake their fealty to Christ; they were ready to suffer, to do anything, to go anywhere for what they believed.

How much will you do and suffer for what you think right? That is a question which Christ in all ages asks all those who call themselves Christians. "He that endureth to the end," He was always saying, "should be saved."

The second thing noticeable about these Missioners was their simplicity. The best things in religion are the simple ones, which all can understand, "revealed," as Christ said, "to babes," not "the wise and the learned," but the "pure in heart," not the clever intellect but "the single eye" by which He meant a sincere and straightforward simplicity of purpose that was common to rich and poor, the learned and unlearned, grown up people and children.

The last quality observable in these first Missioners was their power of consolation. Every one wants to be comforted sometimes. "The Holy Ghost, the Comforter," is the sweetest and most beautiful and most frequent Name of God. They bore in their speech and countenance, they reflected with every look, One who stood in the dusty thoroughfares of the world, and cried to all the ages and generations of toiling men and women, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and I will give you rest."

It was a beautiful experiment, a splendid heraldry of Christ and His Gospel. The seventy went out and returned with joy, but they went out no more.

Why was this? I think it was to show that such a mission ought not belong to any one set of men however specially endowed, but that every who loves Christ, should be in his own way an Apostle and show forth his own life faithfulness, the consolation, and the simplicity which is in Je Yes, Jesus Christ claims such beautiful and joyful service from us all beca we are "the children of God," and the citizens of a heavenly kingdom. must not be in a position to say when the Lord asks about our services, fealty and our labour of love, "Oh, the seventy are doing all that, so I thou I might be let off." How much better to hear from that dear Divine Mas who has loved us and given Himself for us, "Well done, thou good faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

XVII.

The Parables of the Kingdom.

There were some things so important that Jesus returned to them ag and again. One of these was the Kingdom of Heaven. What it was, h it was to be entered, what was the good of going in, why everything was comparatively unimportant, and so on.

In order to make His disciples understand Him thoroughly He t them story after story. Of course by the Kingdom of Heaven He me not only an outward and visible church set up on earth, but an inward st

and condition of mind, a kingdom set up it were in the heart; for an outw kingdom of righteousness, goodness and l could never last unless it was in close to with an inward kingdom of the heart, si good acts can only proceed from good thoug and dispositions; they are outward and visi signs of inward and spiritual grace.

So He would say at one time that kingdom was like a good seed sown. T sower, He said, went forth to sow his se The seed was divine influence, the soil the heart. Or it was like a tiny seed, a m tard seed, and yet destined to grow into large tree, or like a small lump of lea that would leaven a whole basin of dou or like a pearl of great price to win wh the merchant would spend great days of and pay great sums of money and give many things of less value, or like a net wh

The Good Samaritan.

took in the good, bad and indifferent, yet from which the fishermen or selects the good at last; and as one image after another, all familiar ones, arc before His delighted listeners, Jesus would point the moral and adorn t tale with such power and felicitousness that even His enemies would sa "Never man spake like this man," and, "see how we prevail nothing; t whole world is gone after Him," and if we had such preaching in our church now, there would be no empty seats and no yawning children.

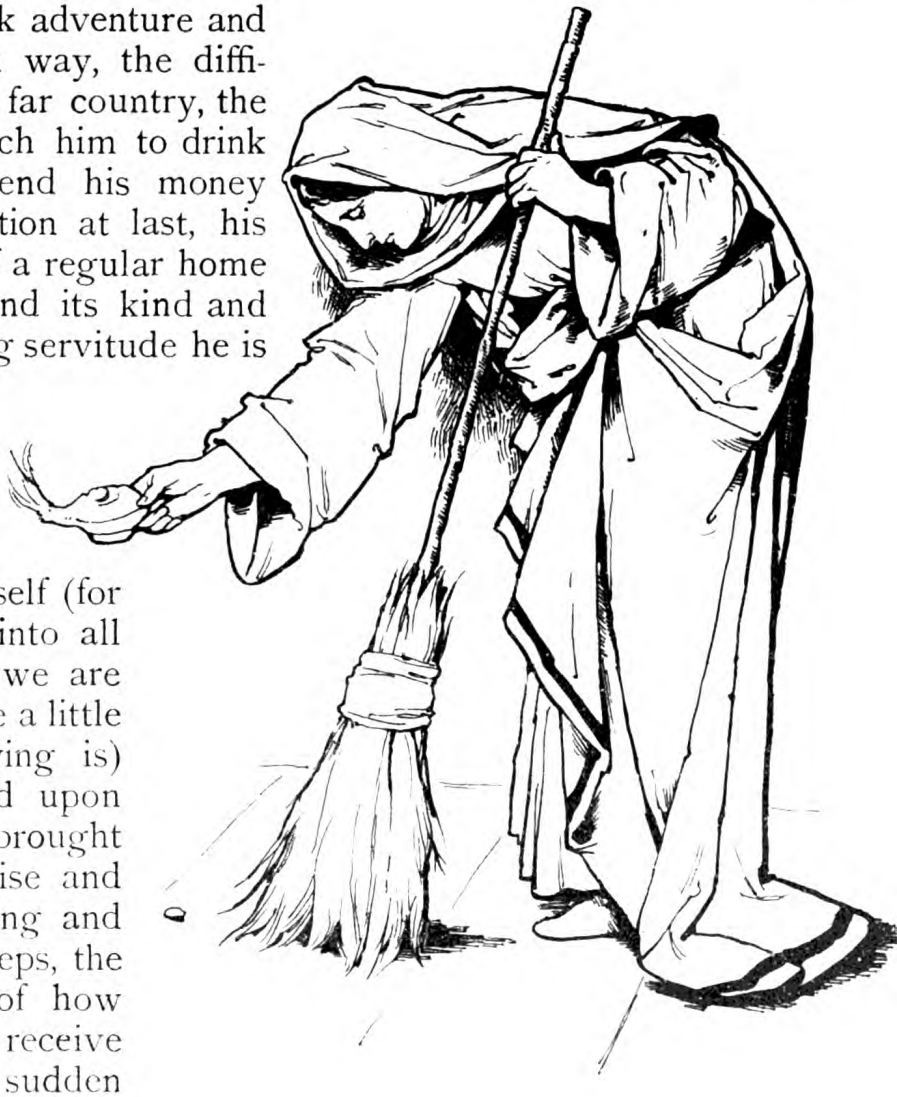
XVIII.

Some Dramatic Parables.

But some of the most beautiful of all His stories were told on t spur of the moment, in consequence of something which happened in the stre or suggested by a chance conversation.

Jesus, for instance, noticed how when He went into the Temple t people who were most conspicuous were the Pharisees who not only pray out loud in order to attract attention but had Bible texts written in lar letters on their very clothes, whilst others who had no reputation for bei religious, would just creep in or stand afar off and say some very humb prayer all by themselves. And thus we get the story of the two men w went up to the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a public and you had better read it. Now who were the publicans? They were r keepers of refreshment houses, or places where people go to drink, but ta gatherers, that is people who paid the Government so much for the pri lege of collecting the taxes and then got out of the people as much mc as they could, which of course found its way into their own pockets. Th had the police more or less at their backs, who were, I am afraid, not seldc in league with them to squeeze the people and sometimes shared the boo So the people hated the publicans and they were very unpopular. But son were better than others. Levi, or Matthew the Evangelist, who was one the Twelve was taken from the very receipt of custom, or his tax-collecti bureau. Zacchæus, who was chief of the publicans, but a very little m so that he had to climb up a tree to look over the heads of the people see Jesus pass, was a very well known publican, and apparently, as tim went, quite an honest and respectable person; but his profession had a b name. It was often brought up against Christ that He was the friend publicans and sinners, to which He replied, that He came not to call t righteous but sinners to repentance. And we know very well that y cannot do people very much good unless you approach them in a friend spirit. The people we are inclined to turn our backs upon because we thi

ourselves so very much better than they are, are the very ones whom Christ thought it well to attend to. For He said there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, and there ought to be joy on earth too. What a great thing it is to see a man who used to be a thief and a vagabond, getting his living honestly and winning the good opinion of which he once was not worthy, a disreputable useless servant of the devil hanging about outside public houses and at the thievish corners of the streets, suddenly turned into a Child of God, and a respectable member of society. Parable after parable was employed to illustrate this. The search for the lost piece of money by the woman who swept out the house till she found it, the recovery of the lost sheep, the trouble that it all required, the joy and reward that crowned the successful endeavour. There is no more touching parable recorded than that of the Prodigal Son, the impatient young man who wants to get hold of his father's money and be off to seek adventure and enjoy himself in his own way, the difficulties he gets into in a far country, the bad companions who teach him to drink and gamble and who spend his money for him, his utter destitution at last, his sorrowful remembrance of a regular home with its regular duties and its kind and loving faces, the degrading servitude he is forced into when he is driven out into the fields to keep swine, without enough to eat himself, and not a friend to speak to, his coming at last to himself (for really when we plunge into all sorts of sinful pleasures we are not quite ourselves, we are a little off our heads as the saying is) his sudden resolve forced upon him by the misery he had brought upon himself; "I will arise and go to my father," the long and painful retracing of his steps, the doubts and misgivings of how the father was going to receive him, then at last the sudden



meeting, the father having been watching for the return of the prodigal the time. "Ah," he kept saying, "I knew the boy was not bad altogeth he was young, hot, inexperienced, wayward, he thought he knew about eve thing better than his father; I trembled for him, he would not listen to r he had to learn his experience; after all you can't get old heads on you shoulders. Poor fellow he has suffered. What a state he is in, so thin a nothing but rags on. Well, well, he has learnt the lesson. We must ta him back and make him forget the past, the distant fields with the noon-d sun and the swine and squalor, and the heartless people, who ruined him a then felt no pity and drove him out, but he is come home, home at last." And the father goes out to meet him, will not let him finish his little contr speech, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, etc.," but falls on his neck a kisses him, and has his rags removed, and clean good clothes brought, a a good dinner served. "Let us eat and drink and be merry," says the d old father, "for this my son was dead and is alive; was lost and is foun

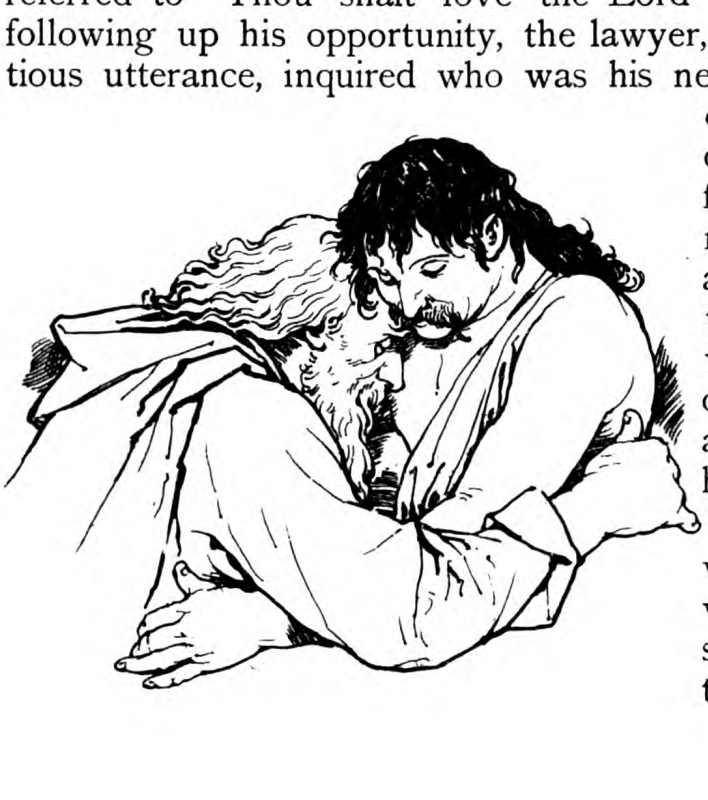
It is not very easy to resist this kind of preaching. No doubt people laughed and cried in turns, for there was plenty to smile at in so of the stories. What can be more humorous and more dramatic at once, th the story of the outside neighbour who wants to borrow a loaf late at nig knocking and knocking, until at last a sleepy voice inside calls out angr "Go away, I am in bed with my wife and children, can't you understand th we are all gone to bed? What knocking again! Go away, go home, anywhere, and let me go to sleep! What knocking again? What do y come here this time of night for, making such a disturbance? I won't g up! No I wont! A friend, you say? Call yourself a friend? Well I nev heard such impudence! No, I'm not going to get up!" Won't he get u You'll see! Knock, knock, knock. No sleep for that poor man. The childr crying, the wife scolding, still Knock, knock, knock! "I tell you", says Chr although he won't get up "because he is his friend", he'll get up to put end to the nuisance; because "of his importunity" he'll get up at last and s in a rage "Take what you want, any quantity, clear the larder, ransack t house, only don't bother me any more." I tell you because of his i portunity he will rise and give him as much as he wants in order to get rid of hi

Why people were never tired of listening to these dramatic stori told no doubt with all the inevitable glow and fervour of the eastern story-tel The parables must have been more like impersonations than narratives, as y can see any day even now in the market places of the unchanging east, Cai Tangiers. And why was the story told? Just in a phrase at the end wou come the moral or the purpose. "If ye being evil will yield to importuni how much more will your Heavenly Father give all good things, or the He Spirit, to those who earnestly desire and ask for them?"

The Parable of the Ten Virgins.

What a parable again is that of the unjust steward! What a consu mate piece of acting does that steward go through with his lord's credito with whom he seeks to curry favour, so that when he is cast out for cheati his master they may receive him into their houses. Here the moral is n the less interesting and forcible because a little hard to find out. The lo commends the unjust steward. That seems an odd thing to do until y perceive it is not Christ but the man's own master who commends hi and he does not commend his dishonesty, he praises his cleverness. Th Jesus says, "I say unto you make to yourselves friends of the mammon of u righteousness." And what can He mean by that? Why mammon mea money. Money is called unrighteous because it is so much more often ab sed than used; in itself it is neither good nor bad, merely the symbol exchange, and money there does but stand for all gifts, powers and oppo tunities, which we may use or abuse. How are we to make these o friends? Why, by using them rightly. And then they will be the means our finding joy by and by, and some of those many mansions of which Jes spoke; and after using well our gifts and opportunities, which have be here placed within our reach, we shall have done all we can to insure o reception "into the everlasting habitations."

Some of Christ's most beautiful stories and most memorable sayings we uttered in answer to questions not always put to Him with the best motiv When a blustering lawyer made his way through the crowd of listeners a called out loudly "which is the greatest commandment?" he was immediate referred to "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbour," th following up his opportunity, the lawyer, on the watch to surprise some inca tious utterance, inquired who was his neighbour, which drew from Jesus t



exciting story of the man who we down from Jerusalem to Jericho a fell among thieves. You had bett read the story. The moral was so a and irresistible that the lawyer ceas to question and completely disarm went home to think over the brother duties we all owe to the sufferi and neglected, and which may nev have occurred to him.

Jesus Christ's enemies we very anxious to get Him into difficul with the Roman police. And as some sense He claimed to be a Kin they thought He might be entrapp

into saying something disrespectful of the Roman Emperor. Was it, they asked Him, lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar? Now the bulk of the Jewish people hated to pay tribute to any foreign conqueror, and if they refused they would immediately put themselves in the wrong with the government. Now would Christ side with the people or with the hated Romans? He called for a piece of money, and asked whose head it bore. "Cæsar's." "Well, then, render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's," was the instant reply.

On one occasion after overturning the money-changing tables and the booths of those who sold doves within the sacred precincts of the temple, which even by their own law they had no right to do, the officials came and asked Him by what authority He did those things. His authority turned upon what He was, John had said what He was. Did they, He would ask them in His turn, believe that John was a prophet from God, or only of man? Let them answer that question, and He would then see about answering theirs. Again they were defeated. They dared not say John was a mere irresponsible man; for all the people held him to be a prophet; they would not commit themselves by saying he was from God, as the awkward question might then be asked, "Why did ye not then believe in him?" "We cannot tell whence he was," was their lame reply. "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."

It seemed hopeless to find Jesus off His guard, and His answers always made in the presence of the people who applauded the quick and skilful replies were most embarrassing. So we are hardly surprised to learn that after one of these very crushing rejoinders, no man durst ask Him any more questions.

Jesus constantly expressed Himself in a very sweeping manner, so the people constantly complained, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" But His motive was to arrest attention and then He explained His meaning and the difficulty of the hard saying vanished.

At one time He conveyed the impression that a rich man could on with difficulty enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and perhaps not at a But He explained that He meant a man who loved His riches too mu and would be willing to do anything to get them and keep them whil most unwilling to give any of them up. The man who so trusted in rich as to think that money could buy anything even forgiveness and the gra of God. "Such an one," He said, "is not fit to enter into the Kingdom Heaven. A camel might squeeze through the needle's eye, (which was a ve narrow gateway in Jerusalem, so called) but the rich man would be too he vily laden and greedy of his wealth to get through the gateway into Heaver

He would say again that unless a man hated his father or his moth he could not be His disciple; but that was a figure of speech and on meant that in those days when to profess Christ might involve rupture wi friends and families, the would-be disciple must count the cost; for a discip of Christ would have to incur the risk of persecution and adverse criticis of all kinds.

Well now, for another hard saying. After feeding five thousand peop with a few loaves and fishes, the delighted multitude followed Him, not consequence as He told them of the words He spoke, but of the meal th had enjoyed. Well He took this opportunity of telling them that the bre which they ate was of little value in comparison with the bread that can down from Heaven. "That bread of life," He said, was Himself, and varyin the figure, He substituted His flesh and blood for bread. He told them th they would have so to drink in His Spirit and drink in His words, that might be said that they ate and drank His flesh and blood, made them much a part of themselves in their inmost spirit as the bread and wine th they ate and drank became part of their bodies.

Many things quite as opposed to Christ's way of teaching as transu stantiation, have been taught under cover of Christianity, and all becau people did not take the trouble to ask. Was the Lord using figures of spee or not? What did He really mean? Suppose you read in the poet Tennys "A million emeralds twinkle in the grass" and then go out on the lawn wh the blades of grass are laden with dew-drops glittering in the sunshine, a expect to pick up handfuls of emeralds or diamonds, you would certainly very foolish, and you are very much mistaken if you think that when Chri said "I am the door," He meant He was a wooden plank, or "I am the vin He meant He was a tree covered with bunches of grapes and leaves, a that when He said, He would give them His flesh to eat, He meant H would cut up or get miraculously fabricated for millions of people, for ninete hundred years or more, over and over again, His actual flesh and blood a invite them to eat and drink it.

XIX.

Judgment Parables.

It has sometimes been taught that we must believe on the authority of Jesus that God the Father will make room for a few good people in Heaven, that those that are not good enough when they die to go to Heaven will be kept alive in fire and be slowly burned and tortured for ever and ever in Hell. If this were so we might be frightened of God, but it would be difficult indeed to think of Him with love and gratitude as a Divine and eternal Friend much less a Father who made us and not we ourselves, but having made us, promised He would never leave us or forsake us.

The doctrine of Eternal punishment is founded on several parables and figures of speech used by Our Lord.

Once, for instance, walking upon the parapets of the City of Jerusalem overlooking the valley of Hinnom, a place foul as a refuse heap, where smouldering fires always burned to consume rubbish and carcasses which were being preyed on by the worms, and so loathsome that it was called the very mouth of hell, or the traditional Jewish place of punishment after death, Jesus after describing the state the soul gets into with lying, cruelty, selfishness, and all sorts of wickedness, compared it to a wretched mass of putrifying matter, only fit to be cast into the fire and trodden down amongst the refuse where, as in the valley of Hinnom, the worm never died. But we cannot infer from this that we are to be kept alive by and by in hopeless torments. There was nothing at all alive in the Valley of Hell but the worm, who fed gladly enough on its suitable food and had plenty of it. All the fire did was to purify the unclean and burn up the refuse, and we ought to pray that God's punishment and the fiery discipline that we have to go through and all we may have to suffer for our misdeeds, may have the same effect upon us, so that we may grow better and better until we are improved, made good and saved, however grievous the punishment which through disobedience we may have brought upon ourselves.

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, instead of assuming that the selfish heartless rich man was beyond the reach of salvation, we have to infer precisely the opposite, for we cannot help noticing how much better a man he was already becoming in Hell than he ever had been before. Before he got there he thought of nothing but himself; he was perfectly callous to the sufferings of others; but the discipline of Hell in the parable seems to have made him think of his brethren, and desire that they should be warned, that they might not come there too, as many a father may warn

his son to avoid the sins that brought grief upon him when he was you
True, Abraham reminded the rich man of the great gulf fixed then and th
that could not lightly be bridged. You cannot undo in a day the folly
years. But it was nowhere said the gulf for you would remain for ever
for ever, although for ever and for ever there would be an uncompromis
gulf between good and evil. But goodness whenever and howsoever attai
will always find itself on the right side of the gulf and if the rich man c
tinued to improve under painful discipline so fast, the time might well co
when he too would find himself on the right side.

In another place Jesus says, using again highly figurative langua
that on account of our evil deeds we have as it were brought ourselves i
debt with the righteous God and shall be cast into prison and not be let
until we have paid the last farthing. It is then hastily assumed that we
never pay and therefore we shall never get out, and that once in prison alw
there. But a little reflection will show you that everyone not only can but m
pay the last farthing. What we sow, that we shall reap, and even if t
were impossible, the Church teaching itself must come to the rescue,
Christ the Saviour, it is sometimes declared, paid any debt that we co
not pay; so if that be so, why are we, when we accept Him as Our Savi
to be left in prison? But the fact is, you cannot evade the consequence
wrong doing: they are always worked out by the penalty attached. The m
has, somehow, whether with borrowed money or with his own, to pay t
debt against righteousness which has been incurred; to repent, to make ame
to cease to do evil and learn to do good. That is his private and in
pensable business and we are not told that the good God exacts any oth
On the other hand, we are told that "when the wicked man turneth av
from his wickedness and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall s
his soul alive."

Nothing at all is said about the time being here or now, only t
whenever the change comes, God in His mercy wipes out the past,
what is the meaning of the forgiveness of sins? We are forgiven, it is s
for Christ's sake, and this is true, for in a sense, and in a very real se
we claim His perfect goodness and are only truly complete in Him w
accepted in the Beloved. In other words we are accepted on account
what we aspire to be; we spiritually appropriate the perfect life, and we
thus pardoned and received, not on account of what we are, or can h
actually attain to, — as St. Paul pleads, "Not as though I had attained."
then only the stain of opposition to God's Will as the Apostle would say
worked out when the will is conformed to God's Will, although it be p
fectly so as far as we are concerned in aspiration only.

Where, may it well be asked, do we gather from Christ's words that the washing out process is limited by time or this life? Nowhere. But everywhere do we gather that the chaff will be burned with unquenchable fire; that the evil will be under eternal condemnation; that the wicked, the people that forget God, will be cast into Hell; nowhere that they will never be able to get out of Hell; on the contrary it is affirmed that sooner or later God's Will must be done, as we pray "Thy will be done." And who has resisted His will? Man's resistance to it may be long and obstinate, but sooner or later without losing his freedom of choice or sacrificing his sense of moral responsibility, he will be, as it were, shut up to a hearty acquiescence in the great "Thy Will be done," and be taught to say joyfully at last "Lo, I come to do Thy Will O God," and this we are told "is the Will of God" even "our sanctification" and that it is not, and indeed it cannot be the Will of God, "that anyone should perish." And these are happily the very words of the Bible.

Now if I had space, I would show how the sheep and goats parable is the poetical and figurative embodiment of the evil and the good principles in every one, rather than literally, as some have supposed, two masses into which the world is divided — one all good, and the other all bad. No one is all good, and no one is all bad. Some are worse than others, and some are better than others. So that we may say, speaking figuratively as Christ spoke, there is something of the sheep in the worst goat, and there is something of the goat in the best sheep.

Other so-called judgment parables are such as the sower who went forth to sow with the result that the wheat was garnered at harvest time and the tares were burned. The foolish Virgins who neglected to fill their lamps and were shut out of the bridal feast; the servants who are told to trade with the pounds or the talents; some of whom trade well while one does nothing and is condemned and cast into the darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; the wicked husbandmen and the vineyard; all of these parables have been pressed into the service of everlasting punishment. None of these parables really bear out that doctrine. All teach that the fire is always burning; that the Divine wrath is always active against evil, and that for an evil and rebellious condition of heart, which is indeed none other than the sin against the Holy Ghost, there is no forgiveness neither in this world nor in the world to come. But Christ

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter.

never taught that sin, and therefore torment, should for ever have dominion over any soul. He came to teach the very opposite, for He came "to destroy the works of the Devil," and save mankind. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world," as St. John writes, "but that the world through Him might be saved." On the very threshold of His career, Jesus denies that the kingdom of this world belonged to the Devil at all. The door of sin's prisonhouse is flung wide open, those who are tied and bound with the chains of their sins are rescued by One who came to bind up the broken hearted and set the captive free.

The fragmentary character of the Evangelical reports of some of Christ's words might lead us to suppose that He foretold the approaching end of the world and His coming again almost immediately.

But this was doubtless a mistaken impression, and yet some who noted down His words seemed to convey it. But here again there is good reason to believe that a great deal of the XXIV. Chapter of St. Matthew refers to the siege of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews as a nation, which actually took place within the century, and it is more reasonable, as well as more reverent, to hold that Christ did not actually mean that He would reappear after the ascension within the century than to suppose that He prophesied what did not and can never now take place within that first century. For whatever He did foretell, His words as recorded, undoubtedly state that those wonderful things about to take place including His own coming in judgment in the clouds of Heaven, would occur within the lifetime of people then living on earth: "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled." And it is now nineteen hundred years since, and only what is connected with the siege of Jerusalem occurred at all in the life-time of "that generation."

Wise commentators have therefore inferred that here and elsewhere Christ was speaking parables and clothed His prophecy of the coming national doom with the judgment imagery to be found in the Prophet Daniel, which some have hastily and incautiously applied to the end of the world.

We must never forget how very few words of Jesus Christ, comparatively speaking, have come down to us; how very full of imagery and poetry His talk was; how very often we have the image and not the explanation; the text without the sermon; and many a hard and apparently self-contradictory saying without His fuller comment upon it. This may possibly be the case in connection with what He uttered in connection with the siege of Jerusalem. In like manner, if we had a fuller account we should find in His sweeping denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees, His utterances about divorce, His uncompromising opposition to the rich, His seeming acquiescence in the government of the day and the policy of its rulers, His complete

silence upon polygamy, slavery and the current extortion of the Roman C
cials, especially the publicans and the tax-gatherers — perhaps, I say,
may have to rest in the conclusion that we have only a very small tho
precious part of the Lord's teaching upon a large number of questi
touched upon. Many things not condemned by Him may be reprehensi
many things approved and disapproved by Him may be open to excep
and qualification. We must do the best we can and interpret difficul
incomplete statements and the silences of Christ as well as His hard sayi
by the general spirit of such parts of His life and teaching as we know,
the whole life and teaching we have not got. As St. John says "Many o
things Jesus did the which, if they should be written every one, I supp
that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be writt

There is one very beautiful saying which, though not to be found in
Gospels, has by some happy effort of memory been recorded in the A
St. Paul in speaking to the Ephesian Elders winds up an exhortation to lib
lity with the words: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how that
said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." Most people think the o
way: that it is more blessed to receive than to give; but you will find th
is more lasting pleasure and contentment in making others happy and supply
their wants than in always thinking how much you can grab for yoursel

Fortunately most of Christ's words are so clear and forcible "that
who runs may read." When Peter wants to know how often he is to
give his brother and thinks that perhaps "seven times" would be enou
Jesus answers; "I say not unto you until seven times, but until seventy ti
seven." Of course there follows a striking parable showing the beauty o
forgiving spirit and the need we all have of forgiveness ourselves. The
who took his fellow by the throat saying; "Pay me that thou owest,"
who would not let him off, was an example of the wrong way of treat
some personal debt or grievance, which if adopted by the inflexible rig
of God towards sinful man would place us all in a very hopeless posit
The story of the father and the two sons who were both told to go
the vineyard and work, whereupon one said "I go Sir," and went not,
the other said "I go not," but afterwards repented and went, is equally
mistakable in its meaning, for it is far better to do without professing, t
to profess without doing.

With regard to the Pharisees "who except they wash eat not," sho
great attention to small things, perfectly right in themselves and neglec
more important ones, and found fault with others who may have neglec
small things although they were careful to discharge important duties. —
one could miss the force of Christ's explanation that outside acts were triv
valueless, compared with the state of the heart and general disposition. Ag

if we want merciful judgments we must ourselves judge others mercifully or, conscious of our ignorance and incapacity of forming a correct opinion, suspend our judgment altogether — that the same crime did not imply the same guilt, that true justice regards not only the offence but also the capacity and knowledge of the offender, that one who knows and offends, is worthy of more stripes than one who offends ignorantly; that it is as rash to embark in a speculation, a course of life, even if that course of life be a noble one, without counting the cost, as it is to go to battle with undue preparation, or to begin to build a house before you know whether you have enough to finish it, that it is your duty to employ whatever talents you have, and make the most of them. They are given us in trust and an account of them will surely be required. Every thing, wealth, cleverness, influence, must be used not for ourselves only but for the good of man and the glory of God; for the Lord has said to His servants whom He has left in charge, "occupy till I come." There was no possibility of misunderstanding these, and indeed the great bulk of the Saviour's recorded words.

Feeding the Five Thousand.

XX.

The Transfiguration.

It would be interesting to know how much of Christ's time was taken up with good works and how much with preaching. Wherever He went, constant pressure was brought to bear upon Him to heal the sick, and He usually contrived to make each deed of mercy carry some lesson. Blindness would suggest moral blindness, incapacity to see goodness or our own defects, paralysis or palsy would suggest the sinful state which required the offices of the good physician of the soul, a lost sheep suggested the good shepherd, a barren fig-tree pointed to a life devoid of the fruit of good works, so that His actions and the daily incidents of His life, became in His hands profitable for doctrine, correction and instruction in righteousness, and He found "sermons in stones and good in everything."

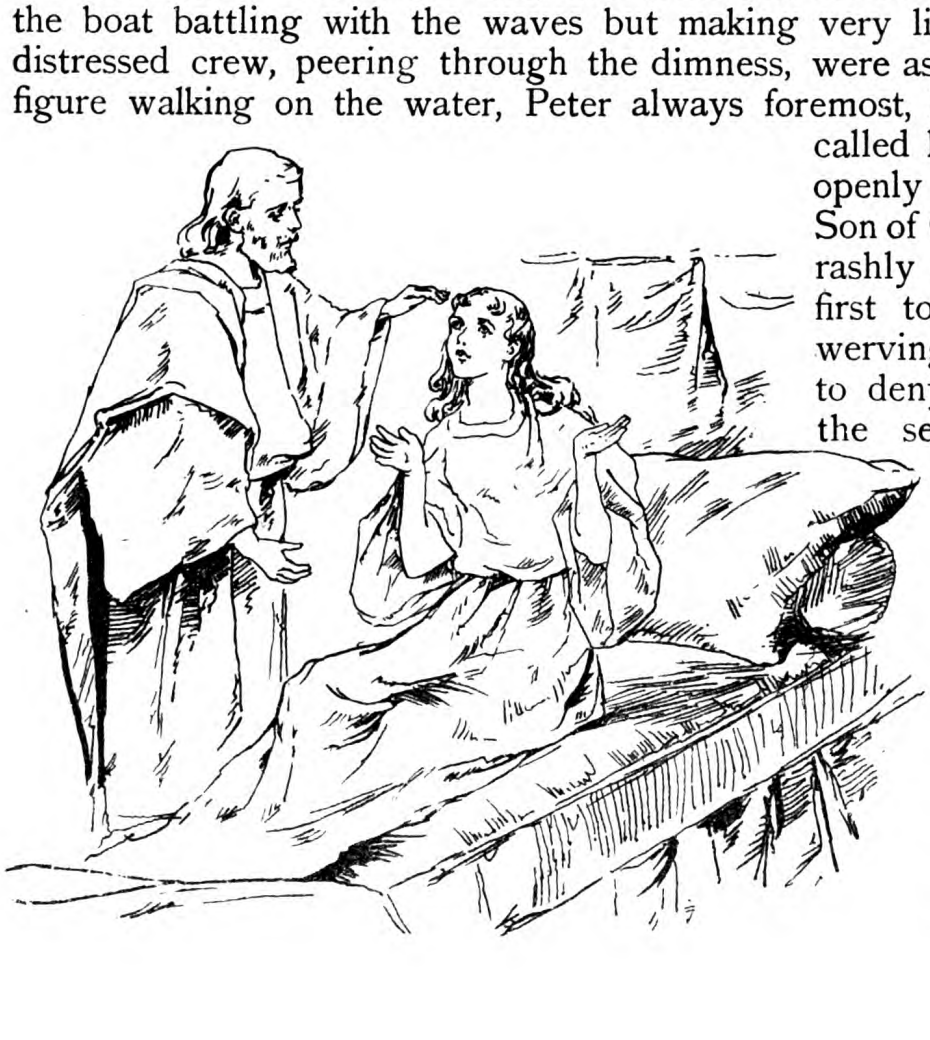
The wonders worked by Jesus were of different kinds; His methods varied. We read of one place that "He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." He refused to work miracles to order, either to protect Himself or to gratify curiosity, and often the cure of a disease, was made dependent upon the inward disposition or faith of the applicant; though in raising Jairus's daughter, a girl of twelve, this was not so, neither in the raising of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary who had been dead some days, nor the raising of the widow of Nain's son, whose body was just being carried out of the city for burial, can we say that there was any expectation or belief beforehand, that such a wonder as a resurrection from the dead would be wrought.

In some miracles, Divine intention or Will power alone seems to have been used. As when the nobleman's child was suddenly restored, or the ten lepers healed by a word, while one alone returned to give thanks. Sometimes the act of faith by itself drew forth healing powers, as when the woman touched the Lord's garment, and He said: "Who touched Me? for I perceive virtue or healing power gone out of Me."

Then again the Lord used what we call means like the touch; He laid His hands on the sick, He touched blind eyes, palsied limbs, deaf ears; He used moist clay and annointed the sightless from birth, or put His fingers into deaf ears, and touched with the moisture of His own lips the dumb. He cast out devils and unclean spirits with a look or word; He delegated healing power to others so that to their own wonder His Disciples like their Divine Master were able to heal the sick and cast out evil spirits. It is quite ev-

ident that Our Lord taught and believed that there were evil spirits, under some conditions they were to affect and influence human bodies, even might be drawn into the bodies of swine, as when a whole herd of derene swine who were feeding upon a hill slope were suddenly posses with devils and "ran violently down a steep place into the sea." This very mysterious, but there are very many wonderful and mysterious things wi in our present state of knowledge and experience we cannot understand; we have seen in our own days such marvellous cures and such horrible of crime and such extraordinary effects produced by employing gener unknown or unemployed forces of nature that we find no difficulty in be ving such strange accounts of healing or of demoniacal possession, as indicate a departure from the ordinary laws of nature, — power to walk the water, or to quell the storm, or to rise in the air without help of a ballo or visions of saints or prophets in light such as we find in the story Our Lord's life on earth.

On one occasion the Disciples embarked towards evening on the l of Galilee leaving Our Lord engaged in meditation and prayer alone u the mountain. The wind rose, and from His mountain height He could the boat battling with the waves but making very little way. Presently distressed crew, peering through the dimness, were astonished to see a hu figure walking on the water, Peter always foremost, Peter the rock as Je



called him, Peter first to con openly that He was Christ Son of God, first to rebuke H rashly for foretelling His de first to declare his own werving fidelity, first soon a to deny Him, first to leap the sea to meet His L after the resurrectio Peter boldly prop to step out of the s and also to walk u the waves, but c attempting to do so strength or faith and he sinks, until Ch lifts him from the t bled waters and together step into storm-tossed barqu

Indeed this lake was more than once the scene of wonders. Was it not on its turbulent waters that on one occasion being asleep He was aroused by the terrified cry of the Disciples; "Lord we perish?" And rising up, He rebuked the winds and the waves, and they obeyed Him and there was made a great calm. Was it not from its smooth waters, standing in a little ship, that He taught the people who crowded to the shore to hear Him? Was it not there that more than once by casting in the net at His command the fishermen who were His apostles obtained a miraculous draught of fishes, and there that the tribute money was found in the fish's mouth?

It is not unlikely that when you are grown up you may visit the Holy Land and row out upon the sea of Galilee which was the scene of such wonders nineteen hundred years ago, and landing again your feet may touch the very mountains trodden of old by the sacred feet of Jesus, when He looked down upon the beautiful red lilies and said; "Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

* * *

It was on Mount Tabor that on one occasion, accompanied as usual by the faithful Peter, James and John, as they were resting, suddenly in the still air around them, appeared in a kind of luminous haze the figures of Moses, Elias, or Elijah, the two mightiest of the Jewish Prophets, and the Lord stood with them in raiment white and glistening, His face gloriously lighted up, and the three in accents wonderful conversed together. The words fell upon the dreamy ears of the bewildered Disciples, like snatches of sad and solemn music, for they spake of His approaching sacrifice at Jerusalem, solemn and sad indeed and little understood at the time, though well remembered afterwards, strange talk indeed it was of sufferings before a cruel death; an apparent defeat, a mighty and glorious victory, in reality a victory, for as St. Paul says it became Him in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering.

So strange and unexpected was the vision, so Heavenly seemed the atmosphere, that the three bewildered but enchanted Apostles, Peter, James and John felt as if they never wished or desired to leave that Holy mount, if only they

could go on breathing that charmed and p
fumed air and lie in that golden mist a
listen to the melody of those prophetic voi
"Let us build here three tabernacles," th
murmured drowsily, "one for Thee, one
Moses and one for Elias." Vain words! su
moments might not last; the golden haze d
away, the light went from the face and glister
raiment of the Lord. Moses and Elias fad
out of the dream, and mountain clouds rol
down over the group and the light of comm
day recalled to the work-a-day world,
sorrow, the toil, the struggle and the
grimage of life.

XXI.

At Jerusalem.

"If Thou doest these things," they said "show Thyself at Jerusale
But Jesus was not to be hurried. He knew very well that the time was
of danger. "Go ye up," He said, "I go not up yet." In spite of His popula
there had been many warnings, He had been hustled in the streets; condem
in the Sanhedrim or Jewish Council, and shut out of the Synagogue.

At Gadara, the people rose against Him and besought Him to dep
at Nazareth they had openly insulted Him, at Chorazin and Bethsaida wh
He had done so much good, He had met with the deepest ingratitude,
His way to Jerusalem the Samaritans had even refused Him and His D
ciples the rights of hospitality. The Son of Man had not where to lay His he

But the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand; Jerusalem was full of rumou
would He come? Would He dare face the adverse sentiments of
Jewish magistrates? Would He set Himself up against His popular rival,
rabbas, who proposed to realize by physical force the aspirations of the
contented Jews and overturn the Government? Would Jesus at the
moment rally His friends, organize His Kingdom of Heaven, and w
miraculous power far beyond the brute force of a Barabbas, scatter all
enemies, and set up the twelve apostles on twelve thrones to rule the twe
tribes of Israel. With a fine irony, perhaps hardly understood, Jesus assu
His intimates He would not shrink from a public appearance at the Fe
"I must walk to-day and to-morrow. It would never do for a prophet

The Raising of Lazarus.

perish out of Jerusalem." For to Jerusal
must be reserved the terrible privilege
killing the prophets and stoning those w
were sent unto her. "Come," they say, "t
is the heir, let us kill Him." Well, be it
"Greater love than this has no man; than t
a man lay down his life for his friends."

It must have seemed very strange t
indeed for a king. Peter did not like it
all and rebuked Him openly. Judas kept qu
enough, but resolved then and there to ta
such a step as would compel Jesus to decl
Himself and use His mighty powers to has
the Kingdom, as we shall presently see.

Suddenly when the Feast of Tabernac
was at its height Jesus appeared at Jerusale
He takes His seat in an outer court of
Temple; a crowd gathers; once more they yield to the spell of His matchl
eloquence. In the midst of the most complicated ceremonies going on
around them, when every device is being resorted to to raise money, a
the least spiritual and ecclesiastical privilege is unscrupulously bought a
sold, and the wise and learned are busy weighting religion with heavy burde
and elaborate doctrines, Jesus preaches the "Way and the Life and the Trut
He tells them that there is but one way to know about God — obedien
one act of right doing would teach them more about religion than all
gorgeous ceremonies they were looking at daily, than all the religious tax
they were encouraged to pay; "He that will do the will of the Father sh
know of the doctrine." Obedience is ever the organ of spiritual knowled

To this wonderful period of Our Lord's Ministry, when He was alm
in sight of the Cross, when He knew and openly proclaimed that they w
going about to kill Him, and foretold that in a little while He would
taken away, belong those beautiful sayings about the Light of the World, abo
the Good Shepherd who took such care of the sheep, and whose voice
sheep knew so well, about the Vine and the branches, by which He taug
the close, spiritual, and loving dependence in which they stood to Him, even
close as were the leaves and the branches of the vine to the central vine-ste
He seemed to feel that the time was short, and He overflowed with gr
wealth of parable and of counsel. Some also assign to this period the para
of the Good Samaritan, which is characteristic enough, as the Samaritans h
just rejected Him. He said there were such things as good Samaritans. T
Divine judgment was ever unwarped by personal considerations. To t

period also seems to belong the great supper to which all are invited — the banquet of the love of God. Perhaps the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Silver, the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, and the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Father with the two sons, one who professed everything and did nothing, the other who refused at first to go and work but afterwards repented and went, the story of the Wicked Husbandmen, the Foolish Virgins, the Sheep and the Goats. Nor, in these last supreme weeks of His life, was He less assiduous in deeds of mercy; the woman with an infirmity, the man with the dropsy, the woman who was dumb, and the raising of Lazarus, which two last miracles seem to have brought matters to a head.

They probably occurred between the two Feasts which had brought Him to Jerusalem for His final conflict with the Scribes and Pharisees. They were the signal for the revival of His popularity with the people. They filled His enemies with misgivings; His arrest and death had been already determined upon by them in secret council. Some had indeed consented to capture Him and bring Him before the judges, but they returned without Him. "Why," said the magistrates, "have you not brought Him?" "Never man spake like this Man," was the confused and hurried reply.

The time then was not yet. It was as He said, "Yet a little while;" but now His allusions to His approaching death became more frequent. "It is written: I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep will flee." "Ye shall be scattered like sheep upon the mountains;" "ye shall all forsake Me;" "the Son of Man shall be crucified." But open prophecy fell on ears as dull as did the veiled allusions.

Great was the anger of the rulers when His pretensions to be intimate, and even one with the Father were more clearly declared: narrowly did He escape stoning. But His popularity after the raising of Lazarus still shielded Him from the open attack of His enemies in high places. They felt that it must be done in an underhand way. He would have to be betrayed from within; His inner circle must be tampered with, and no less a person than His Treasurer and Secretary the apostle Judas who carried the bag, was to be the instrument.

Judas was fond of money; Judas was tired of waiting for the King to declare Himself; "What will ye give me," he said, when they approached him with their infamous plan, "and I will deliver Him into your hands." And they convenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

The clouds are gathering, and presently the storm will burst.

But a strange scene of triumph, remote enough from the humiliation of the Cross, has first to take place.

We read that the people would have taken Him by force and made Him a king: that was no doubt the desire and intention of the growing party of

His adherents, to which Judas secretly belonged; but Jesus bowed to
dictation, He was a King, and He would be a King in His own way a
He would choose His own time. At the moment when His late miracles
the suburbs and His preaching in the temple courts at Jerusalem had rais
a ferment of excited expectation, Jesus appears seated upon an ass, t
traditional animal used in royal processions, "Ho, ye that ride on white asse
He is surrounded by the wildest acclamations. "Hosannah, to the Son
David!" cry the very children. For a moment He pauses in full view of t
City. "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem," He exclaims, "Thou that killest the prophet
Those that were near Him noticed that tears were in His eyes, but t
crowd sweeps on gathering in volume; the people stream forth from t
City gates, all Jerusalem seems to be there, the excitement is at its highe
pitch, palm branches are torn down and strewn in His path. Is it not t
King come to His own City? Hosanna, to the Son of David! But in t
Saviour's ears already rang another cry, — "Crucify Him! Crucify Him
which in a few more weeks would be raised by the fickle multitude. F
this is He whose death has been already agreed upon; but where are H
accusers? They have slunk away in fear; "the people are very attenti
to hear Him;" it is a dangerous thing to try and stem a popular moveme
at its height.

What are the police about? The whole City is in an uproar. Th
stand aside, look on and do nothing, and the crowd sweeps by rending t
air with acclamations.

At the gate the King dismounts, He enters the Temple Courts, H
finds booths of merchandise, and chaffering buyers and sellers, within the ho
precincts. He overturns the money-changers, He upsets the tressels, He mak
a whip of cords, and the cowering dealers all huddled together and hooted b
the enthusiastic mob are chased before Him, and scamper away like frighten
cattle out of the Temple Courts. "My House" says that ringing and no
terrible voice, more terrible in wrath because usually vibrating with lov
pity and tenderness, "My House shall be called the House of Prayer, but y
have made it a den of thieves."

* * *

The wear and tear of Jerusalem at such a time must have been ve
great. The fatigue, the excitement, the knowledge of a secret conspirac
the sense of hidden enemies, false friends, fickle multitudes; no wonder Jes
was glad to return to some quiet households, where His spirit was refresh
by the company of loving friends.

Bethany was only a little village a short walk from the Capital. A
Bethany Jesus had at least two houses where He was an honoured gue

"Save us, we perish."

one was the house of the grateful leper — Simon's, and the other was
of two sisters named Martha and Mary, who lived with their brother Laza
whom Jesus raised from the dead.

It was at Simon's house that Mary broke the alabaster box of preci
ointment over His head whilst He sat at meat, which called forth from Ju
who was always thinking about how much everything cost, the remark
it was a shocking waste of good ointment, which might "have been sold
given to the poor." The Evangelist who records the observation see
doubtful whether Judas cared for the poor, but was not rather thinking
the use he could make if the money had happened to have come into
bag. But the little company which seems to have included Martha
Lazarus as well as Simon the leper, must have felt thoroughly bewilde
when Jesus who alone realized that His hour was at hand, said that "
ointment was for His burial," and predicted that throughout all the ages
come this gentle act would be mentioned in connection with Mary's na
a prophecy which down to this moment has come true.

XXII.

At Bethany.

At the secluded mountain hamlet of Bethany, only a mile and a
off, but hidden from Jerusalem by the crest of Mount Olivet, the Lord fo
in the society of Martha and Mary rest and solace. It was from Beth
He started forth for His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Bethany, or "
place of palm dates," probably supplied the triumphal branches that w
strewn in His path, the memory of which is still retained in the palm branc
of Palm Sunday, which now commonly decorate our churches; in Beth
was the scene of the wondrous raising of Lazarus, and a stone's thr
from Bethany the sacred feet of Jesus last touched the earth as from
midst of adoring Disciples He ascended up on high and the cloud recei
Him out of their sight.

An honoured guest is expected, Martha is busy, no doubt Simon
be there, and Lazarus and many Jews who may come in to see the m
who had emerged from the sepulchre, when Jesus stood and cried; "Laza
come forth."

The Lord arrives. He sits in His accustomed place. Mary leaves
household work and sitting at His feet listens to the gracious words t
proceed out of His mouth. But the guests also begin to arrive. Thi
are not half ready. Martha enters hot and flustered and calls to her si

to come and help her, and even turns to Jesus; "Carest Thou not that I am left to serve alone?" "Martha, Martha," replies the Lord," thou art cumbered about much serving, but Mary hath chosen that better part that shall not be taken away from her." Mary had seen her opportunity, Mary had realized the overwhelming privilege of securing for a few moments such a teacher, of listening to such a master. Nothing in the world matters in comparison with that. Yet was good Martha not chidden, merely told to leave her sister Mary alone. Each of the sisters did well, each according to her character and capacity. It is well to work, it is also well to listen or to meditate. As someone has admirably sung; —

"Oh if not found like Mary listening
Like Martha toiling, let Thy servant be."

XXIII.

Last Discourses.

The public ministry of Jesus was now over; He had taught in their streets; healed their sick; gone in and out amongst them doing good about the space of two years and a half. In the last six months of His life, between the two Feasts of the Tabernacles and the Dedication, He had displayed a prodigious and tireless activity. He had done all and more at Jerusalem than He had done in the Provinces; He had poured forth parable and exhortation, warning and prophecy; but the end was indeed at hand and He withdrew Himself almost suddenly from the glare of publicity.

He was seen no more in the market-place, or in the Temple Courts, but alone in the gardens at Olivet, alone amidst the date groves at Bethany, with a few dear friends, or an occasional anxious enquirer or shy convert like Nicodemus. "To you," He would say, "is it given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but the world without only in parables." But the time was certainly short.

A great inward exaltation seems now to come over Him: day after day the dear intimate circle pressed about Him: and in the cool of the evening among the quiet shadows of Gethsemane, He would sit, or pace up and down, talking, sometimes as if thinking aloud, and at others answering the unexpressed thought or desire of one or the other.

There was a sort of aloneness, and aloofness about Him, and yet never had they felt so drawn to Him, as now when they were about to lose Him. St. John has recorded some of those last solemn conversations, a few of them he seems to place after the Lord's Supper, before they go into Gethsemane for the last time. But probably these utterances belong to the whole of that

pathetic period, before the arrest and Crucifixi which we may call the beginning of the e "Yet a little while," He said, "the Light with you." Then He would "be lifted u from the earth, the darkness would inde fall, but let them never forget that they we the children of the Light. He had co forth from God, the great Father — H Father and their Father, — His God a their God. He was about to return, He h come to explain to them all that could explained about God, to tell them that H was indeed a Father, and that He loved them. That H had many Mansions for His sons and daughters beyond t grave, that no troubles here ought to shake their confiden in the real goodwill towards them of their Heavenly Fath that much was strange and as yet hidden, that to ea of us God said "What I do, thou knowest not now, b thou shalt know hereafter." But they must be quite su that God would do the best for them, even as He, Jesu had loved them as in the person of His Father and h taught them the things that belonged to their peace; th He would shortly have to leave them, and He knew th they were filled with grief and heaviness at the thought, b He added: "I will see you again and your hearts sh rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

Yes! He would reappear though heaviness filled their hearts. It w all very strange, very wonderful, very perplexing, no marvel if they cou not take it all in. A crucified man a crowned king, a body laid in t tomb, a god-like form ascending into Heaven — all that was shortly to b but it was hidden from their eyes. The only thing they realized was th He was going away. "Whither goest Thou?" "Whither I go," He answere "ye cannot come. Yet a little while and I am with you, yet a little whi and I am not with you because I go to the Father." We cannot tell wh He saith "Yet a little while."

Much indeed was hidden from them. Yet in their complete bewilderme they grasped one truth, "We believe," they said, "Thou camest forth fro God." They made one steadfast resolve, they would cling to Him. Alas! f some of our resolves! "Lord, to whom shall we go," cried Peter, "Thou ha the words of Eternal Life." And yet again: "Though I die, yet will I n deny Thee." "Simon, Simon," was the reply, "Satan hath desired to ha

you, that he may sift you like wheat; before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice." But Peter's eyes were blind, Peter's ears were dull, and the hour of doom drew on apace.

XXIV.

The Traitor.

Judas had no doubt listened with impatience to these last mysterious and veiled utterances and long talks which seemed to him unpractical as the tide of Christ's popularity was evidently ebbing away again. Judas who was so fond of money, and looked for the time when Christ should seize His temporal Kingdom and there would be plenty of cash and glory for them all. He had already gone to the High Priests who he knew then were conspiring to take Jesus: and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And the bargain had been quickly struck.

Judas' behaviour when he found that he had really betrayed Him to His enemies was not that of a traitor at heart. His grief, his despair, his suicide; he had doubtless meant to force Him into such a position that short of a miracle, which He was well able to perform, nothing could save Him. He believed that at last the time had come for such a display of power which would crown all their Messianic hopes and end all their tiresome wanderings up and down the country, so he had covenanted with them for thirty pieces of silver.

XXV.

Last Days.

We have now entered upon the last four days of the Life of Christ upon earth. On Tuesday He seems to have alluded to the approaching Feast of the Passover, and spoken of Himself as the victim or the Paschal Lamb. This was at Bethany. On Wednesday He did not go into Jerusalem, but He walked probably upon the slopes of Olivet, or amidst the grateful shade of His beloved Gethsemane, one of His best known resorts. His Disciples asked Him where He would eat the Passover. The Lord with that minuteness of direction which characterizes Him (note the fish with the tribute money in his mouth, the directions to the seventy, the directions to the twelve, the preparations for the triumphal ride, the orders to the servants at the feast of Cana) — The Lord bade them go into the City to a certain man, a certain house, at a certain time; and when even was come He sat down in one of those upper chambers, open to the air, in the grateful cool of the day.

On Wednesday night He laid down to take His last sleep on ea
— unless some swooning or fainting moments on the Cross could be call
sleep. There is no moment between Thursday morn and the arrest
Thursday night, up to the time of Crucifixion that we can imagine a
sleep possible, and on Thursday evening, He sat down to take His last supp
with His innermost circle of friends. The Twelve Apostles were all the
even Judas, who had arranged to hand Him over that very night. He w
no doubt, nursing his approaching triumph. The moment, he thought, w
coming when his business-like shrewdness and clever device to force on t
victory of His beloved Master would be highly appreciated by all the re
When it succeeded, and Christ had extricated them all by some memorab
exhibition of power, then he, Judas, would be welcomed and applauded
them all. Doubtless Judas too loved his Lord, or he would scarcely ha
been trusted to cater for the little band and keep the accounts and contin
down to the very close with Him, sharings all risks and hardships.

XXVI.

The Last Supper.

Yes, they were all there. All had a sense of some coming disast
but all were most confident that He who had such power and who claim
to be a King would be equal to any emergency. The exact nature of t
crisis they did not know; could not imagine, in spite of the strange hi
that had been thrown out; but their talk was full of the coming struggle,
the place each was to occupy in the new Kingdom, of who should be t
greatest. Judas listened, and Judas no doubt thought there could be ve
little doubt about that, when his clever strategy had succeeded and the de
Lord had been forced to declare Himself; for Jesus and Judas would then
honoured above all; Judas would appear in all eyes little less than a Kin
maker when the enemies were scattered, and they, the twelve, came to sit
their twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

They thought only of the twelve thrones, He of the three cross
Who should be the greatest indeed? He answered their inmost though
as usual by a parable in action. Silently He rose from supper, girded Hi
self with a towel, and went round with a basin of water and humbly kneeli
down began to wash their feet. They wondered; this was the service of
slave. Peter alone refused. "You shall never wash my feet." "Ah, if I wa
thee not, thou art not clean." "Lord," cried the impetuous Peter, "not
feet only but my hands and my head." "Know ye what I have done u
you? True greatness is true service. The humblest service if needs be,

only it be loving service. Ye called me Lord and Master, and so I am, if I your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; the servant is not above his Lord."

The lesson was not learned then. But it was remembered years afterwards, when the Twelve went forth and spent their lives in the loving service of man, entering into fellowship with His sufferings, rewarded as He was by persecution and death.

Suddenly, with a glance at Judas, He looked up from His humble employment, and said, "Ye are clean but not all." And they understood not. "One of you shall betray Me." No plainer speaking was possible. In the next moment He fixed upon Judas and handed him the sup. "To whom I give a sup, the same shall betray Me." And immediately Judas arose and went out. No one stopped him, this was the strangest thing of all. It only showed how completely to the end they failed to grasp the situation. The most awful tragedy was going on before their eyes, their attention was called to it by word and act: not one of the Apostles understood. In another moment it was too late. Judas went out "and it was night."

Suddenly the gloom and heaviness of spirit which had come over the Lord, seems to vanish with the disappéarance of Judas. Jesus becomes full of love and solicitude, and tender thought for them all. He had given them all things freely; His earthly ministry was over, He could do no more, only die for them, and in dying He would leave them His very self: His spirit was henceforth to rest upon them. His life was to be their life. On that night He uttered His last parables. Water was a parable, bread was now to be a parable wine another parable. He broke the loaf, they all ate. "Divide it amongst yourselves," He said. He added that it was His body. Then after supper the cup was passed round: "Drink ye all of this, this is My Blood." There seemed nothing strange or unusual about this. A *door* had been Him, and a *vine* had been Him, and a *shepherd* had been Him, and a *light* had been Him — now *bread* was Him, and *wine* was Him. They ate and drank and understood the parable.

Affected by the great earnestness and love but scarcely filled with very serious forebodings, the little group found vent in hymn-singing. "After they had sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives."

The Last Supper.

XXVII.

Gethsemane.

Arrived at the garden of Gethsemane the companionship of even Peter, James and John seemed almost too much for Jesus to bear. He alone foreknew what was at hand; their utter unconsciousness perhaps oppressed Him; He had to meet the crisis bitterly alone; yet He wanted them to be within call; some vague impression may have flashed through His mind that perhaps the fateful hour might not be just yet. At any rate all His friends could do was to watch, to keep awake, to give Him the first note of warning of any approaching danger whilst He prepared Himself for whatever was to be: "Watch ye here, while I go and pray yonder!" And He went forward and prayed: "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me!" He was very restless and troubled in spirit; He was anxious that those three friends should keep awake. Presently rising from prayer He came towards them and finds them sleeping; "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour", yet some watch they must have kept: perhaps all were not asleep together, since the Lord's vigil was noted and even His prayer recorded, specially how He added, "Not My will but Thine be done!" and the increasing earnestness and agony which even forced blood through the pores of the skin, which mingled with the perspiration so that it was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

A second time He came to them and found them sleeping, He went away again and prayed the same prayer. The third time He comes. "Sleep on now, — Behold he that betrayeth Me is at hand. Rise let us be going." The last struggle with the shrinking flesh was conquered, a gleam of torches was seen through the trees, a glitter of armour and the clash of swords and staves; in another moment Judas had stepped forth and kissed Him which was the signal for His apprehension. "Friend," says the Lord, "betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Even then Judas thought no great harm was done or Jesus would scarcely have called him friend. Was he indeed not His best friend, about to force Him to take possession of His Kingdom? But the short sharp call, "Arise" had aroused at last the sleeping Apostles, who hurried up, Peter even drawing a sword and smiting off the ear of the servant of the High Priest. Then on seeing what would follow, a sudden panic seemed to seize the three, and hearing Jesus say to the soldiers: "Let these go their way," they all forsook Him and fled.

The apparent cowardice and flight of the Apostles is somewhat explained if not excusable, when we reflect that Jesus had actually given Himself up without an attempt at escape, that He had deliberately advanced towards His captors and asked: "Whom seek ye?" that they had at once replied, "Jesus of Nazareth," that He had answered "I am He." Even then the soldiers

had hesitated, for Jesus did not push His advantage; there was evide
something awful about His presence, His Kingly calm, for the men were n
reluctant to act, and instead of seizing Him, they went backward and
to the ground. The Apostles stood by noting minutely the events; ag
Jesus invites the soldiers to take Him, and intercedes for His friends. T
might be taken as a broad hint that Peter, James and John might make
and save themselves. The last futile effort to defend Him is set aside
His touching the ear of the High Priest's servant and healing him; so t
it was clear they were not to fight; He evidently intended to be tak
whatever He may have meant when He told them to watch, He almost b
them go and leave Him now. It was certainly strange, but the Lord kn
best. Perhaps it would mean a more wonderful miracle, a more comp
victory. He was going to allow Himself to be captured and then in
presence of the Judges and the whole of Jerusalem assert Himself and c
found His enemies by some drastic exhibition of power. Well perhaps
the moment it was better and at all events safer for them to go and
out of immediate danger. He would be left freer to act alone; so being m
alarmed for their own safety they all forsook Him and fled.

XXVIII.

The Trial.

Peter seems to have almost immediately turned back and with anot
Disciple followed on to watch what would happen. They mingled with
crowd in the lobbies of the High Priest's Palace, and tried to look on
unconcerned spectators at the awful events now in progress.

Jesus was hurried straight off to Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas
High Priest before whom He presently stood. Peter, it seems, had then b
allowed to go in further by favour of some household official and presen
stood in the midst of an inquisitive little group warming himself at the
in a distant corridor, whilst the captive was taken up before Caiaphas.

A servant girl recognized him and accused him of complicity with
seditious prisoner. Peter anxious to preserve his incognito, that is to con
who he was, denied all knowledge of Christ and immediately the cock cr
Again one of the High Priest's servants charged him, and again he den
A third time he was singled out, and then he denied with an oath,
again the cock crew. And at that moment from afar the gaze of
beloved Master was turned upon the unstable Disciple, and the wo
"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you," must have rung in his
as he remembered the prophecy; "Before the cock crow twice thou s
deny Me thrice." And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The trial before Caiaphas was soon over. Jesus Christ had simply appealed to His order and public teaching, He was smitten and insulted and sent to Pilate the Roman Governor that His condemnation might be ratified and His punishment secured. For as the Jews were now a subject race they had no power of signing the death warrant.

The night had worn on, the day was breaking, but it was early and the Magistrate's Court was not yet open.

Seven o'clock in the morning was rather early to begin business. The prisoner remains outside the Court House with a Guard and some members of the Sanhedrim, and a mixed rabble.

Pilate's practised ear, no doubt, detects as unusual commotion. Word is sent in to him that a specially bad case requires his attention.

So Pilate goes forth and confronts the noisy venomous crew; and pray what is it all about? A poor worn man, quiet, silent, but evidently much hated, dusty, bloodstained; what can He have done?

Pilate sits down patiently with his clerk to deal with the charge. "Well, what has He done? Sent here from the Sanhedrim? A malefactor? Good. Well but what has He done?" No one seems to know. "I thought as much. There are all sorts of different confusing cries," mutters Pilate, contemptuously. "Really a most impracticable people, wasting the time of the Court with tiresome cases one after another. One day it is Theudas, then Judas of Galilee, next it is Barabbas, then it is Jesus!" "Good people," says Pilate, restraining his impatience in front of the howling mob whilst a momentary silence is made by the ushers of the Court, "There is no charge before the Court, take your prisoner away. If your Sanhedrim finds fault with His religious opinions, let it deal with Him". But now the mingled cries of "King of the Jews! Seditious Ringleader!" reached the shrewd Governor's ears. A subordinate ruler who would not put down sedition against the Emperor, is no friend of Cæsar's. He may get himself into serious trouble in Rome and lose his Governorship. This must be put a stop to somehow. The case is more serious than it at first appeared to be. Pilate rises and calls to the prisoner to follow him into the inner Hall where he interviews Him privately. Then follows that most strange and most touching conversation recorded in John XVIII. — 33. etc.

Pilate unable to get rid of the case, ends by being completely won over by the prisoner in that personal interview.

A Man of Sorrows is before him, worn, soiled with ill-usage, a man of humble degree but of unexampled dignity of demeanour: the acute Roman official does not fail to see that He has an extraordinary person before him. From His answers he gathers that He lays claim to no earthly kingdom, that He is harmless politically, quite sincere, though perhaps visionary and un-

The Resurrection Morning.

practical like all the rest of His troublesome countrymen. Pilate goes out to the people and speaks quite bravely. "I find no fault with Him at all." First attempt to save Jesus! Pilate next tries to get out of the difficulty by discovering that the case does not belong to him at all. It belonged to Herod the neighbouring Governor, for Jesus turns out to be a Galilean. Very well let Him go to the Galilean Governor.

Pilate had had some disagreement with Herod the Tetrarch, of Galilee, probably about their territorial rights and the limits of their respective jurisdictions. This courteous acknowledgment of Herod's right as a Magistrate was excellent and in the best taste. The two Governors became quite cordial again; Herod who had heard much of the strange eloquent Teacher and Prophet had hoped he might see some striking miracle, but he was disappointed. After a few shameful indignities, Herod quite annoyed at seeing no miracles, sent the prisoner back to Pilate with an exchange of compliments.

And now began Pilate's last unsuccessful struggle for the release of the Divine Prisoner "Behold the Man He is innocent." Violent fury and contradiction. "Well then don't let us argue that point. By your law you can adopt an alternative. Take Barabbas." More clamour. Second attempt to save Jesus. "Well something short of an unjust condemnation ought to satisfy you. I will have Him scourged. Perhaps He may deserve that for all the trouble He has given us." After the cruel scourging Pilate appealed at once to their pity and dignity. Ecce Homo! Behold the Man again! A poor bleeding fainting man is before them — speechless, resigned! King of the Jews indeed! Why look at Him! The claim is too baseless even to be worthy of anger. Cæsar thou canst have nothing to fear from this suffering, meek, broken man. Third attempt to save Jesus.

All was of no use. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" shout the rabble, urged on by the Priests. With really splendid courage, Pilate bearded the shouting fanatics. With keen mockery he said: "Shall I crucify your King?" Then with angry impatience: "Take ye Him and crucify Him!" He knew they had no power as a subject race, but louder now are the cries of sedition that assail the ears of the wretched Governor. "Insult to Cæsar! Insult to Cæsar!" At that dread name Pilate quails. But one last sign of absolute disapproval and anger and then all is over. He calls for a basin of water, and washes his hands before them all. "I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Pilate's wife at this juncture sends word to intercede for the prisoner on the ground that she has been warned in a dream. Too late! Things had gone too far. Pilate no longer had the people in hand. Their threats had succeeded in terrifying him. His place and authority as a Roman official were menaced. So with a last indignant protest he gives in, signs the death warrant, and Jesus is led away to be crucified.

XXIX.

Judas.

And where was Judas? He had followed Him from Court to C bewildered, watching at each turn for the coming of a splendid miracle the opening of the Heavens, for the descent of Michael and his angels great transfiguration even more glorious than that upon the Mount, bec full of the terror of triumph and conquest.

Nothing! Nothing! The crisis came and passed! But no openin the Heavens, no descent of the Angelic Hosts to deliver Jesus; and "v Judas saw that He was condemned" he staggered out of the Court a pairing maniac; wild and haggard he appears before the High Priest; f down the thirty pieces of silver on the pavement — that money tha loved the best thing in all the world next to his Lord; — "I have betr innocent blood, I have betrayed innocent blood!" He went on crying It was all he could say. What was money or anything to Judas now? Lord was to be crucified. His temporal hopes of a glorious Kingdom dashed to pieces in a moment. So Judas, as it seems to me, bore in own way this last passionate witness for His Lord and Master; and ha failed signally to crown Him King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, finding absolutely unendurable, "he went out and hanged himself."

History has not unnaturally bracketed the names of Pilate and J together as the most infamous of criminals, but if we read the Evange carefully, we shall notice that they are careful to leave out no extenua circumstances of which the treachery of Judas, and the weakness of P are susceptible: and that it may be both these unfortunate men were marily blunderers and only secondarily, criminals.

XXX.

Calvary.

But the Divine central figure of all human history now claims undivided and absorbed attention to the close.

Crowned with thorns, and hustled by an excited mob, Jesus "bea His Cross," i. e. the crossbar of the Cross, moved through the streets of salem, faint with wounds and long fasting, and the sleepless suffering of s thirteen terrible hours. As He faints beneath the weight, one Simon Cyrene is seized on by the soldiers and made to carry it.

The end was indeed come at last.

In that supreme, moment, the thoughts of Jesus, seem to have entirely abstracted from Himself: He was thinking as ever only of ot

In His last interview with Pilate He thought only of Pilate's terrible position and made the best excuse for him that ever will or could be made; he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater guilt."

Now when He sees the agonized women who walk by His side in tears, He turns to them and says; "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me but weep for yourselves and for your children."

When He arrives at Calvary and they begin to nail Him to the Cross He thinks with pity only, of His executioners and prays for them; "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Then as He hangs in agony, He thinks of His Mother, whom He sees with St. John, standing at the foot of the Cross. "Mother behold thy Son!" "Son behold thy Mother!" And from that day St. John takes the Blessed Virgin to his own house. Then He turns His head and with His last faltering breath consoles the poor thief that hangs on another cross beside Him. "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

One cry indeed of seeming despair escapes Him. "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." But in reality He was beginning the repetition of the 22nd Psalm, which He was probably unable to finish through faintness; but the close of that Psalm the words of which were doubtless in His mind, are "He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;" it is in reality a psalm of faith and thanksgiving.

As the afternoon wears on, the Saviour seems to swoon at intervals, and at times only rouses Himself to utter those fugitive sentences which are commonly known as the seven last words. "Father, forgive them;" "To-day shalt thou be with Me;" "Woman behold thy son;" "My God why hast Thou forsaken Me;" "I thirst." "It is finished;" "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit." A sponge with vinegar or some kind of anodyne like chloroform is lifted to His lips; but He refuses to take it. As this awful tragedy was being enacted hour after hour, the crowd surged to and fro, mocking, weeping, over-awed, trembling, now at a sudden darkness, perhaps some total eclipse of the sun, now at an earth-quake shock, in the midst of which the veil of the Temple is rent.

One Centurion at least who heard Him speak and beheld the water and blood gush from His side, after a spear from a rough soldier had pierced Him exclaimed; "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

But every word and incident of the Crucifixion has been dwelt on by writers, painters and poets, and will be as long as human language endures. It is well that it should be so. After all, the true crowning of Him whose Kingdom was not of this world was the crowning with thorns on Calvary; for there it was manifest that "having loved His own He loved them to the end."

When Jesus bowed His head upon the Cross and cried with a loud

voice "It is finished!" the most wonderful human life on earth was broug to a close. It was wonderful in its perfect obedience to the Highest W its perfect goodness, its absolute self-surrender, when such surrender w demanded by fidelity to the cause of God. "He that endureth to the en He had said, "the same shall be saved."

We may not be able to understand all the mystery of it, and precis in what way or sense that Divine Life and human death and sacrifice came the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole wor These are among the things, as we are told, that the angels desire to lo into. But we can at least see that disobedience, and waywardness, and separates and always must separate us from the favour of a good G That misery will sooner or later be the final end of wrong doing, whi obedience to the Divine Will expressed in the Ten Commandments, the Serm on the Mount, the injunction to worship God and love one another, is only thing that can save the world. This and this alone, the Christ life a the trust in Christ, can bring a man peace at the last, though as in the life a death of Christ, temporary suffering and sacrifice may be the price wh has to be paid. He who obeyed so utterly, has taught us how to love a obey in our measure. God will take the Will for the Deed so long as continue to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Chr until we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the S of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fuln of Christ." And by and by and hereafter, a further and more complete planation will be given us of Christ's work and its action upon the wo invisible when we are fit to receive it, and we shall be like Him and Him as He is.

In other parts of the New Testament, especially in St. Paul's letters Epistles, we read a great deal about the reality of the sacrifice of which Jewish rites were but symbols and parables. Christ is spoken of as Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His blood is said to clea and to save, and let me here say if you read the word *life,* wherever word *blood* occurs in reference to Christ, you will understand many diffic and puzzling passages better. Upon such words as "the blood of Chr cleanseth from all sin." "We have redemption through His Blood", e — a vast superstructure of Atonement Doctrine has been raised.

There are a great many theories and explanations of Jesus Chris work and the way in which the blood of the paschal lamb saved the raelites, and the blood of Christ saves us, and how the perfect life and dea of obedience takes away the sins of the world.

Into these explanations, which may be read in many books, this lit book does not propose to enter, as it only professes to tell you the story

Jesus Christ's life as it is found in the Gospels, and none of those explanations, true and helpful as are some of them, may seem to be found there. Christ is announced as a Saviour, but theories of Salvation belong more to the ingenuity of the theologian than to the Sermon on the Mount.

But the most wonderful thing of all remains to be told. It is what is called the Resurrection of Christ.

XXXI.

The Reappearance of Jesus.

The King was crowned on Calvary. But His rule over the hearts a lives of men, aye over the whole world and for all time, was proclaimed His Resurrection.

This was indeed that spiritual Kingdom, that Kingdom of Heaven, which the Cross, nineteen hundred years afterwards, on towers of church and chapels, throughout the Christian world, remains the outward a visible sign.

Jesus was so nearly exhausted by suffering before He was crucified, th He hung for six hours only on the Cross, and was then taken down. H was certainly dead, for a soldier had pierced His heart with a spear and H was thus spared the last indignity of having His legs broken like the tw thieves who hung beside Him. And Joseph of Arimathea went in bold to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus.

Pilate, whose sympathies for the Galilean prisoner were by this tim well-known throughout Jerusalem, gave over the body, understanding th death had been duly certified.

So the Lord was laid by loving hands in a new tomb cut out of rock in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man.

On Saturday Jesus was laid in the grave, and a great slab of sto blocked the Sepulchre. Was He ever to reappear?

From this moment the fragmentary narrative of the Evangelists bein in fact, a collection of records current at the time, becomes full of apparent irreconcilable difficulties.

In the accounts of His reappearance, no less than ten discrepancies ha been noted by theological scholars, and there is much food for conjectu The one fact upon which all agree is the fact of His actual reappearan and that He was unmistakably recognized by those who knew Him be

By the Sea of Galilee.

Was it the crucified body? It would appear so, for He showed doubting Thomas His pierced hands and wounded side. Yet must it ha been changed since it came through closed doors and mounted into the at what is known as His Ascension.

On Sunday morning, the stone had somehow been rolled away, Guards had taken flight, telling strange tales about angelic figures in wh raiment, the sorrowing women who come to bring spices and unguents embalming Him, find the grave empty and the body gone. Peter and Jo immediately run to inspect the empty tomb.

A strange and familiar figure, that may not be touched, appears Mary Magdalene in the garden; but it is able to speak: "Touch Me no it said.

A further change is apparently to take pla before it said to Thomas "Reach hither thine ha and thrust it into My side."

The Eleven Disciples are bewildered by sudden appearance amongst them as they sit meat.

He is not long after recognizable by Jam alone: He joins the Disciples the twilight as they walk to Emma talks with them; enters and su with them; breaks bread; is rec nized and vanishes.

In the morning mists, Pe and the sons of Zebedee, and Thom and others go a fishing on the La of Galilee, John the Beloved, w the quick instinct of love, recogni Jesus standing on the shore.

"It is the Lord," he cries w deep emotion. And Peter, with usual impetuosity, throws his fish coat about him, plunges into the wa and swims towards Him, whilst others bring to the beach the b full of fishes caught at His comma

Peter, who had helped th to pull in the net, with the rout instinct and quick observation of

fisherman, began counting the fish, and he noticed three things — that they were all large fish, but nevertheless the net was not broken, and that they were just 153 in number.

Such trivial details seem to relieve the tremendous strain and excitement of such a meeting. The Saviour seems determined to put them at their ease. It was everyday life again. The old familiar toil, the old familiar companionship.

Had He not commanded them to cast the net into the sea on the right side of the ship when first they discerned Him on the shore? Had He not asked them whether they had any meat? He now points out the fire of coals, and the bread, suggests the cooking of the fish, He invites them to join Him in a meal.

All the circumstances are so homely, so suggestive of past happy days gone by for ever.

Then only, when they had dined, He singles out Peter who had denied Him, and the perfect reconciliation takes place; three times the trembling eager penitent and devoted Apostle is asked if indeed he loves the Lord; three times the care of the sheep is given him by the Good Shepherd.

He will nevermore forget the searching question "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" Never forget his own reply, not the hasty presumptuous, "Lord, though I die with Thee yet will I not deny Thee;" but most humble, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Feed My sheep," says Jesus.

Then Peter knew that full confidence was restored, and with a beating heart he hears that he too in years to come is to glorify his Lord by laying down his life for Him.

Tradition records that in the time of persecution under the wicked Emperor Nero, Peter, who had become the leading Christian figure at Rome, was implored by his friends to escape that he might be spared to the Church, being the very rock upon which it was founded, and that he at last yielded.

Whilst hurrying out of the gates of the city in disguise along the road, he met a figure which he at once recognized. "Quo vadis Domine?" "Whither goest Thou, Lord," he exclaimed.

The Ascension.

"Roman iterum crucifigi;" "I go to Rome, there again to be crucified," was the reply. And the figure vanished. Peter understood the reproof; he turned back; gave himself up and was crucified, but at his own request head downwards, as being unworthy to die in the same position as his Lord.

Before His final departure, the Saviour, as St. Paul tells us, appeared to about 500 brethren at once, upon a hill just outside Bethany. At the time when Paul wrote, about 56 A. D., a good many of the Disciples were still alive who had witnessed that thrilling sight that whilst He spoke with them He was taken up; they watched Him wonderingly until a bright cloud received Him out of their sight.

That was all! But that was enough. They knew from henceforth that He was alive for evermore. They were only a little handful of obscure fishermen, and a few poor women in the midst of that vast turbulent Roman Empire.

Their King was a crucified Jew; no one took much notice of them. In a very short time the growing trouble, and discords that rent Jerusalem scattered the devoted little band who most of them took refuge in a mountain village called Perea beyond Jordan.

But in less than three centuries from that time, the religion of their crucified Master was proclaimed by the mightiest Emperor that ever lived, Constantine the Great, to be the religion of the Empire; and for nineteen hundred years, millions of the human race in all the most civilized countries of the world have proved in weal and woe the truth, the strength and the consolation of those words — "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"

No. 4645.

RAPHAEL TUCK & SONS, LTD.
London - Paris - New York

Designed at the Studios in England
and Printed at the fine Art Works in Germany

Publishers by Appointment
to Their Majesties
The King and Queen Alexa